

Chris Floyd, 6 Garden (2023-11-29 15_07 GMT-7)

Fri, Dec 01, 2023 4:38PM • 17:29

Transcription edits completed by Jess Crowley, 12.13.23

****Of note, interview started quickly and the recording missed the beginning of story.****

Chris Flyod (C.)

Dave (D)

< beginning and closure of individual's speak time >

00:00

Chris:

Yeah, that, that's just changed here . . .

Dave:

Right.

Chris:

. . . in the area. But, but then, you know, also then raising kids here, you know, and, and when I talk to them, like

00:14

they like the sort of idea of, you know, like, visiting other places, but I think they all also kind of have like, they, a lot of them say they'd love to still be in Broomfield when they, you know, when they grow up, move out, you know, settle down like, you know at least that's, that's how they picture, you know, their lives too. So, so clearly for them it's a pleasant place to be and feels like home.

Dave:

Yeah, Broomfield has that sense of comfort for a lot of folks I think- Yeah, it's cool. So and tell me maybe just a little bit more about your, your kids and what you were just mentioning how you're feeling like it's great to raise a family here, that sort of thing. What's that experience like?

00:59

Chris:

Yeah. Well, four kids, so relatively large family, we filled our house

01:06

pretty well. Oldest is 22.

01:12

And youngest is 14. Ah, 15, pardon me. And so, only one in high school at this point. He's a sophomore, the youngest.

01:27

One that just started school up at CU; one going to Front Range. All of them, essentially, still at home, except the one who's up in the dorms at CU. So again, it's

01:40

a full house. But yeah,

01:45

I mean, I think their experiences have really been shaped by the schools here.

01:51

They-

01:53

We live right over by the high school and actually very close to both the middle school and the high school. So, Broomfield Heights, Kohl/Broomfield Heights. And Broomfield High School is where most of them have gone, although, actually the older ones did a few years at Nativity of Our Lord here, which was the parish that I grew up in, and that's where I went to school. So I went there for all eight years, first to eighth grade. And we started sending them there; it turned out to be more expensive than we could afford, especially as we added more and more kids.

02:30

So, I think public schools have been incredible for them, especially as neurodivergent kids to a large extent.

02:42

You know, I think they got a lot of accommodations that they otherwise wouldn't have gotten. And

02:50

they've, I think in a lot of ways they've flourished living in Brookfield.>

D: <That's awesome. Did you go to Brookfield High School, then?>

03:03

C: < No, I ended up, I went to high school, ah, all Catholic schools for me. So Nativity, and I went to high school at Regis High School, (D: okay), which was

03:15

an interesting year, 90 to 94.

03:20

They moved. They were on the campus of Regis University. They were part of Regis University but then they got a grant with some land all the way down in Aurora. I drove from here, Broomfield, to Aurora every day and back- 40 miles back and forth every day for school because it was an all boys school at the time, no longer, but it was an all boys school; every male member of my family, both sides of my family, had gone to Regis for two or three generations. Yeah. And it was just hard

03:53

for my parents to imagine me and my brother going anywhere else. So that's what we did, yeah.

04:00

So I went there. And then Gonzaga University up in Spokane, that's a Jesuit school up there. So yeah.

04:09

That was my schooling experience. So the public school is actually very different. I think I went to Kohl for kindergarten because they didn't have a kindergarten but

04:19

otherwise, yeah, like,

04:22

I've done a lot of things that like for my child, like, I just sort of assumed- you know, the things and the way my life went was how my kids' would, so I was like, let's put him into Nativity at first, and it became a thing that wasn't sustainable. But, and again, overall probably for the better,

04:46

getting into the public school community and the kids being part of the public school communities, did take a little bit of a shift in my mentality and bigger schools than the ones that I had gone to.>

05:01

D: < Yeah, it's interesting. I guess. I went to Regis for an MBA. Regis University. But yeah, that's

05:10

an interesting school journey there for sure. So I'd love to hear maybe just a little bit more about your experience as a video game designer,

05:18

and just kind of what that has looked like. What side of video game design do you do? I had a buddy who was like more on the side of like, he was just a project manager. Which you could do anywhere- right. But like, what's your role?>

C: < Yeah, well, it's, I've done a lot of different things. You know,

05:39

the nature of the industry in Colorado specifically, it's not one of the big centers for game development. That'd be LA, San Francisco, maybe Seattle, some places in the northeast, or where there's a lot of

studios and there you can start doing a particular kind of work. And then there's always some studio probably looking for someone doing/specializing in something, but I've never really specialized because there's only been a few studios at a time around the area. And so,

06:12

the first company I started working for, they specialized in what are called MMOs, massively multiplayer online games. These are games with hundreds of players at once, all in the same world. And this was really when that term was first coined- 1999. So that was before most of the well known games in that genre had been released.

06:37

So yeah, that was one particular type of design, those projects are large, and they take,

06:45

they take many, many years to build.

06:50

But then I shifted directions and found something else and went to a different studio that was in Louisville called Idol Minds, where they were making console games. And in fact, were making this very small,

07:09

very silly game about putting a guy in a giant slingshot and launching it into a city and letting him get hit by cars, like cartoon violence, and so on. And I was excited to work on this tiny game. And so, I went from doing like- there's lots of different areas of game design. You don't need to get, probably, way into it. But I went from doing a lot of

07:30

systems, design mechanics, game rules, and crunching numbers and things like that,

07:36

to then doing level design, which is more about buildings, spaces, a little bit more visual and artistic. And so I've bounced around on a lot of things, eventually leading the design on projects.

07:51

And hiring teams and leading the projects. So yeah, I've really been fortunate. And I think I describe myself as sort of a jack of all trades in game design, actually because I've had an opportunity to do just about everything and work on all the different platforms that are out there; whether it's consoles, PCs, handheld, mobile. Yeah, so, just happens, I'm sort of pretty rare. And in the industry I'm somebody who's kind of done a bit of everything at all.>

D: < That's, that's really cool. And that you've done it for a long, I mean 99... >

C: < Yeah, It's pretty much consistently for 25 years, basically. >

D: < It's amazing.

08:34

Yeah, so

08:37

I'm just curious about, kind of that piece of, how you've seen game design, and maybe studios change over time. What does that look like? And...>

08:49

C:< yeah, it's interesting.

08:53

The industry here has been- it was always kind of isolated.

09:00

And sort of doing its own thing. And most of the studios I work for, I guess have been-

09:05

they fluctuated with sort of their fortunes, in terms of the size. But they've been kind of what we'd consider mid-sized studios, always- nothing enormous. Maybe 100 people-ish, at most; sometimes like a dozen, or something like that. But that's all kind of considered in the sort of medium range- to studios that are hundreds of people, obviously, and even projects with hundreds of people on them.

09:36

How has it changed? Like..

09:40

I think what I've seen a lot of it's just been driven by

09:47

the technology generally because so much has changed since I started- things like mobile devices and touch screens showing up as

10:00

One input that didn't exist before that changes game designer VR now, which is what I do now.

10:08

Those are just big technology changes that suddenly force you to think in different ways, and changes how projects are built. And then, like I mentioned, we've had really everyone- it seems to me just about everybody- started to open up and go online working remotely. Now that's more and more possible; that would have seemed crazy 5 or 10 years ago, you know, to run a project that way,

10:37

but it makes a lot of sense now, and seems like it's kind of sticking so...

10:44

And, yeah, I like that. I mean, it opens up your opportunities for where you can work again. Especially if you want to- I don't want to leave Colorado again. I certainly don't want to go to LA or something like that. So being able to still live and work in Broomfield, but work for nearly any company out there, is an incredible opportunity that just came along since the pandemic basically.>

D: <Right, right. Yeah, that's absolutely a big change and shift and how people get things done. And

11:17

yeah, that's, that's really neat.

11:19

So what are some of the things that you're maybe excited about for the future of Broomfield? You could even make it very specific to your family. Yeah, what are you looking forward to?>

11:31

C: <Oh, I don't know. I mean, so I started

11:37

volunteering as a member of the Arts/History/Cultural Council, several years ago, during the pandemic, at the end of the pandemic, it was the public art committee at the time. And then I think it got folded into the arts, history Cultural Council.

11:54

So there's projects there and getting to see some of those- the city center project and things like that- that are rolling; when I think about those things coming together while my kids are growing up becoming adults now really,

12:10

and imagining some big changes like that, I think that's pretty exciting. It's always seemed to me that one thing about Broomfield that I guess you can think of as sort of a disadvantage is that it never had a long history that a few places around here have. Like, if you look at Louisville that has their like old town, or Arvada, those places have these longer histories. And what, we cropped up in the 50s or 60s some time? And, you know, my neighborhood was built in the 70s. So

12:49

you don't have that old, like downtown history or anything. But that means we're building that history, I guess. And think about places like Nativity that has been there on Midway since I think the late 60s, probably maybe earlier, and

13:10

there are some areas that now have some history. And, it's like spending as much time as I have here, it does sort of feel like you get to see that happening.

13:28

So, so yeah, you know. What

13:32

do I see

13:35

for Broomfield? I mean, it's obviously become a- we think of it a little differently, I think, since it became a county- how it sort of stretches out to other neighborhoods, and there's enough to it that it feels like all the different parts of Broomfield now. And that's pretty cool for the diversity I think it brings and,

13:59

what it means for us as a as a community, but

14:07

like I say, with kids who can at least imagine themselves being here in Broomfield for themselves

14:16

or nearby for a long time, it's cool to think that there will continue to be changes and they'll get to experience those.>

D: <Yeah, that's great.

14:26

I want to go back to something you mentioned earlier, when you talked about how you were born here in Broomfield; you lived in Broomfield and you stayed here in Broomfield after you came back from university.

14:38

But do you know why your parents ended up in Broomfield? Like what their story is? >

14:44

C: < I mean, they grew up in Denver.

14:47

And

14:50

they had let's see, they lived in

14:54

part of Denver, kind of by City Park, I think, which was I think where my

15:00

mom grew up and then

15:02

they had a place down there. And my, my brother who's couple years older than me- also adopted- they adopted him in

15:10

74, and lived down there in Denver. And my dad was

15:18

a teacher, he was a special education teacher for 30- more than more than 30 years in

15:26

Boulder Valley Schools. So he taught up at Casey, at the time it was called Casey Junior High, and it was Casey Middle School up in Boulder, and a few other schools in Boulder Valley. But I think he had probably just started that career? Maybe even was still going to school at UNC to get his teaching certificate? And I think my family started to raise a family. I think that suburban life just seemed maybe a little better, maybe more affordable. I don't know exactly. And again, I don't know if like he was in school up in Greeley, or maybe it was working in Boulder, might have made sense for them to come this direction, you know, here, basically halfway between Denver where their family was and Boulder where my dad was working. So I think that's why they came here.

16:23

Yeah, so I've got, you know, pictures. So then I was born in Denver, but they were- I think moved into our house here in Broomfield, probably not for very long when I was adopted in 76. >

D: < Okay, yeah. That neighborhood would have been pretty new. >

C: < Yeah, it definitely was built in the 70s. I don't know exactly what year our house was built, but it was definitely early 70s.>

16:50

D: < Was is just south of the high school or?

C: < It is pretty much directly West High School. Yea off of Miramonte. Yeah. So yeah. So I think there was one other owner of the house before that. I remember my- was talking about that so- there must been fellows there for not too too long before they ended up moving in. >

D: < Interesting. Cool. Awesome. Well, thank you so much. Is there anything else that we didn't talk about or that we missed? You wanted to mention or?>

17:17

C: <No, I don't know. I think that's was pretty good.>

D: < Great. Chris. It's been a pleasure speaking with you. Thank you so much. >

C: <Yeah, thanks. Yeah, my pleasure. >