

## Steve Stephenson

After founding Steve's Sundry in 1947, he was cherished by Tulsa's readers and authors.

### Chapter 1—1:11

#### Introduction

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**Announcer:** Francis W. "Steve" Stephenson was the founder of Steve's Sundry in Tulsa, Oklahoma, which he opened in November 1947 at 12th & Harvard. Steve shared space in a building with Ernest Moody, Senior of Moody's Jewelry. Steve met his wife Hazel while earning a marketing degree from Oklahoma A&M, now Oklahoma State University. He went on to work for a variety store known as S.H. Cress. He eventually opened Steve's Sundry, which was a complete drug store without the pharmacy. In the early days of the store, Steve would also sell boat motors, lawn mowers and fishing tackle. He became the first dealer in Oklahoma to sell Zebco reels. In 1958 Steve moved the store to its present location at 26th and Harvard. Listen to Steve tell the story of a bookstore that became Tulsa's bookstore because of the personal attention given to generations of readers. This interview was conducted in Steve's home in 2009 when he was 91 years old. He had a tennis match scheduled for that afternoon. He was 93 when he died November 22, 2011. We thank our sponsors for making this story available on [VoicesofOklahoma.com](http://VoicesofOklahoma.com).

### Chapter 2—6:56

#### Steve's Start

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**Steve Stephenson:** My given name is Francis W. Stephenson. I've lived all of my life as Steve. I was born in Billings, Oklahoma January 7th, 1918. I got through high school in 1939 and college in 1945.

**John Erling:** Where did you go to school?

**SS:** Oklahoma State. I finished school. I worked my way through on grants and I worked in Stillwater. I paid my own way. Then we got married and moved to Tulsa and started our life.

**JE:** When you say you started your life, what did you start when you came to Tulsa?

**SS:** I came to Tulsa and got a job with S.H. Cress. We were just a young couple starting out on a \$20/week salary.

**JE:** What was S. H. Cress?

**SS:** It was like a TG&Y. I don't think they have them now. But it's a variety store.

**JE:** So you went to work for Cress and what did you do?

**SS:** I went on a training scholarship. I worked all over the store.

**JE:** What was your degree in?

**SS:** Marketing. I was one of the first students in that school when then they started it at OSU.

**JE:** Then you were looking for a marketing job?

**SS:** Yes. I turned down other jobs. My granddad owned what they called a racket store. They sold a little bit of everything—wheat and things out of a pickle barrel and all that kind of stuff, so I decided to follow him. That's why I got a marketing degree and that kind of a job. I had a good start.

**JE:** How long did you work for Cress?

**SS:** When the war came, I didn't want to get drafted, so I enlisted in the Navy. I was on recruiting duty in the Navy for four years.

**JE:** You were in the military from 1941 to 1945?

**SS:** Yes.

**JE:** What did you do when you got out?

**SS:** At that time, all of the merchants poised themselves to take you back if you had been working there and you did a satisfactory job—so that happened to me too. Then they sent me out to manage different little stores around town in Sapulpa and McAlester. I got on-the-job training being manager of those locations.

**JE:** How long did that continue?

**SS:** Two or three years. I cashed out my savings. Ernest Moody had just finished building his building, so I had the south half of that building. I had a store there 10 years at 12th and Harvard.

**JE:** What business did you run there?

**SS:** It was a sundry store, people at that time didn't know what a sundry store was. It really was a new word. I always described it as being like a drug store. We had a fountain (drink station) and places to eat. It's like a drug store without the pharmacy—that's the difference.

**JE:** Okay, a drug store without a pharmacy, right. Why did you choose to do that? The Cress store was a variety store.

**SS:** Yes, but it was a chain.

**JE:** Why were you interested in the sundry side? Was there something as you worked in this variety store that struck you that you thought could be your niche? You could have started a variety of different businesses.

**SS:** A pharmacy is a separate business and I just didn't have the knowledge, so I went into the sundry business and it worked out.

**JE:** What did you call your business?

**SS:** Steve Sundry. We sold boat motors and lawn mowers and we sold all kinds of drug items, except prescription ones. I had a complete drug store supply, but I couldn't use the word drug store in my name because I didn't have a pharmacy.

**JE:** Sounds like you sold some hardware items as well?

**SS:** Oh yeah. I had a friend who worked for a wholesale house and they sold fishing tackle. He offered to get me two samples of everything I would need to sell fishing tackle. Then as I would sell it, I would pay him back for one and keep one and you add to your stock. That's the way we did it. So I grew with that. Then Zebco reel came out at that time—it was invented by a barber named Jasper Hull. When he finally got ready to sell it, he brought it by to show it to me. We went outside the store to cast it. Of course you know what they do—they just take off. I was the first one to cast it.

**JE:** You cast the first Zebco?

**SS:** Yes. It was so advertised that people were coming in and paying for them first before we had them for sale. Dave's Hardware store was the main hardware store at the time. They also had these reels ready to go out. Anyway, Hull called me up at 5 o'clock and said, "How would you like to be the first one to sell Zebco in Tulsa?" I said, "Good!" he said, "Okay, get on your telephone and start telling your customers you have them." So I stayed and called people until 10 o'clock that night and I sold my 20 reels.

**JE:** Do you remember how much they cost?

**SS:** They cost \$20.

**JE:** You used your cash out money from Cress to start this store then?

**SS:** Yes, I used that and more. Do you remember Ed the gentleman that started Farmers & Merchants Bank?

**JE:** F&M Bank? Yes.

**SS:** His bank was across the street from my store. I got ready to open and I had all of my money spent. He and I became friends because we were across the street from each other. So I went over to borrow some money. I forget how much I asked for—maybe \$800 or \$900. We sat down and talked. He was a gruff guy. He said, "I'll tell you Steve, that's not enough money, you better take twice that much." So he doubled my note. He financed me for a couple of years until I got on my feet. That's what I wanted to say that makes Tulsa, it's that the independents help each other. That's what Tulsa is all about.

**JE:** Yes, that's very true. So then he allowed you to buy more stock then?

**SS:** Yes, he backed me. That was a good generation.

**JE:** So this was in the mid-1940s?

**SS:** Yes, because in 1958 is when I moved to where I am now.

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### Chapter 3—2:20

#### 12th and Harvard

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**John Erling:** Okay, so you were in that location next to Moody's from 1948 to 1958?

**Steve Stephenson:** Yes.

**JE:** You had good memories with Ernest Moody?

**SS:** Oh yes. We had a lot of fun.

**JE:** Maybe your kind of store was the only one of its kind in town?

**SS:** It was.

**JE:** The fact that you sold a variety of things. Did you sell any groceries?

**SS:** No groceries.

**JE:** But you had a food bar?

**SS:** I had a regular café on bar stools.

**JE:** Like you have now?

**SS:** Yes, exactly like we have now, except we did serve full meals at that time, but we don't do that now.

**JE:** Right.

**SS:** The store from that standpoint is the same store that we opened with. We sold tobacco and anything that we could make money selling.

**JE:** Your store was meeting place then, because you served breakfast and lunch and everybody would come into your store?

**SS:** The telephone company had a building right across the street from us. All of those people would come over between meals and stuff. They used to kid that if you wanted to talk to the boss, call Steve— because they spent so much time over at my store. (Laughter)

**JE:** So from 1948 to 1958, do you remember some of the names of people that were customers of yours? Were there any famous people that may have been coming into your store?

**SS:** Yes, the LaFortune family. Those boys grew up in my store. Bob LaFortune and his two brothers.

**JE:** Those were good years for your business.

- SS:** Yes, they were. I don't remember any time that we didn't make money. That's a crazy thing to say.
- JE:** But every year you grew to where you probably did better than the year before?
- SS:** I know I quit telling people that. See, we started in the hole. It took us awhile to get out. I know that that would sound like bragging.
- JE:** Oh no. That's very good, the fact that a business could start then and grow every year. That shows what a good businessman you were and you were meeting a need in the community. They liked coming in and seeing you.
- SS:** Yes, the reputation I had was, if we don't have it we can get it.
- JE:** And if you couldn't get it, they don't need it?
- SS:** Yes, that's right! That's the truth. I've got that saying on my card.

## Chapter 4—4:52

### Magazines

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**John Erling:** Were magazines a big part of your store then?

**Steve Stephenson:** When the big bookstores came in, all of the smaller bookstores were scared and worried that they would have to close up. At about that time, this friend of mine wrote a book called *Crackerjack Positioning*. He got the name from the fact that at that time, Cracker Jacks were a popular food. They went from nothing to huge because of that little toy in that box. That toy wasn't worth a nickel, but every kid wanted to buy them because they wanted that toy. Crackerjack marketing is to fill a breach. I sold books and I sold magazines. Well, when these guys started in the beginning, they didn't have magazines in their stores.

**JE:** Who started moving in?

**SS:** Barnes & Noble and the other one. The book said to find a niche. We decided my niche was magazines. I bought every magazine that came into Tulsa, except pornographic ones. I doubled my investment and doubled my size and they didn't hurt us. Why? I think it's because people were so patriotic and so loyal. They would go to one of the larger stores and find a book that they wanted and then come to my store to buy it or have me order it if I didn't have it. They still do it.

**JE:** Much of this had to be built on you as a personality?

**SS:** People don't want to buy me (my store) because I think they think the business will go down if I wasn't there.

**JE:** Because the business is so wrapped around you, personally?

**SS:** Yes.

**JE:** That was a good thing.

**SS:** Oh yes, it's the only thing that saved us I think.

**JE:** People like to come in and just talk with you and have fun. What made you decide magazines were your niche?

**SS:** Because of the profit.

**JE:** What about the book side?

**SS:** Well, the magazines carried the books. See, it's a theory. If you buy the same magazine once a week, you have to come into my store to get that magazine and you will walk through the books. Your turnover in magazines is 52. That's once a week on a lot of magazines. I was getting 52 times return on my magazines and my books were getting 25.

**JE:** So that was a marketing strategy?

**SS:** Yes, Joanie is doing a great job. She has a lot of books and only has one or two (of each) on the shelf. She sells and she buys one. I didn't get to that point, but she got there.

**JE:** Do you mean Joanie the wife of your son David?

**SS:** Yes.

**JE:** What about the hardware side of the business? Did that drop off while you were there? The motors that you talked about selling earlier, did you continue to sell hardware, because you don't sell those things in your current store?

**SS:** No, I dropped all of that. I also dropped sewing materials.

**JE:** So in time you realized you didn't want to be in that business?

**SS:** Yes and I think Ernest Moody wanted me to move. He wanted that space. He didn't make me move though.

**JE:** So you moved because Ernest's business began to grow and he wanted that space?

**SS:** Yes, he needed that space. He didn't push me out or anything. I just got the chance to move to a new location. It's a location where I am more surrounded by my customers. It worked out great. It's my second store and it's the same store where I am at now at 26th and Harvard.

**JE:** Were there any other businesses there when you moved in?

**SS:** There was a women's shoe store there. My store was the second one to open there and then a barbershop opened as well.

**JE:** Did you double your square footage?

**SS:** Yes, or more.

**JE:** So, you made a big moving announcement?

**SS:** No, we didn't spend any money on that. We didn't have to advertise, people just came to us.

**JE:** There was no need to advertise?

**SS:** No. That sounds like I am bragging but those people still come in and say, "I remember when you helped me with this or you gave me that." I don't even remember all of them at all.

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**Chapter 5—4:24****Fountain Gum**

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**Steve Stephenson:** I have kids coming home from school come in and give me \$2. I say, “What for?” They say, “Well, I stole one of your *Playboys* last week and I just have to pay you for it.” It’s happened. (Laughter) I’ll tell you one funny one. There’s a church on 31st right down the street from us. The minister’s son was 7, 8 or 9 years old. Anyway, he decided to take a magazine. I had a policy that when I caught these kids stealing I would pick up the telephone and I would fake a call like I was calling the police. I would say, “Oh, no, I’ll let him go, but...” They would just stand there shaking scared you know. So, his son did that and he went home crying. His dad called and he said, “What happened to Johnny down there?” I said, “Well, I don’t know that you want to know, but I did it for you. I taught him a lesson. He was stealing a magazine.” He said, “That’s what I wanted to know. Thank you.” He and the boy both came back into the store and they brought me the money for the magazine. Now 30 years later, the preacher came back to Tulsa and he came to me and said, “I am supposed to buy a book on Oklahoma.” I said, “Okay.” He said, “My son is a minister out in Seattle and that’s the way he starts every new sermon every new place he goes is to tell that story.” (Laughter)

**John Erling:** How he stole that magazine?

**SS:** Yes, and how it changed his life.

**JE:** That’s a great story.

**SS:** Yes it is. That’s why I can’t quit. I mean I can’t just sit because I am always hearing those stories. I still hear them. It’s a bit egotistical, but it’s good for you.

**JE:** It is. That’s what made your business because it was more than making a sale.

**SS:** Yes.

**JE:** It was about people. The store where you are now, has it always been laid out like it is today?

**SS:** Nothing has changed that’s permanent—just the bookshelves have been all moved around.

**JE:** It’s interesting how you have that food bar back there.

**SS:** I hate it. You see, I had everything down at the other store. I had to get back there and wash dishes with the rest of them. That’s what the boss always does. So I decided when I moved to this location that I wasn’t going to do that. Well, that business followed us and I was back to washing dishes and doing the same lunch-hour stuff. There never has been more than two or three of those fountains in Tulsa. There was a real popular fountain down at the end of Boston Avenue. All of the kids would drive and go down there after school. I bought it and put that in my store. Well, that rail on the fountain bar, if you put

your hand under there, you'll feel hard gum. People say, "Why don't you take that off?" I say, "No." We had a lot of fun. Somebody like Bob LaFortune says, "I've got some gum under there I know." All of those kids are men now, but they still recall that. It's always fun when they come in and show their grandkids.

**JE:** But you bought that from a fountain that was down on Boston?

**SS:** Yes, they closed and I bought it from them. The owner died and instead of me having to build one, they just moved it over into my store. I didn't have to build one or do anything.

**JE:** So that just happened as you were moving into your store?

**SS:** Yes. I got the ice cream machines and I got everything that goes with it. They almost gave it to me. We had a company here called Hawk's Ice Cream. It was really good ice cream. They moved it, put it in and hooked it up and never charged me a nickel. I only thing I had to buy was the ice cream. I didn't have to pay anything. That's another case of the kind of people we have in Tulsa. They didn't have to do that. They knew good and well I couldn't buy a new one, but they made the deal and they stayed with it.

**JE:** It was a great time then wasn't it?

**SS:** Yeah, it really was. Now you'll be talking to people about my age, so they'll be thinking of stories like that too.

**JE:** You could make deals on a handshake.

**SS:** Yes.

## Chapter 6—4:15

### Steve Survives

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**John Erling:** So we have the 1960s and some of the turmoil and the 1970s came along and it never affected your business at all. Your business continued to grow.

**Steve Stephenson:** I don't know how I did it. I didn't advertise and I wasn't a big donor.

**JE:** I guess some of it you can chalk up to magic. There was something about that. There still is, with your personality and the people you hired. You had to find a certain kind of person to do that.

**SS:** Yes. I've got a really good staff now. Joanie is running it. She is going to own it soon, when the time comes. She is walking in my footsteps. I tell her that she's taken it past where I have taken it. She has moved the store around and she's done a lot more technical stuff that I have never messed with.

**JE:** It's interesting that the store today, despite the fact that we do have Barnes & Noble

and all of those big chain stores—you are still surviving with your store. Why do you think that is?

**SS:** I can't think of any reason. I was just so scared that they were going to cut prices and run me out of business. They didn't even cut prices. I'll tell you one more story too. I met the president of a bookstore chain at a book convention. He offered to have a counsel with anybody if they had problems. Anyway, he had retired and we talked for about an hour. He pointed out to me that it's not the price. He said, "We're always going to have books at a discount. That's what we live on. But go back and check and see how many other books we have on sale for a special price that you carry and how many you don't. You'll find that discounting one or two books is all you need to do. You don't need to discount your whole store. Your bestsellers should beat your competition, but don't go nuts and go through your whole store marking stuff down." That helped a lot. I wasn't afraid. We just met him. It shows that people would rather buy the book from our place than someplace else.

**JE:** You provide a down-home Tulsa store. These other chains may come in with a bigger variety, there's no question about that, but there's not that homey feeling.

**SS:** Joanie has kept it that way.

**JE:** Here we are in 2009, when did you start pulling away from the business?

**SS:** About four or five years ago.

**JE:** You are 91 years old now, so about the time you were 86?

**SS:** Yes.

**JE:** It's interesting how the store continues to be successful.

**SS:** That is the biggest worry I have is that that would change.

**JE:** Who works there now?

**SS:** Joanie and Jerry—Jerry has been with me ever since he got out of high school. He didn't finish his last year of high school. I tried to make him go back and finish his last year and he wouldn't do it. He's not uneducated—he's a smart guy. Suzie is our buyer. She has been with me about 35 years. We've had about 10 bookkeepers over the years and the cooks have a lot of changeover.

**JE:** So there is still something special. You have to wonder, you are not there as much and the store is still successful. (Laughter)

**SS:** Yeah. I didn't expect for it to happen, but I am glad it does.

**JE:** I think that when you just walk in the store, we like that old feeling and it's familiar. I think that's why we like it. You're also in a good location. Some of these other big bookstores would love to have that location.

**SS:** I really expected them to try to buy me out several times. Some people came in and walked around and stuff, but I wouldn't sell out to a chain. I contracted with Joanie, which

I didn't need to do, but it made me feel good, that the store would always stay known as Steve's Sundry.

**JE:** Twenty-five years from now, when you are gone, it will still be Steve's Sundry. That's got to make you feel good.

**SS:** It does.

## Chapter 7—1:58

### Margaret Thatcher

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**John Erling:** Do you have any more stories to share of interesting things or highlights that may have happened to you in the store there?

**Steve Stephenson:** Well, it was when Margaret Thatcher came to Tulsa to talk to Rotary group or something. During the World War, Germany was about to get England, so England hired this oil company and they sent drillers over to the Sherman Forest. There was oil there, but England could not produce it. So Noble Oil went over and they saved England. They worked under (inaudible)—they lived with the natives, they did everything. When she came over, she wanted a copy of the book that told this story, but the book had gone out of print. Noble Oil published the book. They gave me all of the copies that they had left and I had them for about three or four years. She wanted that book but we couldn't find that hardback book for her. So I called OU Press and I asked them if they had it. They said they did have it and asked me why I needed it. I explained that Margaret Thatcher wanted a copy of the book. The man at OU Press explained that they always keep three copies of everything just in case and they agreed to send me one. So they sent me one and we got it to her.

**JE:** So you were able to give it to her?

**SS:** No, I wasn't very happy about that. He gave it to her and he never gave us any credit for helping track it down for her. He never mentioned Steve's Sundry or anything.

**JE:** Oh. Were you a reader of books down through the years?

**SS:** I don't read books.

**JE:** (Laughter)

**SS:** That's the truth. I'm always embarrassed when people ask me about it. I always say, "I sell them, I don't read them."

**JE:** (Laughter).

**SS:** It's like owning a liquor store and not drinking. But I read all of Michael Wallis' books.

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**Chapter 8—1:35****Local Authors**

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**John Erling:** Talk to us about how you would help local authors.

**Steve Stephenson:** We always gave anybody who wrote a book in Tulsa County a signing. It would get their story in the paper on Sunday and that was a good thing for them. It would encourage them because it's so difficult to get a signing as well as a publisher. We helped a lot of people out with that. Bill Bernhardt and Michael Wallis are two of our favorite authors. We helped them get started. They have both now become very popular authors.

**JE:** Did you tell me earlier that a lot of Tulsa women were writing love novels?

**SS:** This was during the era when every woman thought that she could write a book. We would get all of these paperback romance and love books. There were three or four authors that I can't recall their names now, but they went on to become big writers. We had signings and the authors would invite their friends and family to come and have their books signed and to visit with them. Sometimes there were more family there at the store than customers, but it's a big deal to get a signing let alone to get published. They felt very good about that.

**JE:** What percentage of your income came from the food bar?

**SS:** Twenty-five percent.

**JE:** That's significant.

**SS:** Yes, that's why I keep it.

**JE:** Yeah, you can't change anything now.

**SS:** No.

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**Chapter 9—3:04****Steve's Success**

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**John Erling:** So to summarize, why do you think you, Steve Stephenson, were successful?

**Steve Stephenson:** Well, I really don't know. So many things have been good to me that I didn't expect. I don't know if you believe in the hereafter, but that's the only guy I talk to every once in awhile.

**JE:** Steve, I think you could have been successful in any business. It could have been a hardware store—it could have been anything.

**SS:** Oh yeah. I didn't even know how to open a bookstore, but a newspaper distributor here helped me put it in. He just came in one day and he said, "Did you know we carry books?" I said, "No." He said, "Well, we do and we can put them in your store on consignment. You get the books in your store and they are guaranteed. What you don't sell, you send back. You should sell books in here." He told me it was just like selling magazines except that the profit was different.

**JE:** Is there more profit in magazines or books?

**SS:** It's really the volume, but magazines are about 15% and books are about 40%.

**JE:** So they put in the books at your first store at 12th & Harvard?

**SS:** Yes, and the magazines the same way.

**JE:** So somebody just came in one day and said you should sell magazines?

**SS:** Yes.

**JE:** You have lived a blessed life haven't you?

**SS:** Well, that's why I say everything good has happened to me. I don't know whom else to thank.

**JE:** The man upstairs.

**SS:** Yes, I still use him.

**JE:** (Laughter) Yes we do. You've got to say something about Tulsa because this town has also been good to you.

**SS:** I can give you examples of that. Tulsa Public Schools buys books from us. We started that. The librarian at Holland Hall came over one day and asked if they could work out something where we would buy their books for them and so we worked it out. We gave them a 25% discount and now we have Tulsa Public Schools. One of the big bookstores that was located right across from Holland Hall out on 81st Street said they were going to go after Holland Hall and get their books. They went over there and just practically gave their books to them and they cut us off. But we didn't get angry at Holland Hall—we just went on our way. A little bit after Christmas, when you normally get your schoolbooks in, they didn't have them in. Holland Hall had to scramble around to find their books and that took care of that and we got that business back.

**JE:** That's great.

**SS:** There's another story, one time there was one book that AP students at public schools had to have. I called around and I had to order a whole bunch of them. The publisher asked what I needed so many for. I told him I was ordering them for a school. They required a down payment because I ordered so many.

**Chapter 10—3:52****People Liked Steve**

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**John Erling:** Back in the 1960s, when people would come in and they couldn't afford a book, would you start a charge account for them?

**Steve Stephenson:** For a long time we gave people a charge account. Not everybody, but we gave them to a lot of people. That's the way that we got our higher-class business. We allowed their children to come in and charge on their account and we would send them a bill once a month.

**JE:** Your business thrived. Did you go out and become a member of The Chamber of Commerce?

**SS:** Yes. I belonged to The Chamber of Commerce, but I didn't attend. I should have attended it more. I never attended anything except the Rotary Club.

**JE:** But did you interact with Carey Clarke of Clarke's Good Clothes, or Brown & Duncan, or Bishop's Drive-in?

**SS:** No, I didn't associate with any of them. I wasn't in their same financial range. They were in a higher class than me.

**JE:** No, nobody is higher class than you, Steve.

**SS:** I did tell Joanie when Joanie took over that she should get out and get into these places, because you can get a lot of extra business that way. People ask me why I didn't do it more. I didn't do it because I didn't like to go out and talk my friends into buying something. But she does that. She goes out and does that.

**JE:** Yes, I've seen her out. We should mention that here at 91 years old, you have a tennis match scheduled for this afternoon, don't you?

**SS:** Yes.

**JE:** Where did you pick up playing tennis?

**SS:** High school I guess.

**JE:** Were you on the tennis team in school?

**SS:** Yes. I didn't play in college—I had to work. Then I started playing again.

**JE:** Playing tennis kept you active and you are good at it. Here you are at 91 years old—did you ever think that you would live to be this age?

**SS:** No, I didn't.

**JE:** How do you think you made it this far? Is it your lifestyle?

**SS:** Oh, I think it's my lifestyle. I always exercised. I'm not good at sports particularly. I play tennis and that's about all. It's hard to stop playing. At the same time I decided that I had

better quit driving because I was having some trouble. That's been about three or four months ago now. That's hard to overcome.

**JE:** I bet it is.

**SS:** My wife is very good and very nice. She drives me everywhere I want to go, or David will take me.

**JE:** You had children?

**SS:** Yes, we had two boys.

**JE:** Where are they?

**SS:** Rick is a professor in charge of his department in Rolla, Missouri. David, my younger son is a minister in Skiatook. He's doing well up there. They both got college educations.

**JE:** Did they work in the store ever?

**SS:** Just on weekends and during vacations from school.

**JE:** Did they become big readers?

**SS:** Yes, they both do, especially Rick. I think David reads quite a bit. I know that Joanie does, so I am sure that he does too. My wife is a constant reader.

**JE:** Your wife Hazel?

**SS:** Yes.

**JE:** Steve, I just want to thank you for visiting with us. It must be gratifying that, you know—you can put magazines and books on a shelf but somehow you brought them all to life with your personality. You are always smiling. It's fun kidding with you, all of those kinds of things. People probably enjoy seeing you as much as coming in to buy the magazines or books.

**SS:** They would bring their kids too. I used to sit over there and read them a funny (comic) play with their toys and people appreciated it.

**JE:** Many, many people, who have moved all across the country now, can remember you and going into Steve's Sundry. That's got to make you feel good.

**SS:** Yes it does.

**JE:** Thank you Steve!

**SS:** Thank you!

**Chapter 11—0:31****Conclusion**

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**Announcer:** Steve Stephenson has left behind a story of success that was built on a relationship with people rather than the transaction. As you've just heard, Steve's Sundry Magazines and Books at 26th & Harvard in Tulsa, Oklahoma, changed peoples' lives. Readers and authors are grateful for his dream of owning his own business. Steve Stephenson is another unique Oklahoman whose story is preserved thanks to the generous gifts from our sponsors on [VoicesofOklahoma.com](http://VoicesofOklahoma.com)