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ORAL HISTORY  
2015-36

Interview with Leda Cruger on October 15, 2015 by Karen Brewster in a classroom at the old University Park School in Fairbanks, Alaska during a session of an Osher Life Long Learning "Appetizer" course (HIS-07) titled "Interior Alaska Riverboat Racing: A Tradition Evolves."

Leda is a board member of the Fairbanks Outboard Association and currently is their treasurer. Although she is currently not racing, Leda is one of the younger boat captains, and one of the few (if not the first) female captains. She works for the Tanana Chiefs Conference in an administrative position with their Community Health Aide Program.

In this interview, Leda talks about her experiences riverboat racing. She talks about growing up in Galena where she learned about river travel from her family, and maintaining and repairing boat and snowmachine engines from her brothers. She discusses how she got involved in riverboat racing and learning from Wes Alexander, Sr. and Wes Alexander, Jr. She describes buying her own riverboat, first being a crewmember, and learning how to be a captain. She also tells stories about fears, disappointments, challenges and excitement of different races. She talks about being a woman in a man's world of boat racing, and the support and encouragement she's received from other racers. Finally, she discusses the thrill of racing and encourages others to get involved.

Yukon 800 series