



Episode 624: Ron Paul's Bodyguard: This Guy Has Stories

Guest: John Baza

WOODS: Let's start off by having you tell us a little something about your own background and end that story up with how it is that you came to be contacted by – I guess contacted by the Ron Paul people? Or did you talk to them? Tell us that at the end of your story.

BAZA: Okay, well, I started off young at 18 years old as a New York State correction officer, jail guard at Sing Sing, a maximum security prison, and then after about two and a half years there, went to the NYPD, where I worked on Harlem, I worked in narcotics, I worked in patrolling. Eventually I ended up in the Special Victims Squad, which is rape and sexual assault, etc. And then I retired, and I did some consulting, and I came upon Ron Paul in the 2008 campaign, and I joined Campaign for Liberty, and a couple people there knew that I was a detective, and I guess there weren't too many detectives that were members of Campaign for Liberty or police officers, so you know, I happened to be friends with somebody who became deputy campaign manager, and they asked me if I wanted to come on. And my answer was, "Hold on, let me think about it, yes." And that's exactly how I answered them. So that's how I really became part of the Ron Paul team, and actually now the Ron Paul family.

WOODS: Well, how about that? All right, there are so many things to ask you, because I know some of these stories, and they're just great. But first of all, is this 2012 we're talking about or 2008 or both?

BAZA: 2012 only, yeah, 2012.

WOODS: Okay, and how many months are we talking about, that you were actively doing this?

BAZA: 15 months total, Tom.

WOODS: Wow, so were you traveling all over the place?

BAZA: Yes, constantly. I was never home. I had to – somebody cut my lawn for me, you know, because I was away for so long, but I didn't mind it one bit.

WOODS: You know, I saw you on TV all the time (laughing). You know, from one event or another, I'd say, there's John on TV.

BAZA: Well, I would say that if you didn't see me, I might not be doing my job.

WOODS: Yeah, that's a good point; that's a good point, but it was still neat to actually see you. All right, so tell me about your first day on the job. I mean, what's it like being Ron Paul's bodyguard?

BAZA: Well, it was — I took about 15 trips from the hotel to the airport where I was going to pick him up, so I made sure I wouldn't get lost at all. And of course I had my little directional thing up there. And I picked Ron up, and they got in the backseat, him and Carol — and I would never call Ron or Carol; I'd call them "sir" or "Mrs. Paul." But anyway, when they got in the backseat, I took them over to the — this is one of the first LPACs in New Orleans, and when we went there of course I was a little nervous, but I was with him, and we went through some crowds where he was making some speeches and some private briefings.

But then when we went outside to the big crowd, which was across the street — there was a bar, and they had an outside area. Hundreds upon hundreds of people were there. And I was there by myself now. I was alone amongst hundreds of people with Ron, and you know, some of his staff were there. And as we walked into the bar, I said I think we should stop here, and I guess nobody really heard me, and he kept walking on; we walked outside, and there was really no way out. So I let one of the staffers know, you know, when the time comes, somebody's going to have to stay here; I'm going to have to jump over the fence to get the car, which was parked illegally at the time, and I was hoping it wasn't towed, and pull the car up and get it to near where there was a little fence opening where we could get Ron out. But it wasn't in the bad way that we had to get him out; it was just because it was time; you know, we had to get on a plane. But it was just — I thought to myself at the time, I love this, but what have I gotten myself into?

WOODS: Yeah.

BAZA: I'm by myself with hundreds of people around, and this is Mr. Liberty here. And he was always my hero, but at the time, I'm like, it's surreal. The whole thing was surreal, actually.

WOODS: Before we get into the super duper, like, funny and cute stories, I do want to ask you, was there ever a time when you felt like there was really the possibility of danger?

BAZA: Not to Ron himself. To some of the campaign staff, and that was taken care of by me and the local police, but not to Ron or Carol or family members, no. Not at all.

WOODS: Okay, that's good. So you got to see him up close for quite a while. I mean, as you say, a 15-month period. And one thing when you were emailing us that I like was

that he doesn't use curse words, so he has his own kind of ways of indicating either his displeasure or confusion, so give me a few of these.

BAZA: Yeah, a couple of these is, sometimes when he wouldn't know what was going on because none of us would know what was going on, he would say, "What in the blazes?"

WOODS: (laughing) "What in the blazes?"

BAZA: Or, "What in the thunder?" And when something was really bad, the worst word was "despicable."

WOODS: (laughing)

BAZA: "This is despicable!" And I think we heard that once or twice at the RNC later on —

WOODS: (laughing)

BAZA: — but "despicable" was one of those words. So we all — there were three of us who eventually kind of worked together. We all kind of said we don't even want to know what he means by those words. We knew what they meant. That's the way he cursed. "What in the blazes? What in the thunder?" And it was funny; it really was, but at the time, of course, we didn't laugh.

WOODS: Yeah, of course, right. So as he's moving around from place to place, is he at work? Is he reading? Is he chit chatting with everybody? What's he doing?

BAZA: Constantly working, reading. He would always check, on his iPad he would always check *Lew Rockwell* and the daily poll. You know, I could take a peak at him — I usually sat in the front of the car, but I could take a peak in the back and take a look. And he would always check both of those every day, and then he would be reading a book. And every book that he read on that campaign that I saw that he had, I'd go out and get. I'd get it on Amazon online; I'd order it for my —

WOODS: Yeah.

BAZA: I didn't get a chance to read them till I got back, but you know, he was reading — Rickards, *Currency Wars* I think was one of them.

WOODS: Oh, the *Currency Wars* book, yeah.

BAZA: That was one of them, but there were numerous. Yeah, he was always reading, always — he reminds me of you, Tom. Always doing something to up everybody else's IQ and his own IQ as well.

WOODS: Ah, that's great; that's great. Now, in 2012 he was attracting – you know, he attracted some big crowds in 2008, but they were swamped by the ones in 2012, so again, you're dealing with thousands of people now. Were you still the only person on staff in charge of security, or would they have staff at the various facilities? What happened?

BAZA: Well, what happened was eventually we had an advance guy, which was the tall guy if you saw him in the pictures. His name was Jonathan Schaeffer, wonderful guy, big Ron Paul supporter. And another guy, Will Gallagher, was a New York cop, and of course a Ron Paul lover as well. Loved Ron Paul. And eventually all three of us got together, but we were dealing with crowds where, let's say you would have a crowd of 9,000 we had one time at Berkeley, 9,500, something like that. You know, the Secret Service were there, because I asked their guys. They would have 150, maybe 200 people working around the crowds and doing shift work and all kinds of advanced work. And we would fly in – towards the end of the campaign, we would fly in and literally drive right to the location. And luckily we had some good people on the ground there, our people, Ron Paul YAL people, Ed King and Ani DeGroot. They would set us up, but I'll tell you, it was thousands of people, and there were three of us. And we didn't do shifts; we didn't have shift work, you know? And I mean, Ron worked harder than all of us, but it was a very difficult time to –

And also, dealing with the police, Tom, to get these things done. It was of no help that I was a retired detective from New York. I thought that was going to be a help, but certainly it wasn't, and it was certainly not a help to be with the Ron Paul campaign early on. They treated us like secondhand citizens, but what I did was use my – and I'm kind of joking here – my amazing interview skills, and I said let me use those skills towards these cops we talked to, campus cops. A lot of them were campus police. So what I would do is basically say, I would tell them, listen, we want to pull in, and we want to have the doors shut behind us. That would be ideal; we always liked to do that. But they would say no, no, we want you to do this. So what I would do is I would be very nice, and as we'd approach, within five minutes I'd call up and say, okay, we're going to come in through that door and then you're going to close them behind us, because that was a great idea you gave us. And I'd give them all the credit for an idea that was obviously my idea, but I just made them feel like it was their idea. And sure enough, it worked. It was smooth every time. So I guess that works, and I always showed deference to them, and I kind of knew how to handle cops. I didn't want to act like this big tough New York cop, because it wasn't going to get me anywhere.

WOODS: Yeah, that probably wouldn't have played well. Yeah, that's actually an interesting point. Now, it's true that you're probably not necessarily dealing with a lot of dangerous people, but you might be – you *might*, I say. You might be dealing with the occasional odd person.

BAZA: Right.

WOODS: I mean, I can't imagine there'd be an odd person in our circles –

BAZA: (laughing)

WOODS: – but once in a while, one creeps in. How about any of those? Like for example, wasn't there a story of a guy, who, he either wanted to or tried to kiss Ron full on the lips?

BAZA: Yes. Yes, Tom. Let me tell you about that story.

WOODS: Please do tell me about that story.

BAZA: Oh, so I'll never forget; it's like it happened yesterday. But I believe we were in Philadelphia, and it was one of the fundraisers, and you got to come up and take a photo with Ron, and I usually would work the photo line. And you know, you'd do a couple jobs at the same time, but I'm close to him, very close to him. So as people would come up, I'd greet them, and we would always be polite. That's one thing I want to tell you right now. The team was very, very polite. We never had any problems with anybody, any anger, any issues like that, zero. But when people would come up – so this guy would come up to me, and he was in line to go next, and he said, sir, I'd like to kiss Dr. Paul on the lips. And I said, well, sir, that's really not going to happen, I don't think.

WOODS: (laughing)

BAZA: I said it just like that. And then he said to me, well, how about if I kiss him on the cheek, and I said, sir, I think a real firm handshake would be really good.

WOODS: (laughing)

BAZA: And he goes, I agree with you. And then he went up, and sure enough, he shook his hand. I think he knew better than to – I think Ron would have taken care of the problem, but I just, you know, wanted to make sure that he gave him a handshake. But that was a very interesting person, let's put it that way.

WOODS: All right, that's the first time I think I've ever actually clapped on the show. Like, I just – because the way you handled that, what you said was just right (laughing). "I think a good, firm handshake is what the situation calls for here."

BAZA: Exactly.

WOODS: All right, I have to say I am a little curious about the debates, because that's when I really saw you on TV. During the commercial breaks I'd see you, or afterward I'd see you. So you must have been – if you have access to him, you must have been backstage, you must have overheard things or seen things or seen the candidates interact when they're off camera. Was any of that especially memorable?

BAZA: Yes, yes, of course. You know, it's obviously memorable, because here I am, all of a sudden in my life I'm behind the stage and I'm on the stage and so forth, but

behind stage it was interesting to see the different candidates, because we did, how many, 22 debates I think I was at. I mean, that was an awful lot of debates compared to nowadays, you know? And I remember one time Rick Perry, who was often very gregarious, he came in and he said – John Huntsman had been in the front of the line, and Rick Perry had come in, they lined them all up where they'd walk out onto the stage, and I'm standing next to Ron. Now, a lot of security guys wouldn't do that, but I took my job seriously. You know, I'm next to him; nothing's going to happen. So Rick Perry comes in, and he's like, "Huntsman, bro, how you doing?" And he reaches over and is, like, yelling, he pats him on the shoulder, and he's like, "Doc, how you doing?" And I was just – (laughing) I mean, Rick Perry was an extremely gregarious guy.

WOODS: That's funny.

BAZA: I'm not saying – you know, we all know what –

WOODS: Yeah, his – right, right, yeah, right.

BAZA: I'm a Ron Paul supporter, okay, so people should know that. But yeah, Rick Perry – some of the people, you know, I tend to try to – Ron has changed me. I tend to try not to – I won't badmouth anybody, but I will say some of the more negative people were, like, Newt Gingrich or Rick Santorum, and they weren't very friendly towards Ron. I mean, Ron can speak for himself, but I never saw that. But I did see Rick Perry, of all people, we had that one incident I could talk about at some point, but Rick Perry was always the one who was very, very congenial, if you will, at least backstage.

WOODS: Yeah, yeah, how about that? All right, so that is kind of – that is interesting. I had the sense that Ron kind of got along with at least a couple of them. I even had the sense that he might have sort of gotten on okay with Mitt Romney.

BAZA: You would be right. You would be right to say that. They had a personal relationship that, you know, I won't get into. Ron obviously would get into that. But there was a time where Ron's plane broke down somewhere, I forget where it was, on the trail, and Mitt had offered to let him use his plane or stay at their house overnight. And I think what it was was that Carol and Mitt Romney's wife – I forget what her name was –

WOODS: Ann Romney.

BAZA: Ann Romney, yeah, and they were friendly, and I thought that brought Ron and Mitt just a tiny bit together, and they seemed friendly, but not overly, you know.

WOODS: No, no, I get it; I get it. But something you said a minute ago about negativity and you're trying to learn from Ron, I know again from something that you said in the email that Ron didn't really like when people would – he wasn't interested in personal attacks. He really, really kept things on a really high level. He wanted to take the high

road. And that even applied to things that he would sign or not sign that people might present to him.

BAZA: That is correct, yeah. You're right, Tom. First of all, he would not sign your skin. He would just say, you know, nicely – Ron was always nice. That's another thing. He was never grouchy or anything. He was always nice, just nothing negative to say about this. But Ron would say I'm not going to sign the skin, I'll sign something else, and you know, very nicely. And some people would come up with the Obama posters or whatever and had them look like the Joker, you know, from Batman –

WOODS: Yeah, yeah.

BAZA: – and he just wouldn't sign it. He would just kind of put his hand up and he would sign something else. He was very, very polite about it. There were certain things he wouldn't do, and we would not – he was very – the word is kind of silly, but non-negative –

WOODS: Yeah.

BAZA: – about the other candidates. And in person, too. I mean, afterwards as well. There was no badmouthing of the candidates that I heard.

WOODS: All right, I'm curious about the – well, first of all, before we get to the Republican Convention, let's talk about – I love this story of the couple on the side of the road holding Ron Paul signs, and you guys drive by. You got Ron in the car, and you drive by this couple. Tell that story. I love this story.

BAZA: Okay, this was in the middle – I think it was in Michigan somewhere. It's all a blur to me sometimes, you know? But Jonathan and Will might remember the date or the location. But anyway, it was cold out, and I think it was in Michigan, and we were going from one event to another, and in the middle of, like, what I would consider nowhere – you know, I'm from New York, New York, but I considered it the middle of nowhere – was a couple holding a – I think they were a married couple – holding a Ron Paul 2012 sign. And they were standing on the corner, and some people were beeping, and we pull – so I tapped my partner, Jonathan Schaeffer, he was our driver, and I said, Jonathan, pull over here. And I guess I made a command decision, you know, because I remember me being out there holding those signs.

So we pulled over, and I rolled my window down, and we had dark windows so they couldn't see inside. So I put my window down, and I said, "Who is this Ron Paul guy?" I was turning it into a joke eventually. I said, "Who is this Ron Paul guy?" And they're like, oh, he's the greatest. And I said, "Does he look anything like this guy back here?" And he rolled his window down, and there's Ron, and you should have seen the faces on these people.

WOODS: Oh, I wish I could have.

BAZA: And Tom, he signed the autographs I think on their signs, and it was – I love telling this story, because it was a great story, and Ron loves that. And I would never do anything, pull over or anything if I knew that Ron wouldn't like that. But he liked that; he got a kick out of it.

WOODS: (laughing) I bet he did. That is so awesome. All right, then I do want to – now, I realize there will be some things, I don't expect you to tell me what's going on in the back of his mind or anything like that –

BAZA: Right.

WOODS: – but just your own experiences at the Republican Convention. Let's first pause for a quick message.

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Okay, the Republican Convention 2012, there are some Ron Paul delegates there, and Ron himself was not entirely happy about what went on and all that. But your experience, I'm curious to know your own observations, and also I read something about how there were a few people who joined you in doing security who then became Ron Paul supporters?

BAZA: Yeah, that's correct, Tom, again. What happened was they asked me how many people do you need, so I said total I would like seven people at least. Three of us – me, Will Gallagher, and Jonathan Schaeffer – and then I added on, if I can name the names real quick, Joe Guida, Louis Robles, Mickey Schneider, and Dick Terrio, who were all cops. And I can't tell you, it was like overnight, they were all Ron Paul. Like, no, don't talk about Mitt Romney, don't talk about anybody else; they were Ron Paul people. And in fact, they weren't really into politics at all, and now to this day they still are into politics, and they're like, Ron Paul, where is Ron Paul, where is, you know. And it's amazing; these are kind of crusty old cops, you know, detectives, and they changed, and they believed it. I'm talking about being true believers, too, not just liking him. They love him. But true believers in his message, because they heard him talking, and it was just wonderful, that experience, that part of it.

WOODS: That is incredible. I mean, I always love when somebody gets sort of turned onto the message, but that's really fantastic right there, especially given the location. What was your overall impression of what was going on at the convention?

BAZA: Well, actually, I was with Ron all the time, so I wasn't really in touch with what was going on. I found out a lot later what had happened, because I didn't really know exactly what was going on with this rule change thing and buses were not getting there. I mean, I heard about that later. But I was with Ron most of the time. He obviously had some speeches he had to make; we had to take him to different locations, but the only time I really came into contact with anything firsthand with him was when we went to the RNC, and in fact, they didn't treat him very well there, and I was very upset, because – in order to get into the place you had to go through a

magnetometer, you know, where they wave you down with metal detectors. And that's fine. You know, they do it for everybody, but they don't do it to the congressmen and so forth. But Ron had to wait there. For some reason he was waiting there, it just felt like, you know, this is not right. So I went up and talked to somebody, and finally we were able to get through instead – because I thought it was – it was just wrong for them to, like, delay his entry onto the floor. So then finally we get inside, and here's a story I'm going to add on; it's just a little bit here.

WOODS: Yeah, sure.

BAZA: As we went inside, we toured the, I don't know, around the arena, like you know, the area where they usually have concessions and stuff. And they had a Fox thing, and they did an interview with Neil Cavuto, and then after that interview he went into like a waiting room before he went to the floor. And I was opening the door to look outside, here comes somebody that – well, there's really only one person in the entire world that I can probably say I can't stand. That's Bill Kristol.

WOODS: Ugh.

BAZA: And Bill Kristol, I saw him coming through, trying to go through the same door, and Ron's in the room now. So I was like, uh, no, this is not your area, sir. I was polite, and I didn't want to – I'll be honest with you; I didn't want to be polite. The cop in me almost came out.

WOODS: Yeah, yeah.

BAZA: But I let it go, but you know, that was amazing enough. And then finally we got down onto the floor, and it erupted into, you know, everybody was cheering, the Ron Paul people. Ron went around, and he – I'll tell you one thing about Ron is when he was there, he went to all the congregations, you know, and met with the people on the floor, but Iowa was in a bus stuck somewhere I think. So he would say to me, John – or Jonathan was his other guy – so he would say, Jonathan, where is the Iowa guys, so we would try to find that out, and we couldn't find it out, because they weren't there. And Ron was, you know, quite stunned that the Iowa people weren't there at the time. And I think that was the time that they were stuck in the bus. And that time on the floor, Ron went out, and then he found out that he missed I think Minnesota, so he decided, let's go back in, we're not going to miss Minnesota. So we went back in, and we got a chance to go over to the congregation I guess from Minnesota, and then we walked out. But I guess that's my RNC stuff. You know, I know there's plenty of stuff that went on, but being with Ron all the time, I was kind of – I was out of the loop, really.

WOODS: Yeah, no, I get that; I get that. But tell us the story of what happened when everybody, when he and the family and everybody left the convention, and they were trying to fly out of there.

BAZA: Worst moment of the campaign for me, and I think probably for Ron; I don't know. What happened was a car ahead of me had some family members, and we had car 1 and car 2, and we would always have two cars. And anyway, I was in the car with Ron, and by the time we got there, I got a call before we got there, TSA is setting up, and they're starting to search the pilots. This is executive private airports. Now, private airports, now, you've got to remember for 15 months, I don't know how many hundreds of private airports we went through. There was never TSA there, because they're like prechecked, they have the thing that they do for the private airports, you know? And you just go through. There's no TSA ever. Ever.

Here on this last day when he's leaving from the RNC, TSA sets up. So this put me in a tough situation, because Ron is standing there with Carol – and Linda. Linda also was part of our team, by the way. She did a great job. But Linda Paul, his granddaughter, she was there with them, and Ron – Tom, I can only say that I never saw a face on Ron like that. Just, not defeated, because he's never defeated. Ron would never be defeated, but just, I don't know, just so downtrodden.

And Carol was very upset, and then the guy asked, a TSA guy in a suit and tie – which was unusual too, because you don't see plain clothes TSA people usually. And this guy came over, and he said we're going to need your identification to Ron. And so I was there with him, of course, and my six other guys were there, and Ron opens up his wallet and pulls out his driver license. He's probably never taken it out before, you know? And he's handing it to the guy, and at that moment, Ron Paul was on the screen, a picture of Ron Paul on the TV screen that was playing at the airport. And so I showed the guy, well, that's him, you know; if you need ID, that's him. He's like, well, I need this ID card, and we're going to have to pat them down. And in the meantime, as this is happening, they are patting down the pilots, so I asked them politely, and not too sarcastically, but I said, these guys are pilots; if they want to crash a plane, they can crash a plane, the pilots.

WOODS: Yeah.

BAZA: So at that point, I told my guys to stand at strategic positions, because I was very much in a quandary. This is the toughest situation I was in with the campaign.

WOODS: Yeah.

BAZA: And I needed to know – I didn't want this to turn into something bad, but I wasn't going to have Ron and Carol searched like that. It just was not going to happen on my watch. So what I did was I told everybody, stay where you are and I'll direct you what to do. We had little headphones on and stuff. And of course we didn't smile; we were always just kind of stoic or whatever. But anyway, I think I told myself, what am I going to do here, because I had two choices: one, it's my guys, stand off with the TSA, and Ron and the pilots get on the plane and they leave. And Ron wouldn't like that, and I wouldn't like that. So that was, like, well, that's not good. Then I said, you know, let me start taking pictures of this guy, just politely, because I didn't say anything really to him, and let's see what happens. And I started taking photos of him,

you know, close-ups, and within – I mean this, Tom – within, like, two minutes, and my guys will back me up on this, this guy was on a cellphone, and he comes up to me a couple minutes later, and he's like, okay, this is cancelled. You can go on the plane.

WOODS: Oh my gosh.

BAZA: So my guys, then we saw them off until the plane took off, and you know, I remember going up to Ron and saying, you know, sir, the phone is like a new gun, kind of, because you can take pictures. I think Judge Napolitano said that, so you know, I said that's what I figured we were doing. And then he got off on the plane and obviously was – I don't think he was very happy, and Carol certainly wasn't and Linda wasn't.

But I told my guys, I said, we are now going to walk out of here like men. We're going to keep our mouths shut, and we're going to walk like men right to our cars and take off, because we were furious, but we wanted to – so we walked out of there like – I wanted to represent Ron Paul, that we weren't going to be run over. So we walked out and went to our cars and we left and that was it, but that was that situation. It was shameful. It was a total shame, and in fact, Mitt Romney's plane was sitting on that runway, and that's one of the reasons they gave me why they did it, which was ridiculous.

But at that time – because the next day I read it in the paper – a Secret Service agent had left his gun in the bathroom, in the commode in this jet, in Mitt Romney's jet. He had like a 727 or whatever it is, you know, big planes. And I said to myself, you know, we did better than the Secret Service. We did our job without stomping on anybody's feet, without smashing anybody, without doing anything like that. And I always hoped that Ron would be proud of us, you know?

WOODS: Yeah, yeah.

BAZA: And just to show you one thing, Tom – I don't want to ramble too much, but just to show you about the Secret Service – I got along with them. I did. But when there was a glitter, and everybody's getting glittered at some point – I don't know who was glittering; they'd throw glitter on them, the candidates. Well, Mitt Romney, while he had Secret Service protection, got glittered like they dumped the whole bucket on his head. Now, when we had Ron, somebody tried to throw glitter, and I guess we were doing our jobs right, because it hit me and it hit Jonathan and it hit Will, who I was working with, and nothing hit Ron, and when we got out in the hallway and he looked at us, he goes, you know, you guys don't look too bad with that stuff on you.

WOODS: (laughing)

BAZA: And we just started laughing. You had nothing to do but laugh at that point. There's so much, Tom, that I could go into. But Ron changed my life, I have to say. I'm just kind of pointing out something. He changed who I am, how I treat people, how I – just, he changed me. He did. You changed me too, but he changed me.

WOODS: But that's amazing. That really is amazing, because I could imagine watching his example and, yeah – because the thing is, John, sometimes there have been times when I've been frustrated that he wants to take the high road. I want him to get in the mud and tell the truth about these other candidates, and I want him to do all these things. And it's just not him, and, you know, eventually I came around to realize and respect that. So he changed my mind on things as well.

But tell me about his other half, of course. Tell me about Carol. And she wasn't always on the trail with you, but when she was, what was she doing?

BAZA: Oh, Carol was on the trail quite a bit during the second half of the campaign. I mean, she was on the trail a lot with Ron.

WOODS: Okay.

BAZA: Second half. 2008 was a different campaign, but 2012 she was on the campaign a lot. And Carol was a fantastic speaker, and I guess at one point they used her to do an introduction of Ron at a fundraiser, and she was fantastic – I mean, she was a great speaker. She's funny, and it was just great. And she would go and introduce, not me, but the campaign and the people who were on the ground would use her to introduce Ron a lot. And it was just so – I know you know her, but she's just such a wonderful woman –

WOODS: Yeah.

BAZA: – and she can bring a little laugh to the crowd, and then Ron comes up. And Carol worked very hard with Ron, and I'll tell you, Carol was on top – you know these things; for your listeners I'll kind of try to tell them. Carol was on top of things. She wasn't just somebody that sits to the side and, okay, I don't know what's going on. She knew about stuff, you know? And it was wonderful to be around her as well. In fact, I always say, apart from my own mother and father, Carol and Ron changed my life more than any two people in the world. And you know, I was blessed to have that assignment, Tom. I was blessed.

WOODS: Yeah, it must have been thrilling, because I remember every time I would see you on TV, I would say, you know, darn it, I've got to ask this guy when he gets back about some of his stories, and then, you know, I really started to coming back on my heavy travel schedule, which is much better for the family for me not to be gone all the time, but that meant that I didn't see you as much. I haven't seen you since I think the end of the campaign, so this is my first time to really find out about it. So you guys even, at one point, you ran into the Occupy Wall Street crowd. Now, where was that?

BAZA: That was in Iowa, actually. I don't remember the exact name of the place, but anyway, it was in a location in Iowa. We had a few hundred people in the crowd, and the Iowa guys – who I always got along with, the grassroots guys in Iowa; I got along with them very well. I think highly of them. And they actually came up, and they were very concerned about it, and, you know, I understood why. But I had studied them –

you know, being on the trail, I wasn't just all aloof; I knew what was going on in Occupy Wall Street; I knew kind of what they were about and what they were going to do.

So this was one of the few times that Ron actually, because he needed to, asked for my counsel, and you know, to me that's a huge compliment. And I said, you know, I think you can handle them, sir, and we certainly can handle it. And Ron said okay, and he went out on stage, and at some point they started their chant. They would do this chant and hold up the signs, and he let them do their chant, and he said, isn't it great that we have the First Amendment, and everybody kind of laughed. And he addressed some of their issues, you know, some of Occupy Wall Street's issues. He addressed them, and that was it. There was no further incident. I mean, nothing. So really Ron knew how to – and he was never, ever afraid to go out to a crowd or anything.

There was only one time that we really had to get off stage, because the crowd was getting so big that people were getting crushed in the front, almost like a rock concert. And I had to take one little boy and pick him up and put him on the stage. And we conferred, both Ron and I looked at each other, and I said, sir, I think we need to get off the stage at this point; it's getting a little dangerous. And of course, Ron immediately, boom, we were off the stage; we didn't want to see anybody crushed. But that's the amount of people. I mean, we're talking from 50 to at the Sun Dome, what, 11,000 people there. It was just amazing.

You know, I'm proud of my two guys, Will Gallagher and Jon Schaeffer, who I worked with, because the three of us handled what probably 150 or 200 Secret Service people would do, and you know, they worked shifts and everything. But we loved it. There was never a minute that I didn't love it and never a minute that I didn't think to myself, boy, am I the luckiest guy in the world. Here I am sitting next to a guy who's like Thomas Jefferson to me, and whenever I had a conversation with him every once in a while about – you know, I kept my mouth shut quite often, but once in a while we would talk, he would ask me about my family or something or we'd talk about the Constitution, and that's when I really got excited. Now you know me, Tom. I love to learn about the Constitution, and I remember we talked about the Kelo decision at one point, and it was like a highlight of my constitutional life, you know?

WOODS: Oh yeah, yeah, sure.

BAZA: Go over this decision with Ron Paul, you know?

WOODS: Yeah, right.

BAZA: And the incorporation doctrine and stuff like that. But it was just – I just say that I was very fortunate and blessed that I got to be able to work with him and with the people that surrounded him.

WOODS: Totally thrilling. I've still got a couple more things that I want to ask you.

BAZA: Oh, sure.

WOODS: Tell me about the near-death traffic incident.

BAZA: Oh, and this was – when I say "near-death," I mean near-death, and the reason we say near-death – I would say something else probably, but because Ron said it afterwards. But what happened was we were in Kansas City somewhere, and we were going across a bridge that had a barrier in between the lanes, you know, of course the oncoming traffic and whatever. And there were two cement barriers, and all of a sudden, just out of the corner of my eye I see this truck, a white van, barreling over the two barriers right towards us. And I said, Jonathan – to Jonathan Schaeffer, my driver – and he somehow miraculously pulled that car – and in back of me we had a car too, which Carol was in and Linda with Will Gallagher, who was our driver. And somehow miraculously, we swerved both cars out of the way, and that car came over, and a wheel came off it, and I could see from behind that it stopped, and I didn't see any further accident, and we just went on at that point when we didn't see any further accident. If we saw something, though – I mean, that was very scary, and Ron said, gee whiz, that was a – he probably did say, "Gee, whiz." "Gee, whiz, that was a" – sometimes I say, "What in the thunder?" you know?

WOODS: (laughing) Yeah, when he almost dies, he gets excited enough to say, "Gee, whiz."

BAZA: Yeah, and stupidly I get up, and I'm like standing up in the front, like I'm going to block something. Like a car's coming at me, and somehow I'm going to block this van from getting in the backseat. It was ridiculous –

WOODS: Oh my gosh.

BAZA: – but that was my reaction. But it was very, very scary at that point. But you know, I laugh now, but I think at the time it was not laughable. We were very, very lucky, very blessed.

WOODS: Well, you had another thing in traffic, I guess on Ventura Boulevard, with a suicidal guy?

BAZA: Yeah, Tom, I think it was I-5. I'm not quite great with L.A., but I think it was I-5, the main highway. And there was an exit ramp right off of Ventura Boulevard, and if you made a right, Ron and us, we were all staying at that hotel there; there was a hotel there. And as we pulled down onto the exit ramp, we hit the stoplight, I saw this guy and Jonathan saw him too and so did Will, and he was trying to push himself into traffic. And he had, like, I think his legs were amputated or whatever. And we looked at each other, and we knew somebody had to do it, so I said, okay guys, can you take him over to the hotel, and I'll take care of this.

So they took Ron to the hotel, and I went out, and I was on this exit ramp, and you know, it was like New York City on the highway, you know? Everybody's going by, so I

pulled out my old shield – called a badge, people call it a badge; we call it a shield in New York – my gold detective shield, holding it out, hoping that nobody hits me. And I get over to this guy, and I reach down and I talk to him, and I kind of expected maybe it was an intoxicated male or whatever, but this man was from – it was very sad. I mean, this guy was from – I finally got him to tell me he was in a cancer, like a hospice kind of situation, and he just wanted to kill himself. So I was like, well listen, not today, not today.

So I managed to get him – some onlookers who saw me holding my shield up came over, and we managed to pull him to safety. I called 911, and what I did was – you'll kind of get a laugh out of this, Tom. I called 911, and I said I'm a retired detective from New York; we have this guy, he just needs an ambulance, you know, and that's what he needs. And I waited till the ambulance came on the scene, but the wrong thing for me to do was to get on the air and say I was retired NYPD detective, because no matter what people think of L.A. detectives, LAPD in general, there were six LAPD cars there within, like, minutes. And I just booked. I just got away, because there's kind of an unwritten rule between LAPD and NYPD, you know. If I call, they're going to be there. So that was an interesting incident. I never asked Ron about it. He never mentioned it, and you know, I didn't expect him to, because he's that type of man.

But we had so many interesting times, dangerous times, but also funny times, and if I could just add the one about the sleeveless rabbit fur coat – could I do that, Tom?

WOODS: (laughing) Please do. I would be disappointed if you didn't mention that.

BAZA: Okay, we were also – this was another fundraiser, and there was a gentleman there who actually had an online business, and he sold these sleeveless – some were rabbit fur; some were, I don't know, leather or fur – I think it was all kinds of fur. And they were supposed to be worn without a shirt on, you know? Don't ask me; I don't know how these things work, fashion or whatever. But anyway, he came over to Ron, and he gave him this rabbit fur sleeveless jacket, and so Ron takes it; he makes sure he's got it; he gives it to Linda. Linda always took care of the stuff. And we get in the car; we had finished from that, and we get in the car, and we're going to the hotel.

And as we go out of the car into the hotel, we're always checking around, making sure that Ron gets everything, and you never carry anything for him, heaven forbid, because he carries everything himself. Don't carry anything for Ron; he takes care of his own luggage. But we always checked. He had his jacket with him, so he said, oh, I forgot my jacket. I said, sir, you have it right there, and he said, no, no, the other one. And we rush back to the car, and we get this rabbit fur jacket, and we're trying to hold a little bit of a laugh in – not at Ron, but you know, kind of at the situation. And Linda too. And he loved this rabbit fur jacket. He took it upstairs, apparently, and you know, nobody's going to get this, but Linda Paul has a photo of Ron wearing that. I don't think Ron – I think he had a shirt on, but Linda Paul had a photo of this. I never saw it, and I don't think anybody's ever going to see it.

WOODS: (laughing)

BAZA: (laughing) But I thought that was a pretty funny incident. There are so many of them, so many.

WOODS: Oh, I'm sure the stories are just endless. But when the campaign came to an end, I mean, I guess you were right there to the very end? Were you there when he — did he say thank you and goodbye to everybody? I mean, how did it all end?

BAZA: Yes, he said — of course when we were in the airport, because we had enough time, he said goodbye to all my guys, but I had a feeling that he knew that he and I would meet again, because there was an LPAC coming up in September —

WOODS: Oh yeah.

BAZA: That's just what I do. I go up there and I do that with him. So it wasn't like a goodbye for us. But at one point, I will tell you we were in Florida at a liberty summit down in Florida here. This was not the one you were at; it was another one. The one you were at, by the way, was the greatest one.

WOODS: I wasn't going to say it (laughing).

BAZA: It was. Tom Woods, Brion McClanahan, Kevin Gutzman, Tom DiLorenzo. I mean, you can't beat that. And I was in charge of speakers, by the way, Tom.

WOODS: Oh, that's right. And who's that other — Bruce Fein was there; I think Tom Mullen might have been there. It was a great —

BAZA: Tom Mullen was there, yup.

WOODS: Yeah, yeah.

BAZA: It was a great lineup. But anyway, we were leaving that location, and he was pulling his bag, and I was walking along, and he stopped. This was like 6:30 AM; he stopped and he looked at me, and he said, you know, when they told me I was going to get a security guy, he said I never thought I'd get somebody who got it, somebody who understood the Constitution.

WOODS: Wow.

BAZA: And then he just walked on, but that's Ron's way. He's like my dad; he's old school. That's his way of saying thanks. But to me, that made my life.

WOODS: Oh, that's — oh yeah, sure, sure. Well, you know, I had him on about a week ago, and I asked him only listener questions, and they had to be questions he hasn't answered a million times before. So don't ask him, should I run for Congress or whatever; we already know what his answer is to that. So we asked him, for instance, what his morning routine was, and he said, you know, now that he's at home, he walks four miles a day in the morning and then he comes back and gets ready for his day,

and then in the afternoon he rides his bike. Now, all right, maybe he can't tote his bike around on the campaign trail, but was he always awake early in the morning? Did you ever go out for a walk with him, or was that always by himself?

BAZA: Well, sometimes he would sneak out on us. He was very — he knew that we needed to be with him, but sometimes at 6 AM he woke up, he would go out and get a little bit of breakfast at the breakfast bar at the hotel where we were staying, and then he'd go out for a walk. And usually we would have our totally in shape Jonathan go walking with him, and sometimes he would take him out, Jonathan would actually go out hiking with him, you know, take him where nobody knew where he was going. And this was in Vegas; they hiked I think on — I don't know where they hiked; you know, I'm not a hiker or an outdoorsman. But anyway, the hiked, and he always wanted to get that walk in and that exercise, and we could never keep up with him. I mean, we had a bunch of guys and some real young guys too, and nobody could ever really keep up with him. He walked so fast; I mean, it was really amazing.

But yeah, I listened to that podcast, by the way, and yeah, you know, seeing him — I heard one of his family members saying that one day they were riding along down on Lake Jackson, and there's Ron riding along on his bicycle, and he's all over it. He has that routine, and I think that's great, and it's rubbed off on me a bit too, how he does stuff.

WOODS: I want to share one story with you actually. This is from the 2008 campaign. You remember the Revolution March that was held out in front of the Capitol Building? I don't know if you were there, but —

BAZA: I wasn't there.

WOODS: But you know about it, yeah. And you can find all the talks on YouTube and everything. Well, the night before that, there was a little bit of a pre-Revolution March party at a bar. A lot of the people who were in town for the march figured we'd go to a bar and have a party. Well, I had the good fortune of — a few of us had dinner with Dr. Paul at a Ruby Tuesday in town. And there are two things I love about this, but first of all, the people on the restaurant staff all saying to each other, we know that's Ron Paul over there, what do we do (laughing)?

BAZA: (laughing)

WOODS: So eventually they all got a picture with him and everything, and there were people in the restaurant who came up to him, and I thought, you know, this must happen to him all the time. Well anyway, I knew where the — if you want to know where the party is, you ask Woods, right? Who else would you ask? So I knew this thing was going on. It was almost 10 o'clock, and we were wrapping up to leave the restaurant, and I said, you know, there is a pre-Revolution March party going on down on such and such place, and wouldn't it be unbelievable — I was talking to Dr. Paul — if you made a surprise appearance. Like, no one in the world is expecting you to be in a

bar right now. And he looked at his watch; it was 10 PM, and he jokingly said, are people still awake at this hour?

BAZA: (laughing)

WOODS: So he agreed to do it. So we drove over there, we walked down the street — of course people are looking, it's Ron Paul walking down the street. When he walked into that bar, it was like the thing was going to collapse from the people screaming and cheering. I mean, the last person in the world you expect to see is Ron Paul, because we know he's an early-to-rise, early-to-bed, probably doesn't drink a whole lot. And there he was. It was just the best — and somebody somehow had like a bullhorn or something, and they handed it to him, and he's giving an impromptu speech. People are trying to film it with their smart phones, because they just can't believe this is happening (laughing). And this is also on YouTube too. I just thought, this is the most awesome thing in the world. I never in a million years thought he'd agree. I thought he'd say, yeah, that's funny, now I'm going to bed. He went. It was incredible (laughing).

BAZA: That's Ron. You know, you know Ron, and I know Ron —

WOODS: You can't predict what he's going to do sometimes.

BAZA: And it's just wonderful. I mean really, when you talk about the stories, most of them, the stories are wonderful. And you know, I wouldn't have traded this for anything, for the world.

WOODS: Yeah, these are memories you'll just cherish forever. Well, John, we're so glad that you came here to share a bunch of them with us. I'm sure you cherish the memories, and we very, very much enjoyed getting a chance to be a little bit a part of them after the fact. Thanks so much.

BAZA: Well, thank you, Tom. Thanks for having me on.