

Joseph Anzalone interviewed by Paul Vance

Joseph Anzalone: ... may record me.

Paul Vance: Take me to your leader. Hello, hello, hello, testing.

Joseph Anzalone: Be gentle.

Paul Vance: I'll be very gentle. All right. You want to get started?

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah.

Paul Vance: Okay. Please tell me your name and your job title.

Joseph Anzalone: Anonymous. Joseph Anzalone. I'm a A journeyman.

Paul Vance: You're an A journeyman. Where do you live, Joe?

Joseph Anzalone: [00:00:30] Franklin Square, Long Island. I just purchased a house in Long Beach.

Paul Vance: You purchased a house in Long Beach.

Joseph Anzalone: Yes.

Paul Vance: Are your parents from Long Beach?

Joseph Anzalone: No, they're from Franklin Square. Oh, they're from Brooklyn, actually, but they live in Franklin Square.

Paul Vance: They live in Franklin Square. Cool. What's your background?

Joseph Anzalone: Background, ethnicity background?

Paul Vance: Sure. Is that what comes to mind first when you think of it?

Joseph Anzalone: I don't know. What else would come to mind?

Paul Vance: I don't know. You're a New Yorker.

Joseph Anzalone: New Yorker, yeah. [00:01:00] I'm a Long Islander but Italian background, really.

Paul Vance: You have an Italian-

Joseph Anzalone: My whole family's Italian, Sicilian Italian.

Paul Vance: The whole family's Italian?

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah.

Paul Vance: Do you have any hobbies?

Joseph Anzalone: Surfing, skating, fishing, mountain biking, snowboarding.

Paul Vance: You're full of things and making music.

Joseph Anzalone: Music.

Paul Vance: Music.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, writing.

Paul Vance: I know a lot about your music. Your parents are from Brooklyn [00:01:30] and you're an A mechanic. What type of jobs does your division do? What type of work does A mechanics do?

Joseph Anzalone: I guess we do anything from pipe work, anything involving electric work really. I mean I could be building racks to support electric work or it could be just installing electric work, running wires, terminating.

Paul Vance: [00:02:00] Is it residential work? Is it commercial work?

Joseph Anzalone: Oh, it's commercial, residential, everything. Is more than commercial and residential?

Paul Vance: Is it more than commercial?

Joseph Anzalone: [inaudible 00:02:14] category. Is there a third category or is it just commercial, residential?

Paul Vance: I think commercial and-

Joseph Anzalone: Boats I guess would be another category.

Paul Vance: Do we do boats?

Joseph Anzalone: I don't think we do boats.

Paul Vance: We don't do boats.

Joseph Anzalone: That's a whole different division.

Paul Vance: I think that's a different local altogether.

Joseph Anzalone: I don't do, my division doesn't do street lighting [00:02:30] really, like the high voltage street lighting. We do street lamp but not the high voltage lamp.

Paul Vance: Then we also do subway work and stuff like that, right?

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, subway work, transit. I guess that would be another one. Is that commercial?

Paul Vance: I think that's commercial.

Joseph Anzalone: Transit, I don't know.

Paul Vance: What jobs have you had before this industry?

Joseph Anzalone: I worked-

Paul Vance: Did you have any?

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, yeah, [00:03:00] yeah. I had odd jobs.

Paul Vance: No, I mean did you come in straight and [crosstalk 00:03:04] or-

Joseph Anzalone: No, no, no. My first job, aside from doing work for family members and stuff like that, it was like KB Toys I worked for.

Paul Vance: KB Toys.

Joseph Anzalone: I worked for a toy store.

Paul Vance: What did you do in the toy store?

Joseph Anzalone: I did stock, I did boxed, I did everything. I helped people get stuff, like pick things out. I did cash register and all that.

Paul Vance: Seems like the perfect kind of job for you.

Joseph Anzalone: I had a good time. I had a good time. [00:03:30] I also worked as an estimator for my father's electrical company.

Paul Vance: You worked as an estimator?

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, I started off low, just take off lights, receptacles, all that stuff on [crosstalk 00:03:43] estimate how much the job would cost and then I would get more deep into it, send out for fire alarms, send out pricing for switch gear or send out pricing for lights and all that stuff. I'd get it all priced together and take care of his insurances and [00:04:00] stuff like that. A lot of office work, the office end of the electrical field or a contractor but, yeah.

Paul Vance: Does any of that prior work ever come to ...

Joseph Anzalone: No.

Paul Vance: ... play as an electrician? Would you ever be like-

Joseph Anzalone: Does it help me as a working journeyman? No.

Paul Vance: Do you-

Joseph Anzalone: I'll just say it gives you appreciation for ... Working as a journeyman would help your estimating but estimating doesn't help you working as a journeyman. Does that make sense?

Paul Vance: [00:04:30] Yeah. No, no. You're saying like an estimator has a harder time gauging what something might cost because they're not out there.

Joseph Anzalone: What something might cost or how to, yeah, how to figure it into a price because they're not physically ever doing it. They never did it, never worked on something like that. It takes somebody who's worked in the field might say, "You need a light here." Somebody in the field might say, "How high is the ceiling? Where's my access [00:05:00] points, this and that?" Whereas an estimator might say, "Okay, they need a light. That's this much money. That'll take about a half hour to do one light. That's what it usually costs," and stuff like that but if you're a worker you kind of think about it more because you've been in the situation.

Paul Vance: Yeah.

Joseph Anzalone: [inaudible 00:05:12]?

Paul Vance: Yeah, yeah, yeah. I mean you know that there's obstacles and not everything is like-

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, nothing's a perfect a world in the field but it often is figured that on paper.

Paul Vance: Yeah, paper is definitely different than the actual job site itself. Those [00:05:30] are the jobs that you had prior to this. You said your father-

Joseph Anzalone: A full time student.

Paul Vance: A full time student, I mean that sounds like a workload. What were you studying?

Joseph Anzalone: I worked for him being an estimator while I was going to college a lot so in between classes I would go work for him and stuff like that.

Paul Vance: What were you studying?

Joseph Anzalone: I started out studying audio recording technology for doing recording music and stuff like that. I figured it would help me and my band back in the day, help me out recording and [00:06:00] get me some free recordings hopefully because that was really expensive back then. Nobody was using pro tools on a computer. It was just starting and all that, those programs were expensive so I was doing a lot of that and figured I could make money doing that but it got boring.

Paul Vance: You said that your dad was an electrician or-

Joseph Anzalone: Correct, yeah.

Paul Vance: He's a-

Joseph Anzalone: He's a contractor.

Paul Vance: A contractor so he oversees an electrical shop kind of?

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, he owns an electrical shop.

Paul Vance: [00:06:30] He also had his hands in the field, too.

Joseph Anzalone: He started out working for ...

Paul Vance: Was he a local-

Joseph Anzalone: ... my grandfather who was in the union. Then when he was done working with my grandfather who was my mother's dad, not his dad. He worked for Forest as Forest Electric, another Local Three contractor as a project manager and then from project manager he didn't like being told what to do and all that stuff by everybody. You know it is getting bossed around like that [00:07:00] so he wanted to start his own shop and he did.

Paul Vance: Is it a Local Three shop?

Joseph Anzalone: It is. It was. It was. It was for a long time. It was for about 25 years and he just recently left.

Paul Vance: Was he ever in the local?

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, Local Three for like 25 years about [inaudible 00:07:14].

Paul Vance: As a project manager, he-

Joseph Anzalone: He was a project manager for Forest in local and as-

Paul Vance: No, but does that make him a-

Joseph Anzalone: As a contractor he was Local Three. Contractor's like-

Paul Vance: He never went through the apprenticeship or anything.

Joseph Anzalone: No. He came in through my grandfather. When they got organized he came in and got [00:07:30] organized.

Paul Vance: Oh, okay.

Joseph Anzalone: He might have had a harder time working for my grandfather, to be honest with you.

Paul Vance: Why is that?

Joseph Anzalone: Working for family, you know, they take advantage of you a lot. There's two different types. There's the type that you get away with everything, Jimmy Junior, and there's the type that ... they put everything on you and that's the type I've always had and a lot of that is old school Italian mentality, work, work, work, work. [00:08:00] That was bestowed on him, bestowed on me. It sucks.

Paul Vance: He bestows that type of ...

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, he does that to me all the time.

Paul Vance: ... on you. Oh my gosh. Is that you became an electrician, by your father or-

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, I became an electrician through him, yeah, because I didn't have anything else really lined up. He suggested just fill out the paperwork. They might not call you for another year, two years, three years, whatever it is. I said, "All right, I'll fill out the paperwork. If I don't figure anything out by then I'll jump [00:08:30] in. I'll see what's up," and I know that it's a good job, benefits and wages are good, you know, once you work your way up to that point. Working with hands is different people will work with hands, will work out of offices. It's who you are, I guess, really that make you want to do that because not everybody would work with their hands like that.

Paul Vance: No. Definitely not, especially those musician [00:09:00] hands. Were you worried about that?

Joseph Anzalone: [crosstalk 00:08:59] very valuable, very valuable.

Paul Vance: In all levels. He led you in that direction.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah.

Paul Vance: Then you filled out all the paperwork so you went through the apprenticeship. You didn't-

Joseph Anzalone: I [crosstalk 00:09:15] gone through the whole entire apprenticeship.

Paul Vance: You didn't-

Joseph Anzalone: No, I wish I could've not.

Paul Vance: You didn't get organized then and what does getting organized mean?

Joseph Anzalone: Getting organized means as a non union shop, [00:09:30] you're doing work non union everywhere, and your shop wants to join the union. The union does like this because they want more work to go with the union. They want to build the union and they will test certain guys that you have. You want to bring in your guys because your guys have been working for you all these years. You want to bring in your guys. You know they know what they're doing but the union doesn't know they know what they're doing so they'll run them through a couple of tests, [00:10:00] make sure they do know what they're doing and stuff like that. Then they could come in at A rate but at a different level and they have to take the A test and everything and still make their way to that A level.

Paul Vance: What's the different level-

Joseph Anzalone: Difference between M at A rate and A rate, I don't really know.

Paul Vance: Is it baskets or-

Joseph Anzalone: I think it has to do with benefits and I think it might also have to do with being a foreman. I don't know if you could be a foreman as an M guy.

Paul Vance: At A rate.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah.

Paul Vance: Those are the two-

Joseph Anzalone: I think those are [00:10:30] the two things that kind of are the [crosstalk 00:10:33].

Paul Vance: Then they take-

Joseph Anzalone: Unless you pass your A test, I think if you take your A test you have the chance to get the A. You take the M out of the [inaudible 00:10:44].

Paul Vance: Would they take the same A test as someone going through the apprenticeship?

Joseph Anzalone: I'm pretty sure.

Paul Vance: Okay.

Joseph Anzalone: Pretty sure. I think they just throw them into the mix.

Paul Vance: What is your current job site like? Where are you working?

Joseph Anzalone: Oh [00:11:00] my god.

Paul Vance: That's a good start.

Joseph Anzalone: I'm working I believe at Hudson Yard.

Paul Vance: Hudson Yards.

Joseph Anzalone: It's a big job. There's a lot of things going on over there but I'm in the retail section so it's like a higher end mall going up and we're doing that. It's about 10 floors and it's on the water. All the walls are open. It's cold in the winter. It's hot in the summer.

Paul Vance: Oh man.

Joseph Anzalone: It's dirty.

Paul Vance: Is it?

Joseph Anzalone: It's dangerous. It's dirty. You got to be aware at all times.

Paul Vance: [00:11:30] It's dangerous and dirty. Have you ever, what do you mean it's dangerous and dirty?

Joseph Anzalone: You got to watch out for the floors. On a construction site everything gets abused. Your ramps to go up from one floor to another, stuff like that, moving material, things get abused, holes in the ground.

Paul Vance: Oh gosh.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah. You're supposed to cover them up with certain things but somebody might cover it with something else, somebody might not cover it. Somebody do the right thing, somebody [00:12:00] could come along after them and move it and never move it back. You got to just be aware of your surroundings, really.

Paul Vance: Okay. Do they offer you any other, like an OSHA classes that you have to take or-

Joseph Anzalone: Oh, you mean like safety requirements ...

Paul Vance: Are there?

Joseph Anzalone: ... for the job. Yes.

Paul Vance: For [crosstalk 00:12:20].

Joseph Anzalone: They have their insurance purpose safety requirements, yeah.

Paul Vance: Do you have to wear glasses, hardhats?

Joseph Anzalone: You have to wear glasses. You have to wear a [00:12:30] hardhat and you have to wear high visibility colors. If you're on a lift you have to wear a harness.

Paul Vance: Oh wow.

Joseph Anzalone: If you're above a six-foot ladder you have to wear a harness.

Paul Vance: Six-foot ladder?

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, it's like after six-foot ladder. It's like eight-foot ladder you got to wear a harness or something like at which is kind of pointless if you think about it because you got to climb up to clip off and then climb back down and climb back up to clip off again.

Paul Vance: Oh my god.

Joseph Anzalone: It just doesn't make sense but it covers their insurance and they save money. It comes down to that.

Paul Vance: Is this a regular type of [00:13:00] ... Local Three job? Is this like a regular-

Joseph Anzalone: It all depends on really the GC, the general contractor really who implements that. A lot more contractors, GCs, are doing this to get insurance cuts. They claim it's for your own good. They say they care about you but they don't care about the air quality. They care about whether you're wearing [00:13:30] your glasses or your high visibility colors. It really does nothing.

Paul Vance: Air quality seems pretty important.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah but that's what they kind of don't take care of.

Paul Vance: They never do.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah.

Paul Vance: Is it a regular type of day? Is it like a-

Joseph Anzalone: It's a eight-hour day which usually you do a seven-hour day but it's a PLA agreement.

Paul Vance: It's a PLA agreement.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, with the PLA agreement you lose holidays. Fortunately, we don't lose pay.

Paul Vance: [00:14:00] Oh, nice.

Joseph Anzalone: It's a full rate.

Paul Vance: Okay.

Joseph Anzalone: Which is good but we lose holidays. We lose seven hour day, it's eight hours and I think that's really it with the PLA. We have to scan in, scan out with a card which they say is for security. It's not.

Paul Vance: It's not?

Joseph Anzalone: They already went back to the boss. When they say we're not allowed to use it for time, this and that, they went back to our owner and sent in, "This person coming in late all the time, we're not paying [00:14:30] him because these people are leaving early, this person coming in," and they all get in trouble meanwhile they're not supposed to do that.

Paul Vance: Wow.

Joseph Anzalone: It's not cool.

Paul Vance: That is kind of-

Joseph Anzalone: They're pretty sneaky and they get away with everything but ...

Paul Vance: What do you GC is this?

Joseph Anzalone: ... God forbid you're on the lift minding your own business working and you don't have maybe a harness on, meanwhile you're safely enclosed on a platform. They'll kick you off the job for a couple days, make you take a urine test, see if you're doing drugs and all this shit. It's crazy.

Paul Vance: Oh my gosh. That's wild.

Joseph Anzalone: They make it very, very ...

Paul Vance: [00:15:00] They make this fun.

Joseph Anzalone: ... difficult to be able to just do your job and go home.

Paul Vance: Who does? Who makes it difficult?

Joseph Anzalone: The GC. Not the GC really. It's actually, in this case, it's the owner.

Paul Vance: Oh.

Joseph Anzalone: The person, the customer who hired the GC.

Paul Vance: The client.

Joseph Anzalone: The client, yeah.

Paul Vance: Oh wow. That sounds ...

Joseph Anzalone: It's both of them. [00:15:18].

Paul Vance: ... like a fun job. Is there anything you like about your current job?

Joseph Anzalone: The pay.

Paul Vance: [00:15:30] Is there a certain hour?

Joseph Anzalone: I like doing pipe work. I'm doing ...

Paul Vance: Oh, so you're doing pipe work.

Joseph Anzalone: ... big pipe. I'm doing big pipe work which big pipe for us is really four-inch, three-inch. That's considered big for us. I've worked with bigger. I've worked with six-inch and there is five-inch but I'm working with four and three and anything below that and I'm building out closets myself, according to a set of plans. It's not bad. I don't mind, with pipe work, it starts-

Paul Vance: What do you mean you're building out [00:16:00] closets?

Joseph Anzalone: The closets control the electric power. There's four closets on a floor and they control over the entire floor and I got to build them out according to the panel, the distribution panels, the transformers and everything in between to run the floors. I prep all that so that when the guys come to pull the wire in they're ready to go and set up and just connect everything.

Paul Vance: Wow. Is using large [00:16:30] pipe typical for most electricians or is this like a rare opportunity that ...

Joseph Anzalone: It depends on the type of job. If you're going to a job that's a office renovation or a smaller, maybe a smaller building would use it but not so much of it. This building has tons and tons and tons of it.

Paul Vance: Wow. That's awesome.

Joseph Anzalone: Most of the job is around ...

Paul Vance: Are you working by yourself or with ...

Joseph Anzalone: I started off at MIJ at this job and [00:17:00] I was working with a journeymen and a couple of months before I turned an A mechanic I was put by myself with an apprentice to do the closets so I worked like that for a little while and I still have the same apprentice now as a journeyman. I turned out and I kept [inaudible 00:17:19] still there.

Paul Vance: How many years have you been working as a electrician, you'd say?

Joseph Anzalone: I guess [00:17:30] six and a half years, seven years.

Paul Vance: Throughout this, so you worked previously on little stuff. What was your training like? Were you prepared to go into this Hudson Yards and do four-inch pipe or-

Joseph Anzalone: For this job per say ...

Paul Vance: I mean like in general.

Joseph Anzalone: ... in general?

Paul Vance: I guess we could go specifically. Were you ready to take that task [00:18:00] on? Were you familiar enough with prints? How did you learn or ...

Joseph Anzalone: The prints, actually maybe that's one thing that estimating does help you out with although I did take architecture for a few years, too, which helped me with prints because I used to draw them so that helps with prints, too. I guess being familiar with them-

Paul Vance: What about the pipe being?

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah. That's what I'm saying, reading the print to bend the pipe. I guess you could say I was familiar [00:18:30] with it on a smaller scale and I kind of transposed it to a larger scale.

Paul Vance: How'd you learn that smaller scale?

Joseph Anzalone: It's not easy to do that because it's a lot harder to do the bigger stuff because you don't have as much forgiving ending with it. Yeah. I don't know. You know what I'm saying.

Paul Vance: Okay. There's not much forgiveness in working with-

Joseph Anzalone: If you over bend something you could bend it back a little bit with a thinner pipe, a smaller pipe. [00:19:00] Say up to two-inch, two and a half inch you might be able to bend it back by hand. With a three-inch, a four-inch, you don't get that forgiveness. If you over bend it you really can't use it and that's an expensive piece of pipe. The owner-

Paul Vance: How much are one of those pieces?

Joseph Anzalone: One piece of pipe, I don't know. I'm a crappy estimator obviously. I never estimated a big job like that. My dad was small time but I could [00:19:30] imagine being close to 100.

Paul Vance: How much is a small pipe, do you think?

Joseph Anzalone: Dude, I haven't done that in like 10 years. I don't really know. Honestly, I have no idea. Not even half as much, though. You get a bundle which is 10 for the cost of one pipe for a four-inch probably.

Paul Vance: Do you think about how precious that-

Joseph Anzalone: You do but at the same time you can't let it drive you crazy but sometimes [00:20:00] time costs more than material so if you waste time trying to fix something that you already messed up you end up costing the company more money. Maybe you could use that piece later on to cut up and use it for a smaller piece that you need somewhere else and as long as you're conscientious in that aspect you don't waste anything and they like that, the owners. The foreman, the owner, it helps out if you're conscious about that.

Paul Vance: Do you ever get [00:20:30] accolades or compliments for the work that you do?

Joseph Anzalone: Depends on the foreman.

Paul Vance: Yeah, what-

Joseph Anzalone: You've got your foreman who used the positive reinforcement. You got ones that only have negative things to say. It all depends on the guy, really. I mean you could tell even a guy who has negative things to say, if you did a good job by them not saying anything at all. You could tell that that's actually a good thing in disguise but then you got guys that they'll you you did [00:21:00] a good job. If you didn't they'll tell you you didn't do a good job and I like that. I like honesty [inaudible 00:21:05]. I get other guys who I just work with who will say it's good and this and that.

Paul Vance: That's enough.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah. it helps because we help each other in that aspect. Yeah.

Paul Vance: Who's we help each other? Crews and stuff?

Joseph Anzalone: Oh, the workers in general. Yeah, like the other A journeymen and apprentices and MIJs.

Paul Vance: Can you recall the [00:21:30] first day you worked in the local?

Joseph Anzalone: As a T-A-one.

Paul Vance: Yeah.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, I could recall that.

Paul Vance: Okay. Could you talk about it a little bit or ...

Joseph Anzalone: You got to bring that up?

Paul Vance: What happened? What shop were you with or ...

Joseph Anzalone: I'll tell you that story.

Paul Vance: Oh gosh. Please do.

Joseph Anzalone: It was a horrible day.

Paul Vance: Why was it a horrible day?

Joseph Anzalone: That was probably one of the worst days of my life.

Paul Vance: Okay, please explain.

Joseph Anzalone: Just the [00:22:00] whole thing. First off, I got to a job and none of the guys were answering their phone, the foreman that I had. He wasn't answering his phone at all and he was in the basement I guess with no service so I didn't have no idea where to go, how to get there. I didn't see anybody else. Finally I find somebody-

Paul Vance: Where was this?

Joseph Anzalone: This was Lexington Hotel. Why do I remember that? That's crazy.

Paul Vance: Perfect.

Joseph Anzalone: B&G was the company.

Paul Vance: Okay.

Joseph Anzalone: I go downstairs. They've got another guy from [00:22:30] a different trade, says, "Oh yeah, BNG, they're set up downstairs somewhere," so he take me down there and I met the foreman and he had no idea I was even supposed to be there so I got all my tools. It was cold out. It was February 14th, Valentine's Day, I remember because I got shit for that ... heavy jacket and all that shit. I seen the guy there. He had no idea I was coming, no idea.

Paul Vance: The foreman.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah. He's trying to come up with something for [00:23:00] me to do and now I'm running all over this hotel. I don't know when break is. He doesn't tell me so I end up working through break. I don't know when lunch is so I end up just taking lunch at like 12. It's supposed to be 11:45 so I took it at 12 and I didn't even know where to go. I got some, I came back and he tells me after I come back from lunch. He goes, "All right, you're getting transferred to another job because I don't even need you here." I said, "Okay. Great, man. Thanks." On [00:23:30] top of that I have school that night so now I have my bag. I have my jacket and all my other stuff and my backpack and I just got transferred but I have to go to school. I have until five o'clock to go to school and I figured I was close enough to school to walk there, 66th Street or whatever it was ...

Paul Vance: This is ...

Joseph Anzalone: ... and I was up on 50-something.

Paul Vance: ... school for college or is this-

Joseph Anzalone: No, school for the union. This is the apprenticeship [00:24:00] theory class, they call that. I had to go there after and I had to carry my tools there and my jacket and everything and I remember walking through Central Park, getting lost, doing a full circle and ending up right back where I started.

Paul Vance: No!

Joseph Anzalone: I was sweating and there was snow out and there was slush and I'm walking through the worst conditions. I'll never forget that. It was horrible. I walked through one more time and I ended up taking this extra long way and getting almost kind of lost again, [00:24:30] being extremely pissed off and just making it to school so now I'm sore, I'm hot. I got bags and tools and all this stuff, whatever. I get to class. I'm chilling in class and I have this killer headache. I'm tired because I didn't even sleep the night before. I got out to get on that extra five whatever train, 5:50 train, wake up extra early. I'm not used to that. Sucks and-

Paul Vance: Waking [00:25:00] up early.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah. I mean I woke up early ...

Paul Vance: That's extra early.

Joseph Anzalone: ... but that's early. Yeah, there's a big difference between 6:30 and five o'clock. It sounds like it's not but when you wake up at that time it is, in my-

Paul Vance: No, I mean I very much agree that that's early.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah and that's not even early for half of these guys. Some of these guys coming out from far Suffolk County at like four o'clock, 4:30 in the morning and waking up 3:30 in the morning. I don't even [00:25:30] wake up maybe to use the bathroom at that time and get a glass of water and they're getting in their car and driving to the train. Are you out of your mind? What kind of life is that?

Paul Vance: It's a hard life I feel.

Joseph Anzalone: [crosstalk 00:25:43] to the city, yeah. I'm at the school and they tell us, "We're going to give you some books." Okay, great. Going to get books. I walk across the street to get the books and they give us this huge cardboard box with at least 20 books in it, textbooks, [00:26:00] workbooks, little books, big books, heavy, heavy box. Now I go back and I have a train. I have a train to catch. We get to leave at 8:20 I think it was. I have a 8:42 train to get home. The next train after that, 9:42.

Paul Vance: 9:42.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, is that [inaudible 00:26:21]?

Paul Vance: [inaudible 00:26:22].

Joseph Anzalone: After that I have a 9:42 so that's a hour if I miss that. I [00:26:30] ask a couple guys I just met, I said, "Who's going back to Penn? Let's get a cab together. We got all these books, instead of running to the subway and trying to do ... " Not only that but I had my backpack. I had my tools and I had my three jackets because I thought it was going to be cold. Guy didn't tell me if it was going to be an outside job or not. Guy didn't answer his phone the night before. I go to Penn Station. I get back to Penn Station. I start running for the train because I'm about four minutes away from missing [00:27:00] it and I don't want to miss it. I run out of the cab. I start running through with the other guys, running through Penn Station and I got my tool bag on top of the box, my backpack on, the jacket on everything like a big mess and I have a headache. I'm running for this train so I don't miss it and the whole bottom of the box just shoots out and these books go across the entire Penn Station floor. People are kicking them and shit.

Paul Vance: Oh my god.

Joseph Anzalone: I'm just sitting there like, "I hate this job. I'm not [00:27:30] working here ever again. I hate my life." I was like, "Why am I even here?"

Paul Vance: Oh man, asking the big questions.

Joseph Anzalone: "I hate this city."

Paul Vance: Were you ever in the city prior to-

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah. Not for work. I used to come every single week for shows. I used to go to concerts. Anyway, I missed that train, had to wait another hour for the next one. I didn't get home until 10.

Paul Vance: Then you had to start the day over.

Joseph Anzalone: Had to start all over again in a new spot the next day. It wasn't fun.

Paul Vance: That's a pretty crazy [00:28:00] first day kind of story.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, it sucked.

Paul Vance: You take electrical theory for classes but can you explain your learning process for this career that you put yourself into? Are you more ... was it book orientated for you or was it more like hands-on type of ...

Joseph Anzalone: I'll tell you what it is.

Paul Vance: You tell me what it [00:28:30] is.

Joseph Anzalone: I'll tell you what the is. If you really want to know.

Paul Vance: I want to know.

Joseph Anzalone: There are two aspects of it. The mandated learning, book learning aspect of it which is good to know but when you're in the field it's a totally different type of learning. As an apprentice working with other journeymen, working with other apprentices and that's where you really learned a trade. You don't learn the trade on paper in a classroom [00:29:00] after work. After working all day, being completely tired, you have to go to class from five to 8:30 and I had Monday nights. I had to do that every single Monday night and you have Monday nights. We had to do that every single Monday and it would just kill you for the rest of the week because you'd be shot by the time you got home. At least you'd get home a little bit earlier. I'll get home at like 10:30 and then I'd have to shower, maybe eat something. 11 o'clock, by the time you go to bed it's almost 12, 11:30, 12 o'clock [00:29:30] and you got to do it all over again the next day plus then they'd send you to college during the week. Not as late but still had an impact on you, if you ask me

Paul Vance: Yeah, absolutely. You did most of your learning-

Joseph Anzalone: Most of your field learning you do in the field. Most of your skills and something that a company would find you ... reliable and what's the word I'm looking for? Give me something.

Paul Vance: [00:30:00] You're ...

Joseph Anzalone: Valuable. Thank you. Thank you for that.

Paul Vance: You're welcome for nothing.

Joseph Anzalone: Valuable would be I learn more of those in the field. The skills that a owner and a company would find more valuable-

Paul Vance: What would some of those skills be that a company would find valuable? What ...

Joseph Anzalone: Working at a good pace, getting things done and being able to work with [00:30:30] the material, problem solve and bend pipe and stuff like that. You learn that in the field and that's what gets the job done. We learn all this stuff in the class. We learn all this stuff about calculating loads and this and that and that is totally good to know. I would never put that down at all but the fact of that is that they have an engineer that does that. Even if you come up with that load and you tell them that this is what it is, they're not going to listen to you anyway [00:31:00] because they have a procedure, protocol, they got to go back to the engineer and they got to do it anyway. You could fail that class, meanwhile and you could be the best pipe bender, better than any journeyman on the job, and you will fail and you'll get left back and you might never even make it to that point which is ridiculous.

Paul Vance: Totally.

Joseph Anzalone: It's meant to help and meant to make us smarter and this and that and I think it does but at the same time I think it has too much impact on [00:31:30] your job rather than maybe more and I know that they are doing more hands-on classes now. I think that's better for us because-

Paul Vance: You think hands-on-

Joseph Anzalone: I took some hands-on classes with the union. Every once in a while they would send you to hands-on class and that's the most I learned in class.

Paul Vance: In class.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah.

Paul Vance: Then otherwise-

Joseph Anzalone: In my opinion.

Paul Vance: Yeah, otherwise it's you're in the field working with another ...

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah.

Paul Vance: ... electrician.

Joseph Anzalone: Learning through working with people and even that could be detrimental to your learning because if you learn from [00:32:00] the wrong guy, some guys don't do the right job. Some guys, not a lot but some guys, there's others that are better than them.

Paul Vance: How do you find those? Do you get thrown in with those guys or can you choose those guys that you want to gravitate towards or ...

Joseph Anzalone: Sometimes you just get brought into it ...

Paul Vance: Is it just you?

Joseph Anzalone: ... because it's your foreman that tells you who to work with. If you don't like the way this guy's working you can kind of tell. As a first year, second year, third year, as a first [00:32:30] year and second year you might not know but the more mix amount of guys that you work with and it's good to get thrown around to work with different people because you learn more that way. This guy could be putting a pipe one way and this guy could be putting up this way and it comes out the same but it might be better to do it the way the second guy did it.

Paul Vance: For you, maybe.

Joseph Anzalone: Now you learn that and you use that later on. You know what I'm saying?

Paul Vance: He might have you taught you a way that you're more comfortable with than the [00:33:00] other guy.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah.

Paul Vance: Did you do electrical work on your first day?

Joseph Anzalone: No.

Paul Vance: No.

Joseph Anzalone: Yes.

Paul Vance: You did?

Joseph Anzalone: I did.

Paul Vance: What did you do.

Joseph Anzalone: I did electrical work [crosstalk 00:33:11].

Paul Vance: Not to go back but ...

Joseph Anzalone: He asked me if I know anything. I said, "Yeah, I know a little bit," because I worked with my father. I would do family members' houses, stuff like that, change the ceiling fan, put a outlet in, do my own house with him [00:33:25], little things. He goes, "Oh, you know how to splice." [00:33:30] First I was just distributing fixtures and stuff all throughout this hotel. I think it was the Lexington Hotel. I was just distributing fixtures outside of the proper rooms and stuff which needs to be done. I get it. You're going to put the cheapest guy on to do that, the one that knows nothing. It makes sense but he asked me to splice stuff so I spliced it and whatever. He said, "Okay, you know what you're doing." I didn't really know what I was doing, [00:34:00] I kind of faked it but I did pretty good at it. Fooled him.

Paul Vance: You were-

Joseph Anzalone: [crosstalk 00:34:00].

Paul Vance: You weren't working with another-

Joseph Anzalone: No, I was by myself.

Paul Vance: That day.

Joseph Anzalone: I was in a room with a bunch of other guys but I was by myself doing that.

Paul Vance: You had your own task to do-

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, I had my own task.

Paul Vance: Was there ever a location or maybe even a tool? You were working with big pipe. Was there ever something you were intimidated by or ...

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, I was intimidated one time until I used it and I'll tell you what that is. I was working at Rikers Island.

Paul Vance: [00:34:30] Oh, Rikers Island.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, for like a year and a half. Two things, actually, I was intimidated by over there.

Paul Vance: I bet.

Joseph Anzalone: Three. [crosstalk 00:34:35], three.

Paul Vance: Rikers Island. Okay.

Joseph Anzalone: Really. We would drive on there and we had our own separate area in the back where we were doing a new power plant and we had to-

Paul Vance: They have their own ...

Joseph Anzalone: A power plant, yeah.

Paul Vance: ... separate ...

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, their own power ...

Paul Vance: ... power.

Joseph Anzalone: ... system, I guess. Yeah.

Paul Vance: Wow, okay.

Joseph Anzalone: We were helping them with that. We were doing that and I was with ADCO at the time. I was second year apprentice [00:35:00] and we had these big lifts because once the job, the building started going up we had to use these big turtle lifts, not the articulated lift, not the scissor lift. They can go up like 60, 80 feet up into the air and you can spin the bucket a certain ways but they sway when you're up there.

Paul Vance: What?

Joseph Anzalone: You don't feel safe right away, especially if somebody else is [00:35:30] driving.

Paul Vance: Okay> Oh, so this is a two man-

Joseph Anzalone: It's a two man, you would put two people in there, yeah. Once I started using them, at first I was nervous with them, once I started using them I was like the other guys didn't even want to drive them. They let me drive it because I'll put it anyway you need to be. I was the best with it. I loved it. I had fun. It was like because you have to use different angles and different techniques to get into different spots it was kind [00:36:00] of fun. Instead of just driving it into one spot you got to lift a certain thing, drop a certain other way, turn this, tilt that and get it into where you got to go. Those are tight spots.

Paul Vance: Did you get trained to use that thing?

Joseph Anzalone: No.

Paul Vance: No.

Joseph Anzalone: No.

Paul Vance: Okay. How Did you-

Joseph Anzalone: No, I just had to figure it out.

Paul Vance: You just problem solved.

Joseph Anzalone: I just figured it out. I played around with it on the ground level and the guy showed me this, this, this, this or this [crosstalk 00:36:21].

Paul Vance: Who showed you?

Joseph Anzalone: Another journeyman who was familiar with it, not that they'd done it a lot but now I can say I did it [00:36:30] five years ago, about four years ago. I could say I've done it. I would have to get re-acclimated to it but it wouldn't take me as long as learning it from start.

Paul Vance: No.

Joseph Anzalone: I haven't touched it in a while either but I was with a guy who did it like that. He's used it before. Also over there, I had to drive a big box truck. One of the guys, what happened is there was two journeyman and myself and a foreman. One of the guys was in the hole doing work [00:37:00] and the other journeyman was backing the truck up to drop stuff off into the hole. I'm hitting on the truck telling him to stop backing up and he almost drove the truck right on top of this other guy and he was very shaken and he never wanted to drive the truck again. So guess who got to drive the truck everywhere now.

Paul Vance: Oh my gosh.

Joseph Anzalone: I've never drove an extended, extra long box truck with an extended lift gate at the back and I had to drive this around the island [00:37:30] all the time and I did and I didn't care anymore. You got to just eat it up sometimes. This guy was a horrible driver to begin with, though.

Paul Vance: [inaudible 00:37:39].

Joseph Anzalone: He was a horrible car driver. I've been in a car with him.

Paul Vance: Oh yeah?

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah.

Paul Vance: What was working on Rikers Island like?

Joseph Anzalone: You know what, I hear stories where people working by the cells inside and stuff like that and I didn't experience any of that because I was outside the whole time.

Paul Vance: Oh, you were outside the [00:38:00] whole time.

Joseph Anzalone: I've never been so cold or so hot in my life. The building I'm at now is very cold in the winter but Rikers Island, I was never been so cold before. We were right on the water. The wind would just whip through to the point where you can't even do anything. You're just crippled.

Paul Vance: Like you're-

Joseph Anzalone: Frozen.

Paul Vance: How could you hold anything?

Joseph Anzalone: You can't.

Paul Vance: You can't hold-

Joseph Anzalone: You just stand out there trying to work but you just can't do it so a lot of the times if it was that cold our foreman would give us easy simple things to do, maybe stuff that [00:38:30] we could do inside to build so that we could set it up for later, stuff to prep and ...

Paul Vance: Knock it out and stuff.

Joseph Anzalone: ... we would do what we can with the conditions.

Paul Vance: Yeah. Do you have a typical day at work at this point?

Joseph Anzalone: Yes and no, I guess. At this job?

Paul Vance: Yeah.

Joseph Anzalone: At this job it could be pretty typical sometimes because I'm going into the same closet I was in yesterday until I get to a new one, until [00:39:00] I finish that.

Paul Vance: It's pretty repetitious.

Joseph Anzalone: It's pretty repetitious in that aspect but every once in a while you get thrown. You can't do this closet because they didn't paint or they didn't pour a

[00:39:10] pad or they didn't do this so they throw you into something else for two days and you get acclimated to that and finally you start doing it and then they're like, "Okay, go back into the closet. They're ready, get going." You're like, "Okay, let me reset up for that now because it's a completely different type of way." For the most part it's typical, for the most but every once in a while you get [00:39:30] thrown into the mix.

Paul Vance: Thrown a loop or something like that.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, where your partner's not in, you need somebody else.

Paul Vance: Can you tell me about your coworkers or is there a specific demographic on this job? Are they all A mechanics? Are they all ...

Joseph Anzalone: Because it's an eight-hour job, as a MIJ you have to work eight hours so there is a decent amount of MIJs on the job ... which is good. They do give the guys freedom and ... [00:40:00] a chance to learn and really work on their own and stuff like that so it's good ...

Paul Vance: That's awesome.

Joseph Anzalone: ... because you get to kind of transition from a apprentice MIJ to journeyman when you finally turn out. There are a lot of guys on the job right now. There were like 80 at one point. I don't know if there's still-

Paul Vance: 80 people.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah. They split us up into four or five crew really.

Paul Vance: That's just your ...

Joseph Anzalone: That's just my shop, yeah, so they're all working for Zwicker[00:40:28]. You got one general [00:40:30] foreman, five sub foremen with a number of guys in each of their crew. I don't know how many each have but my foreman has like 10 guys, maybe. Another foreman could have 20 because they're upstairs doing something. Another guy has like five guys. It's crazy.

Paul Vance: Wow. Is there a particular thing that you feel you excel at or ...

Joseph Anzalone: I [00:41:00] excel at everything.

Paul Vance: I'm sure you do. I've worked with you before.

Joseph Anzalone: I guess I like doing the pipe work because it takes thinking involved. You got to figure things out.

Paul Vance: Obstacles and stuff.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, it's more-

Paul Vance: Is there any skill necessary for doing the pipe work?

Joseph Anzalone: Math, general ... general feeling for physics, I guess.

Paul Vance: What do you mean by that?

Joseph Anzalone: Some guys just don't understand [00:41:30] when you bend it here it changes it over here and stuff like that, like the way to fit something as a puzzle piece.

Paul Vance: What are you using to bend the pipes since it's so large?

Joseph Anzalone: The bigger pipe, we use what's called a table bender. It's a hydraulic press bender with a shoe and a slide.

Paul Vance: Did you learn that ...

Joseph Anzalone: You have to use a protractor. We did learn that ...

Paul Vance: ... from school?

Joseph Anzalone: ... with the hands-on but we learned that two days out of five years [00:42:00] ago and then you don't use it for five years, you really don't remember it.

Paul Vance: [crosstalk 00:42:04].

Joseph Anzalone: I learned it more on another job when one of those guys, and I try to do this with some of the apprentices, "Come over here, I'll show you how to use this so that you know for the future." I may [crosstalk 00:42:15] ...

Paul Vance: Did you ask him?

Joseph Anzalone: You won't remember but at least you'll know a little bit. I try to do that with any, if I see an apprentice around I'll ask somebody that wants to learn and stuff like that. Some guys will ask me. I've had apprentices ask me, "How do you use this?" And this and that. I said, "Come here, I'll show you."

Paul Vance: Did you have to set it up?

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, I set it up, break it down [00:42:30] every other time. I'll set it up and I'll come back to bend another piece of pipe and somebody has changed it to four-inch. I need it for three-inch, then they change it. I got to change it back.

Paul Vance: What are they changing?

Joseph Anzalone: The shoes, so it's the same thing, same bender but you got to take it apart and set it up for a different size pipe.

Paul Vance: Every time.

Joseph Anzalone: Every time.

Paul Vance: I mean, depending on if you're working on different size pipes.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah.

Paul Vance: Have you ever had an like, "This is out of my hands," kind of moment at work? [00:43:00] Like print changes or like you ...

Joseph Anzalone: Like, "I can't do this anymore."

Paul Vance: Not like, "I can't do," I mean like a ...

Joseph Anzalone: Like a you need help with something.

Paul Vance: You need help or something happens and you do this whole pipe run and then something ...

Joseph Anzalone: Something's wrong.

Paul Vance: ... or something's wrong or someone changes it or ...

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah. [00:43:30] They change prints all the time on this job. They change-

Paul Vance: Like after you've done stuff.

Joseph Anzalone: After I've done stuff, yeah. I have to go back and minimal stuff. I wouldn't say big stuff, minimal stuff, nothing crazy but ... nothing I could really complain that much about because you also, you're still there. That's your job and they need you to do that. Yeah, it's annoying to take down what you just did but, you know what, as long as it's not my fault, [00:44:00] whatever I got to do I'll do. You know what I'm saying?

Paul Vance: Have you ever been injured on the job?

Joseph Anzalone: Seriously injured, no. Injured, yeah.

Paul Vance: What might be like a not serious injury?

Joseph Anzalone: I put a zippy through my hand once.

Paul Vance: Oh, that's good.

Joseph Anzalone: That kind of stuff. I cut open my arm with a threaded rod.

Paul Vance: Oh, wow.

Joseph Anzalone: I cut [00:44:30] my eye, right below my eye a few times. I dropped some stuff on my foot, heavy, heavy, heavy stuff.

Paul Vance: How does that happen?

Joseph Anzalone: Just accidents, you know.

Paul Vance: Yeah.

Joseph Anzalone: You're holding something. You pick something up and something else falls out and you don't know. It could be anything, really. It could be somebody else that drops something on you and you didn't even know. They could be working above you. They could be working next to you. It's hard to stay safe sometimes but ...

Paul Vance: [00:45:00] Ever fall off a ladder?

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, I did. I got blown up off a ladder once.

Paul Vance: Blown up off a ladder.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, that was fun.

Paul Vance: How did you get blown up off a ladder?

Joseph Anzalone: I was working, actually. I was working in a ceiling and it was my fault but I was working in a occupied ceiling for a company that was, they had cubicles all over and they were there. We just had to go back and fix a couple of things that weren't done. [00:45:30] All the lighting is done at 277 volts. That's considered high voltage for us, really, because we usually work with 110. We had to change these little lights out, the test lights for the emergency fixtures because they weren't lighting up. We shut the circuit down and they were all dead but somebody must've accidentally wired one on the wrong circuit so I was doing five of them. I tested four [00:46:00] before I cut them. I cut it and everything was fine. I got to the fifth one. I didn't test it because I tested the first four. I didn't think I needed to. I cut it and it blew up right in my face. I never experienced something so quick. I mean, you get into a car accident you could kind of put your hands up really quick. You get a punch thrown at you or something you could kind of block it maybe. This happened so fast as soon [00:46:30] as the metal of my pliers slightly came in contact with it it just blew up ...

Paul Vance: Nipped it.

Joseph Anzalone: ... and it went through my wrists.

Paul Vance: Oh, you felt it?

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, it hurt. It felt like somebody took a hammer to my wrists.

Paul Vance: Really?

Joseph Anzalone: I got blown back kind of and I fell off of the eight-foot ladder into the occupied office space and everybody was kind of rattled because they just heard this huge explosion. I'm like, "I don't know what to do." I'm just like, "I'm fine." I [00:47:00] just walk away. I walked to the electric closet and shut the door.

Paul Vance: Oh my gosh.

Joseph Anzalone: I was working with a journeyman at the time. I was a third year apprentice. I shouldn't have been doing that.

Paul Vance: No.

Joseph Anzalone: I worked with a journeyman at the time. He didn't know what to do. He was kind of nervous about it, too, but really what should've happened was I should've went to the hospital and get my heart rate checked because that could throw it off. You might not know now. It could hurt you later down the line. You never know. I shouldn't have done that. I didn't. I was like, "I'm fine, I'm fine," and he didn't want to make a big deal out of it either because [00:47:30] he didn't want to get in trouble and that's kind of the pressure that they put on you. If an accident happens we can't send this guy.

Paul Vance: You have health benefits and stuff.

Joseph Anzalone: Yes, but on the job, if you get hurt on the job you want to document that because you can get compensation for that as if you got hurt outside the job.

Paul Vance: Also wouldn't you want to document something like that?

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, so that if something happens in the future they have knowledge that it did happen on the job. [00:48:00] Yeah, I should've and I didn't.

Paul Vance: Just out of fear.

Joseph Anzalone: [inaudible 00:48:03] Now it's documented.

Paul Vance: It's out of fear, though.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, it's out of fear because ...

Paul Vance: That's kind of ...

Joseph Anzalone: ... you feel afraid that they're not going to want to have you in their company anymore, stuff like that.

Paul Vance: They don't want you in your company but you can always go to another company.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah. You can but I'm just saying, for a lot of guys, they get worried about that.

Paul Vance: Little worried.

Joseph Anzalone: They're comfortable where they are ...

Paul Vance: I see.

Joseph Anzalone: ... and have a good gig going. They're not being thrown into the Hudson Yards like [00:48:30] I am. They got nice little ...

Paul Vance: Cushy jobs.

Joseph Anzalone: ... warm office spaces and cool in the summer.

Paul Vance: That stuff happens.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah.

Paul Vance: That's a kind of out of your hands moment, too.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, I guess that was out of my hands.

Paul Vance: That was kind of out of your hands.

Joseph Anzalone: Through my wrists.

Paul Vance: ... and through your wrists. Wow. Was it like a big explosion?

Joseph Anzalone: It wasn't huge but it was ...

Paul Vance: it just made that noise.

Joseph Anzalone: ... it was significant. I had a hole and it melted the pliers, whatever it was.

Paul Vance: It melted your pliers.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, it melted them.

Paul Vance: [00:49:00] Wow.

Joseph Anzalone: It wasn't fun.

Paul Vance: Electricity's a fun little thing.

Joseph Anzalone: Could've been worse, yeah.

Paul Vance: Have you ever felt creative at your job?

Joseph Anzalone: Creative? I've felt creative in the sense of problem solving, yeah, and actually I'm very creative about picking on people. That's good. I'm good with that.

Paul Vance: You picking on people.

Joseph Anzalone: Playing pranks.

Paul Vance: Is there a lot of ball busting at work?

Joseph Anzalone: I'm good with playing pranks.

Paul Vance: Yeah?

Joseph Anzalone: I'm very creative with that.

Paul Vance: Are you the prankster? Are you [00:49:30] the certified jester?

Joseph Anzalone: I consider myself so.

Paul Vance: Oh yeah?

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah.

Paul Vance: Do you have a prank that you-

Joseph Anzalone: Other people might refer as asshole but ...

Paul Vance: Have you ever had a-

Joseph Anzalone: [crosstalk 00:49:39] Am I aloud to say that?

Paul Vance: Yeah, sure.

Joseph Anzalone: Okay.

Paul Vance: Give me a prank that you've played recently on somebody.

Joseph Anzalone: Oh my god. I don't even know.

Paul Vance: What's your favorite prank?

Joseph Anzalone: I like, when somebody's working all the way up in the lift, to shut the button off at the bottom [crosstalk 00:49:56] so they can't get down for lunch.

Paul Vance: [00:50:00] I've heard about this ...

Joseph Anzalone: That's fun.

Paul Vance: ... lift thing.

Joseph Anzalone: There's a lot of little things.

Paul Vance: Little things.

Joseph Anzalone: It's hard to explain.

Paul Vance: Hard to explain?

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, it's hard to recreate.

Paul Vance: Do people play pranks often?

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, kind of helps the day go by. We have fun with each other. Depends on the guy, though. There's some guys who are very serious and ...

Paul Vance: A little sensitive.

Joseph Anzalone: ... those guys, you pick on more.

Paul Vance: You pick on more. You wear them down a little bit.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, you wear them down.

Paul Vance: Have you ever passed [00:50:30] a tool down or had a tool passed down to you?

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, I've had. I've had a couple of tools passed down to me. Have I passed a tool down? Yeah, I have.

Paul Vance: What tool did they pass down to you?

Joseph Anzalone: I got two screwdrivers and a pair of wire strippers. Did I ever have anything else?

Paul Vance: From the same person?

Joseph Anzalone: I got a whole bag. I got a bag from another guy.

Paul Vance: A bag?

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, actually-

Paul Vance: Wow. You hit the jackpot.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, I got a bag, not full of tools. It was [00:51:00] just a empty bag. He didn't like it so he gave it to me. It's not bad. He gave me a bunch of wrenches because he replaced his wrenches so he gave me those [inaudible 00:51:08] wrenches. I threw them in that same bag and he gave me an electronic level because he bought two of them and he gave me one which is like 40 bucks [crosstalk 00:51:16] very nice.

Paul Vance: Is this a guy that you're like-

Joseph Anzalone: This was my partner for a while, yeah. I'm not partner with him anymore but, yeah, he was my partner.

Paul Vance: As a apprentice or an MIJ?

Joseph Anzalone: As a MIJ.

Paul Vance: Oh, wow.

Joseph Anzalone: I got some stuff as apprentice like screwdriver and some stuff like that. [00:51:30] I got a deer head from a foreman once.

Paul Vance: A deer head from a foreman?

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, I got a deer head [crosstalk 00:51:34].

Paul Vance: Why did a foreman give you a deer head?

Joseph Anzalone: I asked him for it. I have a big [crosstalk 00:51:40].

Paul Vance: How did you know that he had a ...

Joseph Anzalone: He's a big time hunter so I really want the one for my jam room. Me and my friends, we had a band room to put all of our music equipment in. I said, "Let's get a deer head or something for this."

Paul Vance: What?

Joseph Anzalone: I asked my foreman, I said, "How much a deer head cost?" You know, how much he think that is. He was telling me, "Why do you want to know?" [00:52:00] Or this and that. I said, "I want to get one for my spot." He's like, "Ah, I'll get you one. I got one."

Paul Vance: Why did you know to ask him?

Joseph Anzalone: He's a big time hunter.

Paul Vance: How do you know this much?

Joseph Anzalone: How did I know he was a hunter? I worked with him for a while. What do you mean? He goes out on trips-

Paul Vance: Is this coffee talk? Is this like ...

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, coffee, lunch talk. Even before work, after work, whatever it may be. You get to know people while working, you know, stuff like that.

Paul Vance: Do you ...

Joseph Anzalone: Socialize.

Paul Vance: Do you take-

Joseph Anzalone: He gave me a TV, too?

Paul Vance: He gave you a TV? Do you socialize with these people [00:52:30] outside of work?

Joseph Anzalone: Some.

Paul Vance: Some?

Joseph Anzalone: Unfortunately.

Paul Vance: Unfortunately. That's good. Do you ever take home with you now that you're like an A journeyman as opposed to an apprentice? I guess you kind of-

Joseph Anzalone: You know what, I don't think I do. I don't really think about it when I'm home so I would say no. Yeah, no. I don't take work [00:53:00] home.

Paul Vance: Yeah. What does it mean to be a union member?

Joseph Anzalone: What does it mean to be a member?

Paul Vance: You said you hang out with these guys. It seems like you're pretty close. You're getting TVs ...

Joseph Anzalone: It could be [crosstalk 00:53:16].

Paul Vance: ... and gear that's ...

Joseph Anzalone: It's almost like a work family.

Paul Vance: You would consider it something of the sort.

Joseph Anzalone: I would consider some guys not in my work family but they're still in the union. There's a really [00:53:30] good group of guys who are working hard for a living and they do deserve a good quality of living and this is what kind of solidifies that for them. I do believe in that.

Paul Vance: They protect each other.

Joseph Anzalone: Yes, and I believe in that. Yeah, definitely.

Paul Vance: Do you have a Local Three tradition that you [00:54:00] like or practice or ...

Joseph Anzalone: No but going after work to the bar for a holiday or something like that or maybe whatever it may with all the guys, just having a couple beers and stuff like that and then going home or whatever. I wouldn't say it's a Local Three tradition because even office people do that. They go out after, stuff like [00:54:30] that but I like doing that with the guys. You get to know them, work with them and then when you go back to work the next day you have stories and this and that. It's fun. You have a good time.

Paul Vance: Yeah.

Joseph Anzalone: I like that.

Paul Vance: That's good. That's a good tradition.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah.

Paul Vance: Do you have any aspirations in this field? Do you want to be a-

Joseph Anzalone: A foreman or something?

Paul Vance: I mean, yeah.

Joseph Anzalone: Move up on the ...

Paul Vance: You want to get political or do you just-

Joseph Anzalone: No, I don't want to get political.

Paul Vance: Okay.

Joseph Anzalone: [00:55:00] I'm too logical for politics, to be honest with you.

Paul Vance: Okay. Fair.

Joseph Anzalone: I don't know.

Paul Vance: You just want to work?

Joseph Anzalone: I don't really know, to be honest with you. If I'm on a job like this I don't like being working in these conditions with all this dust and all this stuff that's not approved anywhere else in the world except for here. I don't like that so a part of me wants to get out. [00:55:30] Part of me wants to get out and be more of someone who just visits the job site, a project manager or something like that ...

Paul Vance: You'd like to do-

Joseph Anzalone: ... kind of helps run the jobs and this and that. It's not physically in the conditions unless you're there once in a while. You're not completely exposed to it constantly every single day. Granted, that's not the truth for everybody. That's not the truth for every job but most jobs are very dusty. When I say dust I mean you know the fireproofing for beams is called Monokote. [00:56:00] It replaces asbestos, which you still run into asbestos a lot of times.

Paul Vance: Yeah.

Joseph Anzalone: I had a couple of run-ins with that.

Paul Vance: You had a couple run-ins where you were like ...

Joseph Anzalone: With asbestos, I had a horrible-

Paul Vance: ... working ...

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, I had a horrible experience with one company and thier super and the guy working there.

Paul Vance: That you were working in asbestos.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, I was working in a area that had asbestos-covered [00:56:30] pipes.

Paul Vance: Wow.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah. That's fine as long as you don't disturb them but ...

Paul Vance: You're disturbing them.

Joseph Anzalone: ... this guy knowingly took a Sawzall and cut a 20-foot length of pipe out of this [inaudible 00:56:38], I was covered in it, and then threw it like 15 feet down onto the floor and let it explode in a unventilated basement.

Paul Vance: Wow.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah and this is the guy I'm working with that's supposed to be conscientious of this stuff but he don't care.

Paul Vance: Yeah. Why doesn't he care, though?

Joseph Anzalone: He has worked around it his entire career when they didn't know it was bad [00:57:00] for you and he's fine.

Paul Vance: This is an older guy.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, he's like a 60-year-old older guy.

Paul Vance: Oh, wow.

Joseph Anzalone: About 60, yeah. He was up there cutting it out. He don't care. He throws it on the floor. I'm 26 at the time ...

Paul Vance: You're just like ...

Joseph Anzalone: ... and you got another guy, 20, with us and I'm like, "Really, dude? In 30 years this could affect me but you'll be dead." [crosstalk 00:57:21].

Paul Vance: Yeah, you will.

Joseph Anzalone: He's saying like he worked around it his entire life and it was never bad to him so I guess it's not bad to anybody [00:57:30] else.

Paul Vance: He said quote-unquote that he worked around it. Could you tell that he had worked around it? Did he look like that?

Joseph Anzalone: No. I mean, I don't know.

Paul Vance: Was he coughing? Was he ...

Joseph Anzalone: No, you couldn't really tell in that sense. He didn't look like he was in the best health but that could be completely ...

Paul Vance: A million different things, yeah.

Joseph Anzalone: ... unrelated. That could be completely unrelated.

Paul Vance: Totally.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, I asked to get transferred from that job and they wouldn't transfer me and it was a whole thing I got [inaudible 00:57:55].

Paul Vance: You'd rather [00:58:00] be a project manager where you could ...

Joseph Anzalone: Yes and no.

Paul Vance: Do you like working with your hands?

Joseph Anzalone: I do but I also, like I said, I don't want to be exposed to this. I have a kid now and so [crosstalk 00:58:10] people that are-

Paul Vance: Yeah, you don't want to bring that home.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, I don't want to bring it home. I bring it home on my jeans. I bring it home on my shoes, my shirt, my hair. You can't avoid it.

Paul Vance: I'm assuming that if you could change anything about your job you would ...

Joseph Anzalone: The conditions.

Paul Vance: ... change the condition, like the ... not the cleanliness. I mean ...

Joseph Anzalone: It's really [00:58:30] that air quality and the products that are used, I guess, aren't safe but what is? I don't know. Those are known to not be safe.

Paul Vance: Like the oil and stuff, like the greasy ...

Joseph Anzalone: No, not so much that but the airborne stuff that you just can't avoid breathing in all day.

Paul Vance: Yeah, so it's the air quality.

Joseph Anzalone: It's mainly that Monokote. It's your cement that's being drilled into and breathe in all that dust and stuff like that. That's not good for you. It's been proven that [00:59:00] it's not good for you but here we are.

Paul Vance: Working in these conditions.

Joseph Anzalone: Make sure you have your hard hat on.

Paul Vance: Yeah.

Joseph Anzalone: That'll keep you safe.

Paul Vance: Totally. Here's a mask. Here's a dust mask.

Joseph Anzalone: [crosstalk 00:59:13].

Paul Vance: Yeah. Wow. The dust, yeah. That is a [00:59:30] major one. You're about to have a kid?

Joseph Anzalone: No, I had one.

Paul Vance: You have a kid. Oh my gosh, congratulations. Would you ever recommend this?

Joseph Anzalone: Want him in this field?

Paul Vance: Yeah, would you ever push them in that direction?

Joseph Anzalone: Being it's a girl, no.

Paul Vance: You don't think it's a ...

Joseph Anzalone: I worked with plenty of females and-

Paul Vance: Do [01:00:00] you have any females on your job now?

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah.

Paul Vance: Yeah.

Joseph Anzalone: They're not bad workers. I wouldn't say that but it's just a very ... You're working with a bunch of guys. It's just the way that, not me personally, but they kind of get treated differently in both good ways and bad ways. I just wouldn't recommend it, to be honest with you. I want her to do something that's [crosstalk 01:00:25] ...

Paul Vance: What happens if you-

Joseph Anzalone: ... so you're not breathing this stuff in all day and stuff like that. I wouldn't want her to [01:00:30] be there ... but if they had nothing else and they couldn't come up with something else to do, I mean it's a good job and it's good to know a trade like that. You could use that any time.

Paul Vance: You studied music.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, has nothing to do with it.

Paul Vance: It had nothing to do with it so you didn't have anything else to do so you chose this or ...

Joseph Anzalone: I wanted to do music. I wasn't much of a [01:01:00] musician in the fact where I would be able to be like a music teacher and teach notes and scales a bunch of kids and stuff like that. That wasn't me. I was more writing. I like to write music. I don't mind covering music but I like to write music and if you're not in that field of mainstream making money like that through entertainment field and all that [crosstalk 01:01:26] ...

Paul Vance: Yeah.

Joseph Anzalone: ... if you're not signed to a label and have a name [01:01:30] out there for yourself you're really not going to be making money. Even that's hard. You got to have a certain image these days. It's kind of hard. It's a rough field.

Paul Vance: You fell back on this.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, I definitely fell back on this.

Paul Vance: It doesn't-

Joseph Anzalone: It's not a bad thing.

Paul Vance: No, no.

Joseph Anzalone: I wouldn't say that, no.

Paul Vance: No. It's just tough.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah.

Paul Vance: Do you think that ... apprentices or in the [01:02:00] future are going to do the same type of work that you're doing now or do you think there's going to be a change?

Joseph Anzalone: I think they'll be doing the same type of work in a different way.

Paul Vance: Okay.

Joseph Anzalone: There's going to be new advancements and different things in products that we use now to make things easier, maybe quicker, maybe use different materials that are more cost efficient, more energy efficient, whatever it may be that might be different. Now we got guys that do solar power and do different [01:02:30] hookups for more clean buildings and stuff like that and that's all stuff that guys 30 years ago never even thought to do.

Paul Vance: Are you doing that now in Hudson?

Joseph Anzalone: I'm not but there's stuff on the job that they are doing like they have rain water collectors ...

Paul Vance: Oh, wow.

Joseph Anzalone: ... and the building will store a certain amount of rain water, a lot of rain water, to use and it just uses to just flush the toilets so you're not wasting fresh, clean potable water unless you're drinking it or washing your hands and this [01:03:00] and that but if you're flushing the toilet it's just using that rain water. It's probably filtered and stuff but it's not like wasting energy. It's saving energy in that sense.

Paul Vance: As an electrician are they doing any energy saving type of ...

Joseph Anzalone: On my job, I have not done. Not that I know of ...

Paul Vance: Are they doing wind turbines?

Joseph Anzalone: ... but they do do that in certain places.

Paul Vance: Are they doing solar?

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah, they do stuff like that.

Paul Vance: Okay.

Joseph Anzalone: I haven't come across it yet but I know people who have and I know that they are doing [01:03:30] more and more of that because buildings are getting a tax cut for that.

Paul Vance: Yeah.

Joseph Anzalone: Stuff like that.

Paul Vance: In New York.

Joseph Anzalone: They're saving money for that and that's good because in long run it's going to help our environment which really is a big thing these days.

Paul Vance: Is it a big thing to you as a ...

Joseph Anzalone: I think so.

Paul Vance: ... as an electrician?

Joseph Anzalone: As an electrician or just as a person?

Paul Vance: I mean, both I guess. Do you think there would be more work for you as an electrician if we had to ... retrofit [01:04:00] stuff?

Joseph Anzalone: [crosstalk 01:04:00] going green and stuff like that, yeah. I think there'd be more work because you'd have the bigger percentage of buildings that need work that aren't green so going back and changing them all, it'd open up a lot of work.

Paul Vance: Do you have any advice for someone who's starting out in the field? Is there any advice you'd give to your apprentices or anything like that?

Joseph Anzalone: Stick with it ...

Paul Vance: Stick with it.

Joseph Anzalone: ... as much as you don't want to because the apprenticeship, we have the roughest apprenticeship out of any of the trades, I think. [01:04:30] Most trades will agree to that.

Paul Vance: Really?

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah.

Paul Vance: Even like the iron workers and stuff like that?

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah.

Paul Vance: Wow, okay.

Joseph Anzalone: I started at \$11 an hour. Most trades will at least start you at 18, 20 so coming into that, taking that kind of cut in pay and being able to do it, then they ask you for dues. Your dues are \$250, \$280 and then they ask you for an initiation fee of \$500. [01:05:00] Then you got to pay \$280 a month for our train ticket to get into the city. Then you got to pay another \$100 for your subway. You're doing all this while making \$11 an hour. I mean, you do the math.

Paul Vance: No, yeah, yeah.

Joseph Anzalone: It's not easy.

Paul Vance: Do you feel like you're compensated enough for this job?

Joseph Anzalone: Once you get past that level [crosstalk 01:05:21], once you get that past that level it goes like this. It's not worth it, it's not worth it, it's not worth it, okay, it's worth it. I'll [01:05:30] do it for this.

Paul Vance: You think all those obstacles lead you to appreciate that compensation?

Joseph Anzalone: Yes. Yes. I think it's a way of keeping younger people from starting in the apprenticeship because somebody who's older and has a family won't be able to take that pay cut and start at \$11 an hour. They want younger people to come up. I've worked with an apprentice who was 50 years old [01:06:00] and he was like a third year apprentice. He was a MIJ and there's no reason why he should've really been on a [crosstalk 01:06:06].

Paul Vance: That's crazy.

Joseph Anzalone: I don't even understand that but then I had to pick up a lot of the work because it was hard. Some stuff was hard for him and I had to end up acting like an apprentice all over again so it's rough and I think doing that cut in pay and stuff does help keep people younger to come in and ...

Paul Vance: Go up again.

Joseph Anzalone: ... make their way up.

Paul Vance: Is that the natural process, you think?

Joseph Anzalone: [01:06:30] I think so. It's meant to be a lifetime career, yeah.

Paul Vance: Yep.

Joseph Anzalone: Definitely.

Paul Vance: You think that you'll continue or ...

Joseph Anzalone: Till I hit the lotto.

Paul Vance: Yeah. Is there anything that inspires you or motivates you or anything you're passionate about?

Joseph Anzalone: Electrically?

Paul Vance: I mean, it could be ...

Joseph Anzalone: [crosstalk 01:06:52] electric-

Paul Vance: ... either electrically or in general but ... what comes to mind first?

Joseph Anzalone: [01:07:00] Traveling.

Paul Vance: Traveling, so ...

Joseph Anzalone: That's what I aspire to.

Paul Vance: You wake up, go to work-

Joseph Anzalone: That's why I want to make money.

Paul Vance: Yeah. You want to travel.

Joseph Anzalone: I want to travel. I want to see the world. I want to see new things. I want to see different types of nature and environments and animals and places that people live and beaches and ...

Paul Vance: Different type of construction.

Joseph Anzalone: ... meet different people and construction. The only type of cool construction, I went to Italy and I went to Rome and I seen the [01:07:30] Coliseum and all that old stuff and that was walking through New York City and all of the sudden ancient Rome is the next block over. It was pretty intense and that was cool.

Paul Vance: That was cool. That is-

Joseph Anzalone: No electricity back then, huh?

Paul Vance: That's crazy. Isn't that crazy?

Joseph Anzalone: I would've had no place.

Paul Vance: Thank you, Joe.

Joseph Anzalone: Yeah.

Paul Vance: That's all I got for right now.

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