

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Janis Cellini

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Illinois Statecraft – Jim Edgar Oral History project

Interview # ISG-A-L-2009-029

Janis Cellini, Personnel Director during Jim Edgar's tenure as Secretary of State and Governor of Illinois, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Illinois Statecraft – Jim Edgar* Oral History project.

Interview date & location:

Date: September 15, 2009 Location: 241 N. 5th Street, Springfield, IL

Date: December 16, 2015 Location: 241 N. 5th Street, Springfield, IL

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Mark R. DePue, Director of Oral History, ALPL

Transcription by: Susan Burke, ALPL volunteer

Edited by: Betty Workman & Jan Culp, ALPL volunteers

Total Pages: 54 pgs. Total Time: 2:35 + 0:57 / 2.58 + 0.95 = 3.53 hrs.

Session 1: Early life and experiences working on patronage issues for Thompson and Edgar

Session 2: More stories on patronage as Gov. Jim Thompson's patronage chief

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on 09/22/2009.

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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Abstract

Janis Cellini, *Illinois Statecraft*, ISG-A-L-2009-029

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Janis Cellini was born on July 12, 1946 in Springfield, Illinois. She grew up in an extended Italian family, attended Catholic schools on the north side of Springfield, and then attended Springfield College in Illinois, where she received an associate degree in 1966. Cellini spent a semester at the University of Illinois before moving to Illinois State University, where she graduated with a teaching certificate in English. For the next few years, she taught English at Springfield High School and took evening classes at Sangamon State University, also in Springfield. Following her father's death in the early 1970s, she spent several months traveling around California. When she returned to Springfield, she ran a truancy program for the Springfield School District.

In 1978, Cellini began working for the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. By this time, she had also been a Republican Party precinct committeewoman in Springfield for many years. Around 1980, she began working in Governor Jim Thompson's administration as a liaison with downstate Republican County chairs. In 1982, she moved to the Secretary of State's office, where she worked for Secretary of State Edgar as his Personnel Director and then as Director of Personnel and Labor Relations during his years as governor. From 1982 until Jim Edgar stepped down as governor in 1999, she stayed with Edgar and dealt with Republican County chairmen on patronage issues, essentially serving as Edgar's 'patronage chief.' Janis spoke extensively about her philosophy about patronage, the proper role of patronage in a political administration, the negative perceptions that the press and the public have about patronage, and the personalities and dynamics of the Edgar Administration.

Subject Headings/Key Words: Ursuline Academy, Springfield, Illinois; William Cellini; Springfield College in Illinois; truancy program in Springfield, Illinois; Bob Kjellander; patronage practices in Illinois; *Rutan v Republican Party of Illinois*; Mike Lawrence (Press Secretary); Joan Walters (Budget Director); Kirk Dillard (COS); Mark Boozell (COS); Allen Grosboll (Asst COS); Brenda Edgar; MSI Scandal

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