

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Robert Goza

Interview #: SAA-A-D-2004-020

Conducted by the Springfield African-American History Foundation
For the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library

Robert Goza, a Missouri native, moved to Springfield, Illinois in 1952 after marrying Marian Ritchie. He was an early accounting computer specialist with the State of Illinois and active in Scouting and the NAACP. He discusses benefits and problems arising from racial integration in Springfield.

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Interview Format:	audio cassette
Interviewer:	Barbara Dickerman
Transcription by:	The Tape Transcription Center
Edited by:	Christy Barcus, Cheryl Pence
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Interviews are archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential
Library in Springfield, Illinois.

Abstract

Robert Goza Springfield African-American History Foundation Project

Biographical Information and Synopsis: Robert (Bob) Goza was born in Kansas City, Missouri in 1930, one of five children. He attended segregated schools throughout high school and three years of college in Missouri, majoring in mathematics. He married Marian Ritchie, a Springfield native, and they moved to Springfield in 1952.

After starting in an entry-level job at the Department of Public Health, he moved into a career as an accounting computer specialist. Moonlighting as a room service waiter at the Leland Hotel brought him into contact with many of the movie stars who came to Springfield to entertain in the 1950s. Bob became prominent in the community through his long-time leadership in youth baseball and Scouting. He also had an impact on Springfield through his active participation in the NAACP. In this interview, Bob talks about benefits and problems arising from racial integration in Springfield, as well as issues such as access of poor children to sports activities and the need for more opportunities for legal assistance related to employment problems. Bob and Marian have four children: Cheryl Maureen Goza-Smith, Michael Robert Goza, Roger Patterson Goza, and Jeanette Helene Goza.

Topics Covered: Springfield, Illinois, 1950s – present; Springfield youth baseball; Leland Hotel; NAACP; Urban League; Cub Scouts; computer accounting; red-lining; Springfield's black neighborhoods before and after integration decisions; Archie Lawrence; Rudy Davenport; Springfield's consent decree re police and fire departments; Illinois Department of Public Health

Note to the Reader: Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

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