

HOPE ON THE RIVER

THE BOOK TOUR

www.hopeontheriver.com

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

1. **If you could tell your younger self anything, what would it be?** Take a raft down the river when you 17, 27, 37 or 47 – don't wait until you're 57 and your body requires more time to recover!
2. **What inspired you to embark on such a journey down the Mississippi River?** We needed something to spur more donations to Spare Key when COVID-19 began shutting down the economy. Sometimes the best ideas come from desperation and that's where this idea came from. Nearly every single fundraising event we had scheduled was cancelled due to the global pandemic and this event became our way of staying in people's thoughts and to raise awareness of who we are and what we do.
3. **What's your favorite under-appreciated novel?** "The Road" by Cormac McCarthy. You can consider the end of the world to be a hopeless dystopia where you are looking out for nobody but yourself, or you can look at the end of the world being the place where humanity truly rises to its place in the Universe. I chose, and choose, the latter. Where hope is lost, all is lost. Hope is ultimately never lost in "The Road"
4. **What kind of research/how did you prepare before starting your journey down the Mississippi?** I talked to the experts about the river – the people who live and work on it every day. They were the people who understood not just its beauty and majesty but also its danger and complexity. I could have spent a lifetime reading and researching everything or I could spend my time listening to those who have spent a lifetime on the river. In the end, the people I listened to were the greatest source of information I found every single day.
5. **What is your favorite passage from the book?** Easy. It's the speech that my son, Owen, wrote and read at the launch ceremony for my trip on August 27th, 2020. It made me cry then, it still makes me cry.
6. **What was your favorite spot along the river that you stopped at?** My favorite spot along the river was Kimmswick, Missouri. It's where I met Captain Michael Coyle who helped me down the river after I left Hoppie's Marina. It was also where my brother, Karl, joined me on the raft to successfully complete the "Hope on the River" journey.
7. **Would you recommend this journey down the river to others?** Yes BUT some caveats. Don't take the kind of raft I took down the river. Make sure you listen to

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people who are experts about the river. Ask for help, take the help and thank people for their help. Respect the river, the boats and the people on it and they will, in return, respect you. Treat the trip seriously and prepare yourself and make sure that you find time every day to be grateful for the privilege to be traveling on the river throughout the greatest country in the world.

8. **Do you see yourself writing more books in the future?** I have been writing books for decades. It's the finishing them that's the challenge! Yes, I have a couple of books that are close to completion – one is a fiction story and the other is a collection of things I have written over the years.
9. **What was one of the most surprising things you learned in your adventure down the river?** It was a lot of physical work! Every single day I was doing something physical whether it was removing the Plexiglass windows from the raft, hauling gas cans up and down docks, bending over the rear of the raft to pump water out of the pontoons or standing up for 10 hours a day. I would be both physically and mentally exhausted at the end of each day!
10. **What do you think makes a good story?** A great storyteller!
11. **As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?** Somebody.
12. **What aspects of your own life helped inspire your writing?** I am, at my core, an optimist. I believe that people are inherently good. I love America, I believe in American Exceptionalism, and I am proud to be an American. I am defined in my life by my family, my country, my faith in God and most of all, in my belief that as long as there is breath in my body and it can move from Point A to Point B there's a chance I can succeed.
13. **What can readers hope to learn from this book?** Not learn, but be reminded: America is great, filled with great American people, and we live in the most profoundly important country in the world.
14. **What is the best thing you have accomplished in life so far?** Being a Dad
15. **Where do you see yourself in 5 years?** On another adventure somewhere in the world!
16. **What were the challenges you faced when writing this book?** Time. There's NEVER enough time!
17. **What does success mean to you?** Being more happy than unhappy every day.
18. **Will you be writing more books in the future?** Writing, yes. Finishing them, we will see!