

# Making Our Way



A McMAHON / CHEYNE PODCAST

**#93 • Season 3 • Episode 32**

*4/22/2026*

**Bill Himes - O.F. et El**

# Our Hosts

**Janet Cheyne McMahon** is a lover of family, dogs, nature, travel, books, and music. Born south of the Mason-Dixon line, she left after 9 months for parts north, landing eventually in Michigan, which will always be “where I’m from.”

Love of learning led Jan to a Bachelor of Arts (History, Political Science) at the University of Michigan-Dearborn (Go Blue), and a Master of Arts (Library and Information Science) at the University of South Florida. Amid all that, studied for a time with Rob at Colorado State University, a pivotal time in their lives.

Worked at the U of M-Dearborn Library, and then The Salvation Army Florida Divisional Headquarters, with the greatest reward being in serving as the Divisional Librarian. A librarian is who Jan is “in my soul.”

Jan and Rob have made our home in Florida since 1983, and live now in retirement with their dog, Skye, who makes it all the best adventure. They travel as much as possible, spending time in nature and in diverse places on this amazing planet. It has all been, and continues to be a fascinating journey, with hope of making a difference, in small ways, by being brave enough to speak and act on behalf of others.

**Rob McMahon** is a native Michigander, born in Saginaw and raised in the suburbs of Detroit. Rob attended Michigan State University, graduating in 1978 with a Bachelor of Science degree. He did graduate studies at the University of Michigan and the University of South Florida. Rob is retired, having spent 36 years in public education teaching both high school chemistry and biology and middle school science. He worked as a total quality management trainer for the Pinellas County School District and served four years as the president of the Pinellas Classroom Teachers Association. Rob cofounded a non-profit total quality management training center, The Learning Co-op, for Teacher Unions interested in applying the W. Edwards Deming continuous improvement principles to their day-to-day operations. He worked with teacher unions in Colorado, Maryland, New Mexico, North Dakota, Texas and Michigan. He also worked in a similar capacity with Jim Shipley & Associates. In retirement Rob has written a series of science related children’s books, and enjoys traveling with his wife, Jan, and their Black Labrador Retriever, Skye.

**Deanna Cheyne**, born in St. John’s, Newfoundland, earned a Bachelor’s Degree in Vocal Performance from the University of Toronto (1996), studying with such luminaries as Elmer Eisler, Doreen Rao, Greta Kraus, Lois Marshall, and Rosemarie Landry.

Dee taught music at Mississauga Christian Academy, served as music director for Meadowvale Bible Baptist Church (Mississauga, Ontario), served as Assistant Divisional Music Director for The Salvation Army in Florida, is a former member of Tampa’s Master Chorale, and, for the past 18 years, has been a public school teacher.

Dee has visit 36 of the 50 U.S. states, and 12 countries. Her favorite destinations include France, Prague, New Orleans, National Parks, & Hawaii.

Dee & Jim live in Florida with Brigus (Golden Retriever) and Pip (Teacup Yorkie).

**James Cheyne**, born in Galesburg, Illinois, earned a Bachelor of Music degree (Theory and Composition) from Michigan State University (1978); and a Master of Music degree (Theory and Composition) from the University of Illinois Urbana/Champaign (1981), studying with David Liptak, Salvatore Martirano, and Ben Johnston.

Jim has served as music director for The Salvation Army in Central Illinois & Eastern Iowa, Orlando Area Command, and the Florida Division, served as a pastor with The Salvation Army, and was a public school teacher for 17 years.

In travel so far, Jim has visited 50 states and 27 countries. His favorite travel destinations include National Parks, New Orleans, Newfoundland, Argentina, Prague, & France.

Jim continues to write music and support Dee’s musical endeavors, and cooks whenever absolutely necessary. Jim & Dee live in Florida with their dogs Brigus & Pip.



L-R: Brigus, Jim, Deanna, Skye, Jan, Rob.  
Inset: Pip

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# Bill Himes - O.F. et El

#93 - Season 3; Episode 32

4/22/2026

Hosts: Jan, Rob, Dee, & Jim; Guests: Bill & Linda Himes

Our conversation with Bill & Linda Himes continues, this time focusing on Bill's life from El Heugh to Order of the Founder. Musicians of every caliber will find inspiration in his words and wisdom; sports fans, not so much.

[Music]

**JIM (voice-over):** The year was 2000, the change of the millennium. The Salvation Army world had gathered in Atlanta, Georgia, for the International Millennial Congress. Several days of celebration culminated in one final meeting where General Gowans would announce the newest recipients of the Order of the Founder, the Salvation Army's highest honor. This is like the Oscars, times ten, except the recipients don't even know they've been nominated. So when the general announced, "William Himes," Bill, our guest today, looked around for his father, William Himes Sr. before realizing his own territorial commander, Commissioner Harold Hinson, was standing over his shoulder, ready to escort him to receive this honor.

At the ceremony's close, the congregation of twenty thousand stood to sing the founder's song, O Boundless Salvation, in arrangement by Bill himself, as Bill conducted the massed bands. I remember vividly the smile on Bill's face.

So here is our interview with our very first recipient of the Order of the Founder.

[Music]

**JIM:** Linda, are you required to address him as Order of the Founder Bill?

**LINDA:** I always every morning when I get up...

**JIM:** Is there a ritual?

**LINDA:** ..."Good morning, Order of the Founder."

**JIM:** Yeah. Morning?

**LINDA:** Yes. "Ordor of the Flounder"?

**JAN:** He doesn't get up in the morning, though.

**LINDA:** Well, that's true. I misspoke about morning.

**BILL:** Yeah. Morning being ten-ish.

**LINDA:** Order of the founder, yes.

**JIM:** That's fine.

**JAN:** Creative people are night people.

**BILL:** Yeah, often they are.

**JIM:** Well, it's lone time. You can do that in the morning too. You have time by yourself in the morning.

**LINDA:** I do.

**JIM:** Which has got to be a treasure.

**LINDA:** It's wonderful.

**JIM:** Yes. And that's the that's the only thing...

**BILL:** But the evening and late evenings you're never interrupted. And when you're writing and you're working on something, it's like a house of cards. And you're right there and then the phone rings.

**JAN:** Yes.

**BILL:** And you go, Yeah, okay, okay, okay. Now where was it? Okay, let's put that back together. But after ten o'clock at night you're free and clear. I mean I've seen many a sunrise working on something.

**JIM:** What is El Heugh?

*[Laughter]*

**BILL:** El Heugh, yeah, it was a very interesting thing. I when I was in Royal Oak, there was a kid there named David Heugh, and he spelled it H-E-U-G-H, and I hung out with him and a friend in high school. His name was Ray Hudson. After I moved to Port Huron, Ray came up to visit one time to tell me that they formed the pseudo gang called El Heugh. They named it after David. And it was a nothing. It was a nothing. It was like a "Kilroy was here." I thought that was so amusing that I took the ball and ran with it because I knew how to promote stuff, you know. And so we did all kinds of wacky things in the high school that would have driven you nuts. But like we ran El Heugh for president. And we had a post- and and no one ever saw us. We attacked like gorillas. You know, when no one's looking we'd put up a poster and then be down the way.

**JIM:** This had some - like a saber on it?

**BILL:** Yeah, I designed a logo. Looked very menacing. It had like an Arabian dagger and it said "El Heugh" on it. And so we would put that up wherever we could. We'd have magic markers and we'd put it on anything glossy. We did these El Heugh posters when we ran him for president of the student council and we used all the old campaign slogans like "El Heugh kept us out of war," "El Heugh for two chickens in every pot." I mean our American history classes were really productive for it. And it got to be such a big deal. Oh, and then we made up our salute. *[gives a thumbs up]* It's the El Heugh salute. And the secret mark of El Heugh - you probably guessed it - an X. And the whole idea was just to put it everywhere, and it really panicked the school. In fact, at one time I was I had been president of the student council. And I got called into the principal's office and he says, "Now, Bill,

you know, you you have your ear to the ground and you do you have any idea what this El Heugh stuff is?? And I started out with the word golly. When I say golly, it means whatever comes after that is going to be a total lie. "Golly, Mr. Feick. No, I don't. I, you know, my impression is it's kind of like a Kilroy was here kind of thing. I don't think there's anything to it," but because it was right across the street from the corps. And my loyal El Heugh members were like Rick Everett, Mike Everett, Rick Knight, all the guys I went to the corps with, and we just helped advance this.

One night we made an El Heugh flag with the dagger ust out of a sheet and we hung it up the flagpole. So the next day when they came to school, here's El Heugh flag flying. There was a lady who taught geometry, Miss Leonard, who was a W.A.C. during the war. And she addressed all her classes that day. She says, "I was so disappointed when I came to school today and found a foreign flag flying over American soil. Whoever did this treacherous act should be turned into the authorities at once." So naturally that night we visited her house and put El Heugh flags all over.

We also sent Mother's Day cards to all the single spinster teachers.

**DEE:** Oh my.

**BILL:** It would say, "To you, dear mother, to you, from the gang that truly loves you, happy Mother's Day." And it would say, "El Heugh," you know. And the other thing was we ran El Heugh for president of the student council, I mentioned this, but we had another spinster teacher, Marjorie Muhlitner, who ran the student council. And they always met in the band room. And I had figured out a way to wire into the PA speaker in the band room without going through the PA. So we're in there and we made this one recording and we played it while student council was in progress and Miss Muhlitner was managing these 60 kids.

*"May I have your attention, please? This is El Heugh Bulletin number one. El Heugh has now taken over the school and is securing the corridors. Please do not leave your rooms."*

Well, she just went nuts. So she goes, storms out of that band room and goes down to the office.

"What is going on here!?"

She says, "What are you talking about?"

"No, there's a PA announcement!"

"No, there's no PA."

"I heard it!"

And she was down there - she was there for the rest of the hour, so we had El Heugh Bulletin number two. It says,

*"May I have your attention, please, Miss Marjorie Muhlitner, for failing to obey our commands, has been disposed of. Please do not leave your rooms."*

And then when we were in the Second Destiny and stuff, if you look at the Second Destiny photos in The War Cry, and whatever, from that whole summer 'cause it's the first tour - ten

weeks, ten thousand miles, all ten divisions - you know, so they take pictures of us in every division. But you see Jim Curnow, all of us. Thumbs up.

**JIM:** Thumbs up. The El Heugh salute.

**BILL:** The El Heugh salute.

**JIM:** It's really caught on.

**BILL:** Yeah.

**JIM:** I see a lot of people doing it.

**BILL:** Yeah. *[laughs]*

**LINDA:** Sometimes, two thumbs up.

**BILL:** So there were so many stories that came out of that, but it did show up in a lot of places, like on the Eiffel Tower, for example. It got to be larger than life and yet there was nothing to it.

I went back to Port Huron High School a few years ago for something and I went into the bandroom. And they have those John Phillips Sousa plaques, you know. And I had won that award my senior year, and the band director was clued in to who El Heugh was and all this kind of stuff. So it's engraved there. It says, "1967 William Himes - El Heugh." *[Laughter]* It actually is engraved on the thing. It was - and Port Huron is a very provincial town. It's still 35,000 people. It hasn't changed in a hundred years, literally. I thought it was the greatest place to grow up and leave. It was a great place to grow up, but then you - I wanted a bigger world after that, you know.

**LINDA:** But I think he was run out of town.

**BILL:** Yeah, run out of town. Nobody ever figured I mean no one really figured it out.

**ROB:** My first memory of Bill...

**JAN:** Oh gosh.

**ROB:** ...was at Echo Grove working for my dad. You were in the Rec Shack.

**BILL:** Yes, I was the assistant recreation director.

**LINDA:** You just *[unintelligible]*.

**JAN:** Which is hilarious on many levels.

**BILL:** I know. I signed out tennis records and uh you know stuff like that.

**ROB:** Did you do a lot of writing in the Rec Shack?

**BILL:** I did do some writing in the Rec Shack, yeah.

**ROB:** Okay.

**JAN:** Amongst other things.

**BILL:** There weren't always kids around so I just shut the...

**ROB:** Yeah, I know.

**BILL:** I remember one time conning some Girl Guards. It was a Girl Guard camp and they came up with, like, this bored expression, like, "What do you got?" you know, to sign up. And so I sized them up for their gullibility and I said, "Well, you'd probably - we've got tennis and we've got these other things, but I think you'd like Wapasakis. It's all the rage." And they didn't want to seem uncool having never heard of Wapasakis. "Well, what is Wapasakis?" I said, "Well, you've got this net and then you got this ball and you just basically toss it back and forth and you - but you can't use your hands," you know kind of thing. And so they go, "Yeah, okay, I'll try the wapasakis." So I gave them two routed out butterfly nets and a croquet ball. And they just about killed each other. But but yeah, that was my job and the recreation guy who someone who knew nothing about sports but...

**LINDA:** And still doesn't.

**JAN:** I know. I saw him play base- - softball.

**JIM:** I thought sports was a prerequisite for the Ben Merritt Award.

**BILL:** Well, it turned out it was. And you know, one year I thought for sure I was gonna win this because I played the solo, I won the thing, I did this and that. And they gave it to another guy, and I thought, and then they said, "Well, it's an all-around award and you were never on the ball field." So the next year I made a point of being in the ball field. What what's the worst one? Is it left field?

**ROB:** Right field.

**BILL:** Yeah right field.

**LINDA:** There you go. That's how much he knows.

**BILL:** And just stand there. And then one time I just happen to be there and this ball is sailing and I just put up my mit. \*PLOOP\* And everyone cheered. They thought I did some magical athletic thing. I was just standing there and it just landed right. I didn't have to go anywhere. But uh and I got to Ben Merritt that year.

**JIM:** Check a memory on this.

**BILL:** Okay.

**JIM:** When you received the Ben Merritt, was it in the chapel?

**BILL:** Yes, it was. In the old Wonderland Chapel.

**JIM:** The old chapel. And Rick Everitt got first place and comes over and shakes your hand...

**BILL:** Yup.

**JIM:** ...after the award.

**BILL:** Yep.

**JIM:** That's a real memory?

**BILL:** Oh vivid, yeah, because we were peers, we went to the same high school together, we were in the El Heugh together, we were in all these things, you know. I don't know how they

decided who'd get what because we're, you know, he was first chair in the Wonderland band in Solo Cornet. I was first chair Euphonium, you know, we did all these things. And so I'm sure it was a real very minute point spread there. But uh so it's one of us was gonna probably was gonna get it and when I got it, you know, he very graciously came over and shook my hand like a "way to go."

**JIM:** Wonderland Camp CMI's longest audition was between you and Don...

**BILL:** Meyer.

**JIM:** ...Meyer.

**BILL:** Yeah, well it was close, yeah. Because I worked that one summer at Echo Grove, I couldn't go to CMI that year, so I missed it. But before then I had been first chair in the very first Wonderland band. So I'm not there that summer. Everyone figures out, "Well, who's gonna do this?" And this unknown from Indiana shows up and his whole life is wrapped up in this euphonium. He didn't even have, like, a kind of euphonium that we would have used. It was one of these tallish whatever was available at the corps kind of thing. Don Meyer, and he was a very fine - Uh I mean he'd walk around camp with his briefcase and his Arban's book because you know he's out there to practice. And so he was first chair that year. So - that's funny, you reminded me of something - 'cause so now the auditions are for this year. And Don doesn't know me, but I know who - I know who he is, you know, so I'm just kind of standing next to him. And guys are going, "So Don, who do you think is going to be the principal chair this year?" He says, "Man, I don't know, because I hear Bill Himes is back." And I just looked at him with a dead pan and said, "Yeah, I hear he's really good." You know, he had no idea until then we actually are going - progressing in the line then they call my name and I go up there, and he realized he'd been had, you know, but Yeah. But it was close and Art Shoults was our auditioner and everything I did he could do and and I think in the final analysis it was tone and sound. Yeah. Well that's because I had the bigger horn and and that's where the way I've been playing.

**JIM:** It's like a - a cello-like sound I is the best I can describe it. It's just got this this richness to it that that

**BILL:** But you know what I attribute that to uh Joe Pinkerton, because uh he was at Royal Oak when I was a kid and when I first m I mean we we came from record that had no music. But now, you know, I'm I'm at the score that has a youth band and a senior band. I was - and our house was only three blocks from the corps. So I would go to senior band rehearsals just to sit next to Joe Pinkerton and watch his music. And so I took on the task of counting his rest for him, like he really needed that. But he could look at me at any time and go, "Six two three four." I could sit in band practice under Max Wood with Joe Pinkerton with this big burly Scottish sound from Springburn, Scotland. And it was a sound that was unlike an American sound. American sound back there was more like, to quote Michigan State, more like Leonard Falcone, who had this beautiful Italian sound, but it's very light and operatic, whereas the concept from England was this dark cello-like sound and it was really this ri rich sound and he was our youth band leader too.

**JIM:** I was gonna ask you why uh with Falcone in Michigan State you didn't end up there, but it was a different approach to the instrument and...

**BILL:** Yeah, in fact when I went to Michigan, I mean I'd always had played on a a Besson or a

Boosey and Hawkes euphonium, you know, provided for me by the Corps. But then I went off to Michigan and I couldn't take that with me. And they had Boosey and Hawkes euphoniums. And the old man Revelli told me - he had gone to the International Staff Band program when they played at Ford Auditorium in Detroit. I would have been about thirteen years old. And he heard that sound. And he went up to the conductor Bernard Adams, said, "Would you mind, like, during the interval if I could go up and just look at the instruments? I want to see what they're playing on." And he took note of these Boosey and Hawkes Imperial euphoniums and that summer he went to London for something, and when he came back he had fourteen of them that he had purchased for the University of Michigan. So when I arrived there, I mean that was now a few years later, I could just sign that up and they would let me take it home for the summer. I had the same euphonium the whole five years I was there because I never owned my horn until I'd been teaching for a couple of years, you know. But it was that sound that I heard that wasn't an American sound. It was this guy from Scotland had this big burly sound.

**JIM:** So when Dad has you write the corps piece moving from Detroit to Dearborn Heights...

**BILL:** Mm-Hmm, "New Frontier".

**JIM:** ...you write a piece called New Frontier, and Joe's in there.

**BILL:** Mm-hmm.

**JIM:** And you write a nice solo for him.

**BILL:** "We'll never let the old flag fall."

**ROB:** Oh, yeah.

**JIM:** I remember that. In fact, I remember you in front of the band saying how you had different people in mind for the music. I think write - composers ought to put the names, not the instrument, but the name, "This is for this person."

**BLL:** Right, yeah.

**JIM:** And I remember you - there was something that was a blend with baritone and flugel...

**BILL:** Yeah, for Bill Dobney, Sr.

**JIM:** So you're saying, "Oh I wrote this because I knew that Bill Dobney was here on baritone." Then you looked at John Aren and said, "But I didn't know he was here."

*[Laughter]*

**JAN:** That sounds like you, Bill.

**LINDA:** Yeah.

**BILL:** Yeah.

**JIM:** There where was that? There was America the Beautiful. Yeah. Your very first projectionist is right here.

**BILL:** Yes, right. It's a multimedia piece. Yeah. One Kodak carousel projector.

**DEE:** Yeah, I've heard about it.

**JIM:** We got together at our house and you brought some slides, Dave brought some slides, Dad brought some slides, you brought some like a fair, some cows, a garbage thing to show the...

**BILL:** Yeah.

**JIM:** 5-4 section.

**BILL:** Traffic jams and stuff in the middle of it.

**JIM:** Yeah, and so it's this discordant thing, and then just this beautiful transition into, I'm gonna say...

**BILL:** Like, water or something, yeah, it's water.

**JIM:** ...Crater Lake or something. Just this blue that was there. And Jan has to time the the fade ins - or the focus in and focus out stuff.

**JAN:** Just a word about that what - that was an amazing education for me to actually hear the music, be able to see what was gonna happen. I mean, I think - I wouldn't say that's the first time music became visual to me, but it definitely impacted me.

**BILL:** It was a new thing.

**JAN:** Yeah.

**BILL:** Your dad came up with that idea, and your dad. And because their summers as teachers was to visit all these states, you know, so they had slides of everything. So When I came together with my musical version, I didn't have pictures of all those states, but I could say, "Well what I see here is a sunrise." "Okay, we need sunrises." "Okay, who's got the sunrises?" And we and we got enough that comes up and then I, "And here I see Statue of Liberty of the Harbor at dawn or at dusk or something." "Yeah, we got that." You know, pull it up and boom. And they just put it in the carousel and sequence it. But I brought the stuff because in the middle there's traffic jams and stuff like that and I had I, you know, I just take pictures of weird things anyhow, but I had pictures of traffic jams and garbage dumps and all kinds of stuff so we put that in there as well.

*[Music begins]*

**JIM (voice-over):** Before we conclude this episode, I should mention that editing Bill's words is very light. work. In both speech and music, Bill knows what he wants to say and how to say it. Few would be so bold as to edit what Bill has carefully prepared, and fewer still are qualified to do so. And with that in mind, I did, however, edit together two segments, two lessons I learned from observing Bill when he didn't know or think anyone was watching. One about discipline and one about care. I had never told Bill about either until this recording.

*[Music ends]*

**JIM:** I've learned a lot from you, Bill.

**BILL:** Hmm.

**JIM:** I have. I remember one time in that faculty band, we met just before lunch. I think.

**BILL:** Mm-hmm.

**JIM:** And uh you had some solo, just a little easy line that goes up and the top note didn't speak. And it's like the whole world just...

**JAN:** Well that doesn't...

**DEE:** Mm-Hmm.

**JIM:** ..."Bill Himes just missed a note." "Bill Himes just missed a note." It went through the whole camp. *[Bill laughs]* "Bill Himes just missed a note." We all go off to lunch, but you sit there, and run that line again...

**BILL:** Mm-Hmm.

**JIM:** and again and again...

**BILL:** Mm-Hmm.

**JIM:** ...Probably you were surprised that, "Why didn't the lip respond that time?" That was a "don't just throw it away; fix it. Discipline yourself to fix it."

**BILL:** Yeah. I learned over time, and especially in Michigan, that there are usually three mis- - reasons for mistakes in the All-Star with an M. It's either mental or it's muscle or it's mechanical. A lot of times it's muscle, and you have to train your subconscious, because that's the biggest part of your brain, to remember what does it feel like to play a high A. Revelli taught me this. And we were having trouble with a high A-flat concert and one thing he wanted a pianissimo and like, "But it's so high. It's hard to do." And so he'd have us, he said, "Play the note. Now, erase it. Now find it again. You know, when you can do that ten times in a row, then you've got it." You know, kind of thing. But what you're doing, and I've used this as an example, I'm teaching kids, I'm saying, "You know, I can whistle Yankee Doodle for you." *[whistles]* "You're not thinking that's a very big deal. I'm going to do it again for you." *[whistles]* "Now you're not thinking that's a very good deal, but there's something in my brain that has memorized exactly where my oral cavity needs to be to go," *[whistles]*. "I don't know where that is, but because I've whistled a lot, the subconscious has memorized exactly how big the opening needs to be to whistle." And it's the same thing when we're playing or singing or whatever. You there there's a muscle memory that's affected by this, or it could be just mental. I didn't read it ahead of time, I didn't see it coming Or it could be mechanical, I should have oiled that third valve. But you've got to make the analysis and fix it, you know? But so that's probably what I was doing is it was definitely muscle, I'm sure.

**JIM:** The other thing was pastoral. And it was um - This was just after we lost *[Bill's first wife]* Wendy *[to cancer]*.

**BILL:** Hmm.

**JIM:** We're meeting someplace. And it's, I don't know what the gathering is. It might have been Atlanta. I don't know. But there are a lot of people around. So people coming together who haven't seen each other for a while. You were there. And um I saw someone come up to you and say, "Oh, how's Wendy?" And I'm just like, "I shouldn't be here right now." Because you did the most wonderful thing. Because he is about to feel terrible. He's just going to be crushed. And you stepped in there. "Oh, I'm sorry, didn't you hear we we

lost her?" And then what - and he's - you can see - and then you just helped him right out of that in an easy conversational way that couldn't have been more loving, more pastoral, more caring for the person who had just...

**BILL:** Yeah.

**JIM:** ...inadvertently...

**BILL:** You don't want them to be in that pain.

**JIM:** Right. And it was there, and I just kind of watched that and said, "I'm glad I'm watching. I shouldn't be watching. I'm glad I saw that." And I don't know that it's not something that I would go and say, "Hey, I've got this great Bill Himes story everyone should know," but, I've got this meaningful Bill Himes story I think people should know. And it's it's part of the the ministry that, you know, we can - lots of people are talented, but not everyone can encompass the person right next to them...

**BILL:** Hmm.

**JIM:** ...which is the point.

*[Music begins]*

**JIM (voice-over):** That's all for today, but I invite you back to enjoy one more episode with Bill and Linda Himes when you'll hear their own version of a well-known story. Plus, Bill and I talk shop for a bit.

Thank you for your company today.

Until next time.

*[Music ends]*