

# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Taylor Pensoneau

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library

*Illinois Statecraft* Oral History project

Interview # ISG-A-L-2009-007

Taylor Pensoneau, a former Illinois statehouse reporter for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch and lobbyist for the Illinois Coal Association, was interviewed on the dates listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Illinois Statecraft – Jim Edgar* Oral History project.

#### Interview dates & location:

Date: March 11, 2009	Location: Taylor residence in New Berlin, IL
Date: March 20, 2009	Location: Taylor residence in New Berlin, IL
Date: March 26, 2009	Location: Taylor residence in New Berlin, IL
Date: April 17, 2009	Location: Taylor residence in New Berlin, IL
Date: May 4, 2009	Location: Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Date: Mar 12, 2010	Location: Taylor residence in New Berlin, IL

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Mark R. DePue, ALPL volunteer

Transcription by: Susan Burke, ALPL Volunteer & the Audio Transcription Center, Boston, MA

Edited by: Rozanne Flatt, ALPL Volunteer

Total Pages: Vol I – 234 pgs & Vol II – 194 pgs Total Time: 2:28 + 1:43 + 2:13 + 2:26 + 2:32 + 2:48 + 2:26 + 1:48 + 1:30 + 2:12 + 2:32 + 1:02 / 2.47 (1) + 1.72 (2) + 2.22 (3) + 2.43 (4) + 2.53 (5) + 2.8 (6) + 2.43 (7) + 1.8 (8) + 1.5 (9) + 2.2 (10) + 2.53 (11) + 1.03 (12) = 25.66 hrs

#### Volume I:

Session 1 & 2: Early life, early career as journalist & Kerner administration  
Session 3 & 4: Taylor's observations on the Richard Ogilvie administration  
Session 5 & 6: Observations on the 1972 election & Dan Walker administration

#### Volume II:

Session 7 & 8: Jim Thompson's administration & Pensoneau w/ IL Coal Assn  
Session 9 & 10: Jim Edgar's administration & Pensoneau w/ IL Coal Assn  
Session 11: Reflections on George Ryan and Rod Blagojevich administrations  
Session 12: Taylor reflects on the evolution of journalism in the United States

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on May 5, 2010.  
The interviews are archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield,  
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## Abstract

Taylor Pensoneau, *Illinois Statecraft*, ISG-A-L-2009-007

**Biographical Information Overview of Interview:** Taylor Pensoneau was born on October 20th, 1940 in Belleville, Illinois. He decided early on to go into journalism, earning his college degree from the University of Missouri-Columbia in 1962. Pensoneau covered the Illinois Statehouse beat for the *St. Louis Post Dispatch* from Oct. 1965 through Jan. 1978, covering the Richard Ogilvie, Dan Walker, and Jim Thompson gubernatorial administrations. In 1978 he became a lobbyist for the Illinois Coal Association, and spent 26 years with that organization during a time of stress for the state's coal industry.

While at the Coal Association, Taylor began a third career, writing books on Illinois' political and criminal history. His first foray as a book author was *Dan Walker, The Glory and the Tragedy*. He has since written books on Governor Richard Ogilvie and former Illinois State Senator W. Russell Arrington, the most powerful Illinois legislator of the 1960s. More recently, he turned his focus to notorious southern Illinois criminals. He also wrote the chapters on George Ryan and Rod Blagojevich for the book on Illinois governors, *Mostly Good and Competent Men*.

During the course of several interviews, Pensoneau shared his views on gubernatorial administrations from Otto Kerner to Rod Blagojevich, as well as most of the significant political developments of the last forty years.

**Subject Headings/Key Words:** Gov. Otto Kerner; Gov. Richard Ogilvie; State Senator W. Russell Arrington; Gov. Samuel Shapiro; Sec. of State Paul Powell; Illinois Constitutional Convention; Cutback Amendment; Paul Simon; Gov. Dan Walker; Richard J. Daley; Gov. Jim Thompson; Gov. Jim Edgar; Neil Hartigan; Dawn Clark Netsch; Mike Lawrence

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