

Gary: welcome back to the Sunday review with us again today Alan Donovan hopes of kitchen table conversations

Alan: good morning Gary
how are you

Gary: Alan a pleasure to have you here and I'm well thanks and you are well doing

Alan: yes I am really well thanks

Gary: you're a continuing series with the Oneonta icon Sam Nader

Alan: yes and today we're going to be talking with Sam about his career as a politician and the days when he was in mayor and other elected official positions that he held in years past

Gary: when I first came to Oneonta Sam was mayor and but I'll let you pick that story up

Alan: yes and here we go with Sam let's talk about Sam the Republican

Sam: Sam Republican

Alan: 1949

Sam: 1949 I was republican when I got involved with a baseball you know I was doing the PE they put me on the board of directors for the Oneonta Red Sox because anyway I did mostly PA work in anyway Joe Malin re was interested in become supreme court judge and this democratic area so he kicked down the house he had befriended my family he was the lawyer my parents lawyer whenever they need did anything and all they go to Joe Monterey

Joe Malin Terry was the big girl for the foreign people and so Joe came down and he said to my brother says I want you to be the Republican chairman for the six board and he said Sam I want you to run for Alderman he wanted to get strength of the Republican Party and offer us we're all Democrats but we'll reel off so well I ran as a Republican and I and I and my my opponent was Myron brazier and he was a supervisor boss I'm on the railroad he was a nice man red breaks or anything very popular and this was a pretty much democratic you know Jerry but I went house the house and I have my my friend Tony and I love who would who I grew up with and so on came a major in the Army Air Force and Tony he rent a house the house to his old goose pate for customers and but I went house to house and and very nice pretty good night and I I won the Republican Alderman ship but I got to tell you this I called on mrs. system member system store and the systems had a big store and paying up to another day they live they lived on lower Main Street one of those nice houses still there systems her son-in-law was Albert Evie ball insurance got you those names probably recall but anyway so I called on her and she said she said well your your opponent I said I don't know much mine I didn't face it I don't know much about my opponent everybody says he's a he's very popular and everybody says he's a pretty good guy that's about all I can tell you about him but I'm not here to talk about my opponent I'm here to talk about myself and I think I could be a good representative for this board and and so Election Day in those days you

know he's standing by the hip you're 90 feet away or whatever the proper district

Alan: what was the voting

Sam: the voting was at Mitchell Street School where Nader

towers is now

Alan: okay

Sam: voting was in Mitchell Street school and so you know my brother organized and we had and we've got we probably had gotten 50 people at least jobs at Bendix that's it you know rolling I ladies the colognes array and so on but but anyway so come come election day and I'm standing my proper distance my point Myron Brady read standing there with me and Miss assistant comes up she would bite and she hit she sees she said she said to read Brady she said she said you didn't say very many nice things about your opponent and she says and uh but he he never sent a bad word about you and think she went in the falls but I never forget that and that was always my my policy I never would talk about but anyway so I wanted in those days you know alderman and didn't pay anything you know so I won I was elected three times as all of them

Aln: that close elections for you've won by pretty good

Sam: I won by pretty good margins every time

Alan: later on they were closer

Sam: yeah well later on then then then I wanted to become mayor I was so I ran for a sister because I figured well I knew how I would spend the money in

Alan: accessor was a citywide office

Sam: assessor
right yeah so I I ran for accessor and I was elected sister for a couple of terms and but then I wanted to figured I wanted to become mayor have we always supported Roger Hughes and so on and so I saw the Republican nomination and they they said they gave me the nominations but they didn't work for me they they said they couldn't get me over the railroad tracks so anyway so I lost in the primary
I lost not in the primary but then Paul Talbot who was our asunder one Republican someone named chairman the Agriculture Committee he he appointed me as a legislative assistant for one year and I tried to Sydney I tried to Albany over every Monday night
Talbot insisted that is these people just didn't get the money it was about I made a thousand dollars

Alan: long driving
those days

Sam: yeah oh yeah absolutely Rob seven

Alan: yes

Sam: right but I would go there for the Monday night session while they were in session and so then I wanted to run for for a Merrigan and they again they couldn't get the nomination so I formed my own party now

tell about that tell us
about doc Harrison
dr. Carson

Sam: dr. Carson really dedicated
he was an excellent surgeon from what
standing from a professional standpoint
he was uh he was the first who's uh he
was a Democrat and he was the first
democratic mayor in a long time during
the end of the war and warriors and and
and he was a Roman Catholic in which was
on you you know and but he was an
excellent very dedicated public servant
he dr. Carson always told me said Sam
don't put anything under the ground I
never remembered for it you're gonna
have anything built make sure it's on
top of the ground but he was a human
excellent excellent
man you friended me when I first ran for
alderman he he was the he was the mayor
right he was the mayor and I never
forget one I was was campaigning he
stopped and you're gonna give us a
pretty good run young man Isis I really
run my eyes so then I'm gonna win you
never forgot that

Alan: Sam you said you would
drive down River Street people would say
go get him Sam

Sam: oh Jesus when I ran
when I ran for mayor there to come out
of their house today's the day I'll tell
you it made you cry I'll tell you yes
yes

Alan: where did you get the ideas a good
government party

Sam: well they wouldn't
nominate me so I formed my own party and
I called it the good government party

and the Democrats didn't have a candidate so so dr. Carson you know he said you considered accepting the Democratic nomination absolutely who's that party well as far as I've been concerned I always felt that way then I always felt that way now and so on party didn't mean a heck of a lot to me it was the individual the voting for the individual on the local level what does party amount to that I could be nothing I never forget what one of the guys that I had supported for supervisor Paul McCoy he didn't vote for me for four when I ran for the Democratic because of the Bay of Pigs believe that

Alan: sure

Sam: yeah he said I can't vote for a Democrat because of the bad big places hey Paul well the bad things got to do with only Allah you know

Alan: so the first race from there that was a close one right

Sam: that was the close one that I won by 19 votes I won by 19 votes and then they had or they asked for a recount I know I I think as I said I won by 13 and then the recount I gained six votes

Alan: you did pretty well in the sixth Ward

Sam: I did pretty well in the sixth Lord I had about 90% of the vote yes

Alan: so you came across the tracks

Sam: I got

it they said they couldn't get me across
the track I never came across the tracks
right that's right yeah
and then the second time both parties
nominated me but then again
Roger Hughes who had been the mayor won
the run again he said that you know
people ought to have a choice all of a
sudden and so he ran against me in the
Republican primary and he'll I couldn't
want a Republican primary and he beat me
in the primary so I'm the Democratic
candidate and I'd beat him pretty
handily

Alan: you and he were lifetime friends
weren't you

Sam: I'm sorry

Alan: you're good
friends with Roger

Sam: we were good friends
I think I supported him it I supported
him and when he started his political
career and campaigned for him absolutely

Alan: the golfing buddies too right

Sam: huh

Alan: golf together

Sam: no no no bill Hugh's still here

Alan: get the right

Sam: yeah

Alan: they were
brothers or cousins

Sam: no no no really like

Bill right yeah

Alan: so your mayor for
for two terms

Sam: I was mayor for eight
years I had the first four-year term

Alan: so you're elected mayor and as I was

saying you did a lot of good things when
you were mayor tell me about some of you
were Catholics

Sam: well one of the things
I'm really had the airport built

Alan: yes 1965

Sam: the 1965 that was important in my
in my opinion was I thought it was
important then I think it's important
now and for a while we had Catskill
Airways and that we had serviced in the
arc we had service to I think to Boston
well I think that if you're gonna be in
the 20th century you sure as heck have
to have an airport and I was very proud
of the airport during my administration
the expansion of the state
university colleges came about them so
we had to extend our water and our sewer
lines our streets and so on and there
was a program called the accelerated
Public Works program was under John F
Kennedy
when I heard about the program I
established one of the things you had to
have you had to have capital budget
planning commission which we made
sure that was on my agenda we had the
capital budget planning commission and I
not commission I had I well that's sir
I had Fred binder I had alpha rome had
dr. Carson ID Herald her Gras sterling

Herrick and I had the Dan vault sit
pretty much the powers in the in the
community and dr. Carson would say to me
says tell us what you have won and I'll
make sure that we get a resolution from
the capital budgeting Planning
Commission that effect even though my
council was divided and so on and so we
passed the things that we wanted so when
they announced the program I took
my City Attorney
I took my city channeling Tom Natoli and
we went down to New York and we met with
a guy named I Frank trying to cost time
never forget that he had a doctor
program drove down to the federal
building
we took the city seal
I said I'm here for the accelerated
Public Works program he says we just
just about announced that I said I know
that he said well he said you have to
have resolutions Isis if you got a
typewriter if you have a typewriter
and I have my City Attorney in the
city steel and I have the resolutions so
anyway we put our applications in

Alan: just in time

Sam: just in time I'm trying that gotsta
City you've never heard such thing
anyway to make a long story short the
city of Oneonta got more money under the
excel degree accelerated Public Works
program than any city in the state of
New York with the exception Rochester
Buffalo Yonkers and

Alan: all much bigger so
that's water and sewage treatment and so
forth

Sam: right and we fix up our streets
Bugbee Road and another Street that we
fixed up was the going up to Harwick

College that was the dead man's good corner or whatever really called it and so on

Alan: with the wall

Sam: with the wall is right and also leading up to the college's and we fixed the West Street and it honored my administration we expanded our parks

Alan: Wilbert they go a note

Sam: we've built a charter and we I was able to to bring into the city of only out some ministry Corning was was brought in the only island here in my administration gliding corporation of build a building down here which was a very prominent manufacturer in the for a while

Alan: expressway?

Sam: gladdy and custom electronics
And

Alan: talk about the expressway that was important too

Sam: expressway we pushed for the expressway and learned during my administration they they pretty much adopt it where it was going to be and adopted where that it was going to go around on in I wasn't going to at one time you know they had it going through maple streets in that area there and so on so we had that deep tour and we made sure that we built that we had it built so I think that we had also assured ourselves with some flood control because of the six board was continuing

to being flooded and I think that served as a kind of a barrier between the river and our lowlands here at the end of six reward

Alan: the one of the plants for Nader towers begin

Sam: the one of the things I advocated was housing for the elderly I wasn't lynching low-cost housing or middle because I was in housing for the elderly he's like three everybody is middle class anymore the turnout they make charger in the jar and so I established a Housing Authority and we got a their towers was built we started urban renewal and that was a very controversial thing still very controversial but nevertheless it was me that our buildings were deteriorating we had a building on the corner of Main in Chestnut Street the old Opera House is on and so under urban renewal we we upgraded some of those things that we got that part of the parking garage

Alan: a bit of praise when he finished his mayor quite a bit of praise from the council and a lot of other people

Sam: yeah we renewed that we upgraded the Charter we can't remember all we have pretty pretty upbeat administration

Alan: did you ever think of running for other kinds of offices you know

Sam: well I thought at one time about running for the assembly and I could have gotten nomination for that but Alan I had it I had to feed my

family I had a and I became director of purchasing from the Bendix corporation which was a pretty darn good job and very you know very time-consuming job meant a lot of travel for me to be with vendors and subcontractors and establish all of these things and so on so I would have had taken a leave of absence with no assurance that if you know if I got knocked out of the box in this in this Republican area here that I'm sure the Bendix would have taken me back but I would not have gone back as a director personally and so you have to have the type of a job or activity and that's why the lawyers were in there you can do that

Alan: how long director of purchasing at Bendix

Sam: I'm sorry how long I worked I worked for Bendix for 42 years the best employer I ever had best employer anybody could ever had have they were outstanding and the Swiss original people there were friended me and supported me they're extremely good me and my family I got to tell you this has nothing to do with this but but anyway my brother but rest his soul my we're diabetics and my family mice I lost my brother I lost my sister Adele and my niece diabetes my brother died I he was on a dialysis machine and I used to take him to Albany once a week you know it was the only place they had a dialysis machine and so on you know early in the morning driving Albany saw him but anyway my my brother was a supervisor there my brother believed they were paying it for 60 minutes you oughta least give him 59 minutes and work he believed that with

all of his heart he was the most honest man and that I ever knew and he believes in law Hammurabi you really did he yeah what guy steals slap his hand the first time second time slap his other hand third time that's the hand off you believe that and you know what the longer I live sometimes I wonder if maybe if maybe he wasn't right but anyway when when he was supervisor there man by the name of Donald Jones came and he graduated the Cornell industrial school

Labor Relations school and he started under my brother and you know my brother you know what he was going to but you're up to but they were putting him through the steps and meet work he started working from our brother and my brother told I mean all he says you know if the painter for 60 minutes at least you ought to give him 50 and so on and so forth in the sister down anyway my brother got on the dialysis machine he was he exhausted all of his sick leave and so you know concern after all you had a family and so in order to extend that they had to go through corporate headquarters in Southfield Michigan by that time Dom Jones had become gone he'd become our general manager and had been promoted on to a corporate position at South field so they went down Jones and down Jones came back and he says as long as Nate Nader is alive he will be on the Bendix payroll these are broken under him you know very few companies would view that in and when I want to run for Mayor you know after all I had to make sure

well you're going to jeopardize my job so I went to George Steiner who was the general manager and because they kept saying in on I'm I'm working Sidney how can I be the mayor of only on well so

you know they use the same thing yes
again John and so and so
Mr. Steiner issued a statement that
whatever time was needed for me to do
the job at the city of only honor would
be provided to be and so on and so forth
so I work for a great company and
those people were good to me but I
worked 42 years for them I started off
at 35 cents an hour and in the
inspection department then and I wound
up this director 30c

Gary: so it appeared the
same we got great support from his
employer during his tenure as mayor

Alan: yes
he certainly did and that was an
important factor in his consideration to
run

Gary: and so next week part 4

Alan: part 4 deals
with the salmon baseball in Oneonta and
as many of you may remember he was
originally responsible for bringing
baseball to oneonta the minor league
team

Gary: 1967 the oneonta red socks there

Alan: they were

Gary: Alan thank you so much

Alan: you're welcome you're welcome