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Christopher Breiseth: This is the 7th of May, 2018. We're herewith Eugene Roth, Jim Rodechko, Dr. Michelini, Tim Gilmour from Kansas City, and I'm Chris Breiseth. And we've talking about the flood recovery, the process by which federal assistance really came in to make Wilkes-Barre viable, and certainly Wilkes College viable. And we've got to ask Gene Roth to repeat his shoe story, leading up to his visit with the makers and shakers in Washington.

ER: Well, in any event, let me just try to put it in context. The issues that confronted the city of Wilkes-Barre, and the whole infrastructure started when Seymour Holtzman, Frank Casella, and I—all of us had gone to school together, and I wound up—

CB: Class of '57.

Eugene Roth: Class of '57. And I wound representing them, and Jewelcor, and that was the beginning of a whole other story. But, in any event, the three of us got the opportunity to buyout a position that was held by one of the directors on the Wyoming National Bank. We had a visit with Harold Rose, who was then the president, who encouraged us to buy this guy out, and then I was going to go on the Board of the Wyoming National Bank. So the flood comes.

CB: A week later.

ER: A week later. And everything in downtown Wilkes-Barre, including my home, my mother's home, my sister's home, my brother's home—everybody that I knew—was pretty much wiped out. So Seymour [and] Frank get a hold of me, because at this point, I'm living at the Woodlands, with my four kids, my wife, and our dog, in a one-room unit in the hotel. In any event, we go down to visit with them, and Harold tells us that he's been in contact with all the folks in the banking departments, who were ever in the state, the federal, and whatever, and talked about all the mortgages that were outstanding. Because in those days the local banks were the mortgagees, and held a ton of money in them. So the question was, well, what do we do? Is the bank going to be able to open? What about the other banks? Rick Ross was the president of the First Eastern Bank, and a member of our Board. Bob Jones was the president of United Penn Bank.

Francis Michelini: Not Tom Kiley?

ER: Tom Kiley was the—he had a major role there, but he wasn't the president. So, in any event, we're having this discussion, and the question is: how do we get everybody assembled? We don't know where people are. So the first thing we have to do is find a leader, and somebody suggested that we have to go down and find Max Rosenn. Now, we knew that Max Rosenn was already back on the second floor in the courthouse, now the Rosenn Courthouse, which is just a block away from here. And we sat down with him, and we discussed, "What do we do?" and how do we get organized, and we started to talk about that. And the first thing is, I said, "Max, look, Senator Scott is your good friend, and do you think he would be helpful?" He said, "Well, I'll call him." And he called Senator Scott, and Scott said, "Whatever you folks need." Now, remember, he was a senator, we had 2 Republican senators at the time, and he was pretty important in Washington. So, during the course of the conversation, he said, "However—I'll do whatever I can, Max; rest assured of that, but remember, you have a congressman, Dan Flood. And Dan Flood was a very powerful guy.

CB: Mustache and all!

ER: Mustache and all. But, there was, really, among the three of us, and ultimately Harold Rose—no he wasn't at that meeting. The three of us knew that Dan Flood was a little eccentric. I'm trying to be kind. [Laughter.] [He was] surrounded by the worst people known to mankind. I mean, his people were just bad people. But Scott said, "Look, no matter what, we can't meet unless we invite Dan Flood." Max said, "Well, I know Dan. I'll call him." So they arranged this meeting in Florida. Now, do you want me to tell the story about the shoes?

[Laughter.]

CB: Yes. In Florida?

ER: No, in Washington. So I have a problem because they want me to go with them. I don't have a suit, I don't have shoes, I don't have anything. And they said, "Don't worry about it. We'll take you up to Friedman." I didn't even have a car. No, I did have a car, actually. Friedman Clothiers was in Exeter, or West Pittston, some place [local]. I'd never been there before. And he was a tailor, and he sold suits. And so I tried on a suit; the suit was great. And I said to him, "Do you have any shoes? Because I don't have any shoes. I just have these boots that I'm in." He said, "I have a pair of shoes right up there." And he points to the top of an area where he has storage. And he said, "They were specially made." And I said, "Well, could I see them?" And he said, "Sure, you can see them." So he brings the shoes down, and they're my size. I said, "Perfect! Wonderful! Can I try them on?" "Yeah, try them on." They looked great. So I put them back in the box, and we go back our way. I had to get a shot for tetanus and whatever, because I had cut my hand. So in any event, now the morning comes: I get dressed; I put the suit on—it fits like a glove. The shoes are wonderful. Now, we were going to the airport, and we were going to use the Jewelcor plane. On the plane was going to be Harold Rose, Seymour, Frank, and the judge. And we were going to fly down, and have a meeting in Senator Scott's office. Dan Flood is going to be there, and then they were going to take us around to some of the other people who would be very significant in helping whatever program we were going to develop. So as I'm walking to the airplane, Max says to me, "Are you okay?" I said, "Yeah, I'm okay. Why?" He said, "Well, you seem to be walking a little differently." And I said, "No, no, I'm fine." So we boarded the plane,

and we land in Washington. I get off the plane, and I trip. And then we're moving a little bit, and I'm just—I can't get squared away, but, you know, [there's] not much I can do, and Max is saying to me, "Are you okay?" So I said, "I think I got new shoes here!" So we get to the Senate office building. I'm still struggling. When I get to the office steps, I'm a little unsettled. To make a long story short, we had the meeting. Dan Flood was Dan Flood. Scott was talking to us about what we would be confronted with, meeting with the chairs of the various committees and so forth. And every time that Senator Scott would make a point, Dan Flood would hit the table and say, "Do you hear what he said?! Do you hear what Senator Scott said?!" "Yeah, we heard." [Laughter.] That went on for about a half hour. Then when we started to visit, I can't even remember, we met with the House chairman from Texas. I can't remember his name, but he was very prominent. And obviously we needed the House. But Dan had a lot of influence in the House, so we were okay. And the same question arose with the Senate. And, at this point, the committee that Max had created—it had all the bankers on it, and a number of other people—and we had devised a program, which initially was 100% grants.

CB: What kind of money are we talking about?

ER: At that point, we hadn't defined what the [amount of] money was, but he had determined it was going to be a grant. And when we presented—and this was Rick Ross' deal—and when we presented that to Scott, he said, "That's never going to fly." And then we said, "Well, what about making a portion of it a grant, and the remainder a 1% loan?" Which is what it ultimately became. Now, what happened—the process was a very unusual process. I mean, I had never experienced anything like it, because it was a lot of wheeling and dealing.

CB: Even in normal shoes! [Laughs]

ER: Well, I'll tell you about the shoes more. So in any event, we had the meeting, and then we're coming back to Wilkes-Barre, and I get back, and go to our room in the Woodlands, and Connie said, "Well, how did it go?" I said, "It was a great meeting. I think we made some headway. We're going to have to do a lot of work yet. And she said, "How'd you make out?" And I said, I had a problem with these shoes." So I take the shoes off. Friedman had said they were specially made? They were specially made! They were specially made for somebody who had one leg longer than the other leg. So when I was in walking in those specially made shoes, I was tripping all over myself! [Laughs]. So that's the story with the shoes. But ultimately, at that time the 1972 flood was viewed as the most severe natural disaster that had ever occurred.

CB: Since the San Francisco earthquake.

ER: Yes. But then, everybody started to get in line. And so Alaska came in and said, "Well, wait a minute. We terrible disaster, so we want to be included in that grant." And then, I don't remember if there were any other states [in the discussion]. And Alaska was holding it up until [Congress] said, "OK, we'll include you guys." And that was that program. And then they did remarkably. And I don't know whose doing [it was], it may have been the Senator's, but the institution got the grants. So for example, the United Hebrew Institute got 100% financing—not financing, but a grant—to repair that building. Wilkes—

FM: It was the Department of Education. [inaudible]

ER: It was the Department of Education. Full grant. I mean, imagine if we had to borrow the money—even at 1% it would have been [expensive].

CB: The size of that [grant], Mike, was what?

FM: The first check was \$4 million and was presented by President Nixon. That was an election year.

ER: Oh, Nixon was very responsive.

FM: And George Romney was the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. And Wilkes had urban development funding, because that's where King's College was built—on an urban development site. And they had new buildings, and Wilkes had 58 old home buildings at campus. So people contrasted with two institutions, but they were totally different impacts by the flood. 16:56. But George Romney, with Housing and Urban Development, as deliverer of services was non-existent. They were not structured to be able to handle ad-hoc things. And Frank Carlucci was in his 30s, and had stood in the doorway of an embassy in Africa, holding off the vandal hordes who were attacking the American embassy. And he just faced them down. And his reputation as a troubleshooter under pressure had Nixon appointing him to head the flood recovery task force.

CB: Bizarre.

FM: And took it away from HUD, and George Romney. And so, so many pieces came into place. The election year; how Frank Carlucci came to be selected, but he was the savior. He organized, and Max and the Flood Recovery Task Force was the formally established task force that Max headed. They worked through Frank Carlucci.

CB: By the way, the first letter of congratulations for me when I was appointed president at Wilkes was from Frank Carlucci.

ER: Is that right?

CB: Yeah. Now, let me take this story as a way in for you to kind of give your portrait of Max Rosenn as a leader in this community. I mean, you knew him in the law firm. But from my perspective coming into this community in 1984, 12 years after the flood, Max's role as a federal judge, and as a community leader is virtually unique. I mean, I don't know any—and I've known federal judges in their local settings doing exciting things locally, but nothing as leaderly as Max was. You saw him as a colleague, as a mentor. You probably could be as critical of Max for his shortcomings as you were admiring of his strengths. But he was really a major guy for this community, and the flood, really, as I see it, established his local leadership in ways that are enduring. So [discuss] your view of Max.

ER: Well, Max Rosenn was a very unique individual. First of all, his father was crippled. And there was always a question of how that happened. He used to buy and sell cattle, and the claim was that he broke his back picking up an animal. For years and years and years, his father was bedridden, and never got out of bed. And yeah, Max, and Harold, his two sons, and their two sisters all were educated because they had a little store that his mother ran.

CB: Tillie.

ER: No, Tillie was his wife. I'm talking about his mother.

CB: What was his mother's name?

ER: I don't recall her name. She was really before my time. I was just a little kid when she was there. She was a remarkable woman, and her kids idolized her. But she was the kind of person who, at the time of the Depression, and so forth, well enabled people to live. You know, it was the time when people used to say, put it on tick. Well, "put it on tick" was when you bought something in a store, and they would mark it down, and when you had a couple of dollars, you came and you paid for it. And that's how a lot of these small grocery stores survived themselves, and helped their public. So that's what Max grew up with. He was--when the Second World War came, he was in the Philippines as an officer.

CB: He played a major role there.

ER: Yeah. And he was a very unique thinker, but he had a very, very strong attitude about what was right, and what was wrong. So, for example, he wanted to become a mason, but you couldn't become a mason in Luzerne County if you were Jewish. So Max went to Bloomsburg, and applied to Bloomsburg. I mean, I don't know what the process is because I'm not a mason, but [inaudible]. And so he became a mason. And now he came back up here, and now he's a mason! [Laughter.] I think maybe the first Jewish mason in Luzerne County. He was a guy—for example, when the Ku Klux Klan became active in certain areas in Forty Fort, he took them on right away, through the B'nai B'rith, the ADL [Anti-Defamation League] which he was involved with right from the beginning. And it didn't matter whose cause it was, but that was Max Rosenn. He was a religious man. He was profoundly complete in his understanding of the Jewish religion. He went to services; he was the president of the synagogue. He was very much involved in the total community. And you know, it was very interesting—just to follow up with Max and some of the unique things he did—Max and Harold originally had a firm called Rosenn & Rosenn, and Max came to the conclusion that if the law practice was going to thrive, that it would be necessary to really get a broader representation. So he talked to Henry Greenwald, and convinced [him] to join him. And he talked to Mitch Jenkins who had just completed a period of time when he was—

CB: A congressman.

ER: Yeah, when he was a congressman. And he hated it. I mean, he was wonderful—I had an uncle who was in a concentration camp. The day he was released from the concentration camp, he went on his way to what he thought might be his prior home. Somebody pushed him off the

train. He fell off the train [and] lost his leg. After a year or so, he lived, and he was repaired in part, but he walked around with crutches, and one leg for the remainder of his life. So my mother—this takes me into [discussion of] Jenkins—my mother wanted to bring him over. In those days, if you were not physically fit, they wouldn't take you in. So they said, "Sorry, he and his wife can't come over." So my mother, who was a tenacious Hungarian lady, she went to see Mitch Jenkins. Just made an appointment to see him, and told him the story. He said, "I'll see what I can do." Didn't even know who my mother was. Didn't know the Roth family. And at that time, we weren't much to know! I don't know about even now! [Laughter.] So, lo and behold, he presents, to the House of Representatives, tells the story about my Uncle Morris, and presents a bill that would allow them to bring him to the United States, on the proviso that my mother and father would guarantee that he would never look for any aid or subsidy or anything. So in any event, Mitch Jenkins comes onboard, and they form Rosenn, Jenkins & Greenwald. And they decide to move from what was then the United Penn bank to the building that we're in right now on Franklin Street. And they'd go up on the tenth floor, and at that point they had half of the floor. By the way, I'm in high school at this time; I don't know any of these guys. But during the course of that period of time—as a matter of fact, when I came back from law school, they did not accept, initially, Catholics or Jews at the Westmoreland Club. And that always bothered Mitch Jenkins. So [he] came to Max, and he said, "You know, I think this is wrong, and I think what we should do is get a Jew on into—by the way, they began to take Catholics. Pete Casterline was the first one that got in there. He was a doctor. So in any event, at that point, Mitch said, "But you know, Max, I don't think that you would be the right person. Because they would say, oh yeah, you want me to take your partner in [to Westmoreland Club]. I think we ought to find somebody else. And Max said, "How about Lou Shaffer?" And Mitch carried water. And Lou Schaffer became the first Jew who was a member of the Westmoreland Club. But that broke through—

CB: That's a powerful story.

ER: That broke though some of the things that existed as late as the '60s. So that was Max. Max was a guy who loved challenges. He fought the ILGW [International Ladies' Garment Workers Union] for years and years. When I came to Rosenn, Jenkins, and Greenwald we represented 60 garment manufacturers. Now, to be a garment manufacturer, all you needed was a room about this size, four or five sewing machines, and four or five people to operate the sewing machines. The unemployment rate at that point—remember, at that point, we had a break-in, and the mines were flooded, and so forth. So the men were out of work, and the question was, would men learn how to operate sewing machines, and make women's clothing? The answer was a major "no way!" So we became—in this industry, it was the women who became the providers in the family. And ILGWU, at the time, was a very difficult group.

CB: Min Matheson.

ER: Min Matheson. Boy, was she a tough woman. So they battled each other for a long period of time. But Max was not the kind of guy who mixed his emotions with his ability to practice the law. It was a matter of the law. It was not the matter of, "How do I feel about the person who's challenging me?" And then he became involved with Wilkes. He just became a man with a great reputation. And was involved in every charitable enterprise in the community. So he was then

approached by the Republican Party--I don't remember who it was who came to see him—and wanted to nominate him for an opening on the district court bench. He was nominated, and he was opposed. I'm not going to mention who opposed him, but he was opposed. And there were a lot of things that were said about Max that just were not true. But in any event, Max withdrew his name for consideration. And I can't remember the name of the judge who took his place. So that was it, and he was perfectly satisfied to continue practicing law and so forth. And when I came on board—I graduated law school in 1960—fortunately passed the Bar the first time. And then I needed a job. Well, the only lawyer I knew was Joe Savitz. And when I went to law school, I needed a preceptor. You needed some lawyer who would sponsor you. So Joe Savitz became my sponsor. Now, I'm about to graduate from law school. I had spent two summers as a clerk, making \$15 a week, and I'll never forget Max called me into his office. And I had never done anything with Max. I did with Henry Greenwald. Harold [Rosenn], I'd meet with at 8:00 every morning. He was a pistol. He'd say, "I want you to call what's-his-name, and tell what's-his name"— Well, who's what's-his-name? He said, "Are you listening to me?"

[Laughter.]

ER: I mean, it was like torture. Every morning I'd have to meet with him. Because I did all the courthouse filings; I did all the closings at Franklin Federal; you can't imagine what I was doing. And Max calls me into his office, and it's just, really, a very small office that we had. I was working in a library. So he said, "Gene, when you come in, see me for a minute." I figured, oh my God. Max Rosenn called me. This is going to be big. You know, this may be my future!

CB: Your moment!

[Laughter.]

ER: This is my moment. So he says to me, "Your father has a truck, doesn't he?" [Laughter.] I said, "Yeah, he's got a couple of trucks." He said, "Well, listen, I'm just wondering. I've got to take something out to my cottage at Harvey's Lake. Would you be willing to ask your dad if you could use the truck?" I said, "Yeah. Yes, sir, I think I will, Mr. Rosenn, yes." So that was the beginning and the abrupt ending of my future. [Laughter.] But in any event, then, after about a year or so, he became the Secretary of—

CB: Welfare.

ER: Of Welfare. And was profoundly effective as such. Did a lot of things that changed everything that was going on in that whole field. And Governor [Ray] Shafer was the governor.

CB: Who was a Democrat, wasn't he?

Tim Gilmour: Mmhhh.

ER: No, no, Shafer was a Republican. And someday I'll tell you about how the IRS went after somebody in town to try to get Shafer. But in any event, so when his term as Secretary was completed, he came back to the office, and after that he got a telephone call from Senator Scott

[who] said, “There’s an opening on the Circuit Court of Appeals. And if you’re up to it, I’d like to nominate you.” And Max said, “Boy, I’d be honored.” And that was the beginning of the whole story. And you know, I mean he was the kind of guy who, he did turn a little to the left because he spent a lot of time with those graduates from town and—

CB: It brought him into my orbit, actually.

ER: What was that?

CB: It brought him into my orbit. [Laughter].

ER: Yeah. But in any event, he had a magnificent career. To this day has a wonderful reputation, and he was a unique individual.

CB: Tell us about he got involved with Wilkes, and how you see his relationship as a Wilkes trustee, with the presidents, as well as with the general direction of the college and university.

ER: Well, I think that Max was already on the Board when I came.

CB: When did you come on the Board?

ER: I don’t even remember. Sometime in the late ‘60s. And I came on the way Max—the way Joe did.

CB: Through Alumni [Association as] president.

ER: Yeah, he was the president of the Alumni Association. I’m not sure how Max came on. But Max felt that Wilkes had a unique role. You know, remember, he was very close to a number of the people who were on the Board at that time. And I think he was just invited on the Board, and he served for a long period of time.

CB: Would Dr. Farley have taken a major role in—

ER: Dr. Farley, yes—

CB: —bringing him on?

ER: Yes, he would’ve taken on a large role. So you had Andrew Sordoni, Sr. who was on the board. Lou Shaffer was already on the Board at that time. I don’t really remember.

FM: Was Weis on the Board? [inaudible]

ER: Aaron Weis? Yeah. Levy? His name was Levy?

FM: Art Levy!

CB: Reuben Levy.

FM: I think Max must have been very much respected by them and they kind of moved him onto the Board when I first came here in 1955.

ER: Yeah, I think so.

FM: I think Max probably went on between '58, '60, '62.

ER: Yeah, it could have been. Right.

FM: Because Admiral Stark was chairman of the Board—

ER: And Carpenter was—

FM: [inaudible] Carpenter. Yeah.

CB: Donald—

FM: But there was a Jewish community that met at Percy Brown's for breakfast there for a while.

ER: Yeah. Well, again, just to point out, I mean there was a period of time in this community when it wasn't easy for a Jew to even get into college, let alone law school, or alone medical school. So Wilkes represented—you know I've said this every time people describe Wilkes—the first coeducational institution. First non-religious affiliated institution. I mean it was just—

FM: Ethnicity meant nothing. Yep.

ER: Yeah. It just meant nothing. And it was loaded in my year. We were all first-generation college students. So it was just a place where you could get a break. And you could get a chance to find out whether you had the metal to be successful in your life. And that was pretty unique. And in my history, my brother Marvin came to Wilkes. He was a lousy student. Although I think he was better than I was in high school. But he was a veteran, and even though he left his senior year in high school—that was an automatic graduation. So he was in the 8th Air Force. And I previously told the [story]. So when he came back, he came to Wilkes. And that was a period of time when GIs were here. I mean, they worked. It was not two semesters; it was a whole year. All they wanted to do was get out and get on with their lives. So Wilkes was such a unique opportunity for all of us.

CB: Well, looking at the point where you see Max on the Board, and you become a board member, say something about his leadership role within the Wilkes family community.

ER: I would have to say this, to be candid with you. Max was what I'd call an education elitist. So his experience had been Cornell, and law school. So if you didn't go to an Ivy League school, and you didn't—I mean, I remember when I was being considered to go with Rosenn, Jenkins &

Greenwald, you know—Wilkes College? And Dickinson School of Law? I mean, you know, hardly what he envisioned for his firm. But they prevailed upon him, and I got the job but—And by the way, until I passed the Bar, which was fortunate in only 6 months—I was married, and I had a child—my starting wage was \$65 a week. My rent was \$65 a month, so I was able to cover that in the first week. Then I passed the Bar. I was admitted December of the year I graduated from law school, and I got a raise to \$85 a week. [laughter]

CB: Almost spoiled you!

FM: When did you go on the Board, Gene?

ER: Honestly, I don't remember.

FM: Was Bob Capin president?

ER: I think Bob Capin was president, yes.

CB: So you [Roth and Michelini] were not together?

FM: You weren't on the Board when I was.

ER: No. He was the President here when he had a real tough Board. I think Judge Penola was on it. Was he on the Board? Judge Penola?

CB: Judge Penola?

FM: No. He was not on the Board. I became President in 1970, and Judge Penola was not on the Board then. I believe he had just been elevated to something that—

ER: Well, he was on the Bench.

FM: Yeah. I don't remember.

CB: Who were some of your Board members, Mike?

FM: Well, the critical one that I remember was Admiral Stark. Because he and Walter Carpenter—

CB: Walter or Donald?

FM: Donald Carpenter. Why do I say Walter all the time?

CB: Because he gave that huge amount of money for Stark Hall. The IBM stock.

FM: Well, Don Carpenter was what, his son?

CB: Cousin.

FM: Cousin. Okay. So it was Don Carpenter. But they were the key people. I was a Biology professor. I knew nothing about administration. And there was no [inaudible 46:25]. And Dr. Farley told me the story of how Admiral Stark went into his office after a board meeting, and sat in his desk chair. Admiral Stark was about 5'7" and Gene Farley was about 6'4."

ER: I always thought he was 7 foot tall! [Laughter.]

CB: It's all a matter of perspective! [Laughter.]

FM: If you knew Dr. Farley, you can just see that scene with Admiral Stark sitting there at his desk: white hair, shock white. Blue eyes, piercing blue eyes. And Dr. Farley standing at his desk. And [Stark] said, "Gene, I have the responsibility to tell you the board has authorized me to tell you that you have one year in which to make some changes in your administration, or we will have to make some changes in your position." And Dr. Farley was a little taken aback, of course. And Admiral Stark said to him, "When you're in the Navy, and you're the Captain of a ship, if you're shot off the bridge there has to be a man ready to step up and take your place. And if *he* is shot off the bridge, there is another man ready to step up and take his place, to keep that a fighting ship until the last man, or until the ship goes down. And he said, "The board has discussed this, and you have no one at Wilkes College who would understand, or be able to take over, and run the institution if you had an accident, or passed away." And he said, "So we're authorized to give you one year to build an administrative structure that will establish that line of responsibility." So the first thing I know, Dr. Farley calls me in one day, and he says, "Mike, would you like to become my Academic Dean? I didn't know what an Academic Dean was! [Laughter.] Wilkes never had an Academic Dean. But he was creating the structure of administration that Admiral Stark had told him the board expected him to establish. And I said, "Gee, I have three young girls. If I leave research, I'm never going to be a biologist again. And so if I go into administration, that's the end of my career as a biologist. I have to Ann Marie, and we'll see about it. So I went home, and lo and behold, the next day, I get a letter from the National Science Foundation saying—our students had done wonderful on their undergraduate research. Sheldon Cohen had, he just [inaudible 49:29], and Jerry Stein. More of the greats of that generation. And we had established a pretty good reputation for undergraduate student research, which was not the norm. You never did research until graduate school. So it had come to the attention of the National Science Foundation. They called and said—or, they wrote me a letter, Owen Dees was the director, and Alan Waterman was the top chief, and they asked me. They had 30% of their complement in Washington. They rotated faculty members from the academic community, that was the Department of the National Science Foundation policy. So, I got this letter inviting me to go to Washington for a year. I came to Dr. Farley, and I said to him, "You know, Dr. Farley, you've asked me to make a decision about Academic Dean, but I have this opportunity to go to Washington." "Oh, Mike, that'll be great! That'll be good experience!" He laughed so hard! It gave him something to report back to the Board [so] the Board was happy. So I came back in 1963 as Academic Dean. [I] hadn't even been a department chairman! But that's the evolution of the administration under Dr. Farley. It's fascinating because we've talked at length about the department chairman's role, the Hugo Maileys, the Institute of Municipal Government, the economics.

JR: Economic development.

CB: Andy Shaw finally wound up Hugo Mailey's—

FM: Rosenberg! Sam Rosenberg! The links to the community were through faculty leaders. Al Groh in Fine Arts. There were links to every aspect of the—

CB: Institute of Regional Affairs.

FM: [inaudible]. And the economy of the community that we've talked about at length, and the influence that Wilkes exerted. When they had to develop a cooperation between political entities that had been encouraged by the coal companies to hate each other. If you were Irish, if you were German Catholic, you know. Every ethnic group, every divisive influence coal companies used to keep their workers from a collective power.

ER: And when you think about the influence of the people you just mentioned on the community—because this community was about as backward as backward could be. Not their fault. There was never that kind of leadership, and yet these faculty members took on responsibility. I mean, Rosenberg developed this whole mediation process with the unions—

FM: RCA [inaudible] with their economic development.

ER: Yeah. Mailey began to train all these—

CB: Local politicians.

ER: Who were running the politics of the area.

FM: But the price Wilkes paid, and I feel this personally very much was that we had accomplished independent faculty members, that was not a presidential leadership per se. And every president at Wilkes has had to deal with that inherited role of the faculty. I guess it's changing now, but every one of us in this creation of this history—when Bob Capin was alive, he discussed exactly what we're talking about. The good with the bad in an administrative sense: Wilkes did not evolve with an administrative determined institution. And it's perfectly understandable: the society and the culture was changed by Wilkes. But so was the role of the President. Always a different kind of role when it came to institutional operation and leadership. And every one of us experienced that kind of back and forth set of pressures. The institution became the better for it but it is not a clean line of—not like if you were the president of Princeton, or the president of Harvard [where] you wrote academic papers. There was not that kind of leadership that Wilkes required at that time, and Gene Farley walked that—he orchestrated. He was orchestra conductor.

ER: Yeah.

CB: And my take on this is, having come in '84, is that Dr. Farley's conductor role had established a pattern, and there was no strong organizational structure under him. Dr. Mike started, just before the flood, to create three divisions and some people—

FM: Yeah. A faculty policy committee.

CB: In talking about this topic say that the flood saved Wilkes, because that organizational structure was causing a kind of friction between Mike and the faculty, and the Board, that was exquisite. And the three people that were in those roles: Ben Fiester,

FM: [inaudible] History, Sciences.

CB: Dave Leech. All of them were punished by their colleagues, for trying to become an administrative presence, helping to guide the institution. And Mike paid his own price for that. And Bob Capin came on, and he got a dean, and I inherited his dean, and the faculty still were not accepting that leadership. So I, as an outsider, came in, and—

FM: You were the first [outsider] in the whole history of the college—

CB: And my first—

FM: That came in with administrative experience, and no Wilkes history. I came through the faculty. Bob Capin came from student— through faculty, administration. Chris Breiseth came in, and he was the first one who [was external].

CB: And my first action was to assemble all the department chairs, because they had the real power. And by the way, they had unlimited terms. So some of them had been department chair, like barons in Germany for years! And they had no control over where the institution went. But they had tremendous control of their department. And the key two points of pressure were tenure, and promotion. And some of the decisions that were made on those grounds I found so offensive when I got here that I had decided I had to take that on. But out of that group of department chairs, we created three deans. But it came from the barons. And so that gradual—and Jim Rodechko was one of them—and gradually that system became tenable so by the time Tim [Gilmour] gets here, you've got a structure with effective deans. But it was—I'm really glad we had this conversation because your perception of what the Rosenburgs, and the Grohs, and the Maileys did was accurate. I mean, they were in empowered to play a role, not only on the campus, but in the community that probably was as close to unique in American higher ed. of that period that you could find. But getting on top of that for their successors, who had the expectation to play those same roles, including Andy Shaw, at the Institute of Regional Affairs—it was like we had a bucking bronco.

CB: Now, let's get back to your perception as a trustee. I would say this about Max. You talk about his tenacity., dealing with the ILGWU, my inheritance was tenure too. I don't know if you remember that label. But after the flood, I don't know how soon it happened, but we in effect came from a Board developed policy for interruptible tenure. Because we had to get rid of people. Mike had to get rid of people because we didn't have the budget. And so we fired people

who had been here more than 7 years, and under AAUP guidelines, at 7 years, you got tenure. So we were on censure with AAUP when I came. And my job with Max Rosenn was to persuade him that this—in terms of higher ed.—this was an unacceptable censure, and that we had to get away from interruptible tenure, and I went to the faculty, and persuaded them to do a five-year review process from tenured faculty, that was a real signal back to a tenured faculty. And I remember thinking, well, you're not pulling your weight. And it was my bargain the first semester I was here, and Max assented. And once Max assented, the rest of you went along with that. But that was as much as the Andy Shaw thing, which I talked about on the administrative side. That relationship with the board was what made me president.

FM: Well, let's go back even further. When I came back here in 1955, the post-WWII had gone through. Enrollments were declining. The Korean War had started, and created a new blip on the upside, and there were—I think the enrollment at Wilkes was 500 students when I came in 1955, and it was increasing. The Biology Department had two-and-a-half faculty, part-timer, and two full-timers. Chuck Reif, and Grace Kimball. I had tenure within 2 years. Recruiting faculty was very difficult. And I'm sure that they saw this young guy with a PhD from the University of Pennsylvania, that was pretty prestigious to bring into a Biology Department. So you know, I moved in [and] had tenure within 2 years, and think of a faculty that had that kind of view of tenure. I don't think I even knew what tenure was.

ER: Yeah, I didn't know what tenure was.

CB: Dr. Farley would apparently meet you on South Franklin Street, and say, "You've got tenure." So it was all in his hands. No process.

FM: All I knew was that if you were at Wilkes for two years, they would then start paying 5% of your salary, 6% of your salary into TIAA-CREF, and 5% would be assessed from your salary. That was the only terms of employment I ever had, was that you're going to be on probation for 2 years, and if you're okay, that's—

CB: Which is basically the public school teacher pattern.

FM: So you know, you inherit that kind of faculty lack of understanding of even any—they didn't create the tenure policy. There was no tenure policy. Wilkes was damn lucky to get anybody to teach! You know, because the market was so influx. And then with the Vietnam War, during the '60s, and the student protest movements, there was a lot of ambiguity in the system. That's my point—that persisted through to the time when I became President. And Dr. Farley recognized that. He had cultivated the students. Dan Kopen was very active. Student leadership that Dr. Farley had respected and listened to. But the transition of faculty—I remember as Dean, we created, and Dr. Farley understood this, we tried to create a faculty policy committee. Bring faculty into an understanding of the administrative issues that now a full-fledged college [required]—we were not a university by any means. But we were confident that Wilkes was going to be around. And so that effort and initiative was underway, when I became President and the flood hit. So that was such a critical turning point administratively. When Bob Capin, I think his term was very much a fundamental holding action financially. I know he worked very hard.

Those were bad years, the late '70s economically for the whole country. Inflation—Jimmy Carter had inflation rates of 18 percent! I mean, you [Roth] were in the banking business.

ER: Sure.

FM: So, it's been interesting for me to see the transition. And Chris was the first outside experienced administrator that actually set foot on Wilkes campus.

CB: Jim, you were [saying something].

JR: Back in the '60s, faculty didn't care about tenure. You couldn't recruit faculty by offering tenure. There was a scarcity of faculty. It wasn't until the very late '60s that tenure became a recruiting issue when the market started to close off. The tenure policy that Dr. Farley had was actually one that most faculty really liked.

FM: It was very generous.

JR: And you could stay as long as you wanted as an assistant professor., which was a very nice thing without getting the degree. And he postponed it. He postponed the tenure decision so you'd have ample time to get it.

CB: But in terms of AAUP, surfed as a problem after the flood, when you had to get rid of people who'd been here longer than 7 years. And that created the crisis that I inherited, and that's when I saw Max Rosenn have to make a shift because he was really irritated with what he saw as senior faculty who were not pulling their weight. And he felt the board had to get involved. Now you're—that's your board [Roth]. So you know that side of it. So speak to us of the board, as it took hold of these issues.

ER: Well, my experience, and my perception, has been generally that the board has a tendency, a strong tendency to follow the President. And when the President is effective, they support the President. When they don't see the President as being effective, which I've never experienced, then they look for something else. But I have always felt that the issues that were brought to the Board, were always consistently presented in a way, having been fully vetted if you will. Although there were faculty people, particularly one fellow who used to annoy the hell out of me. Tim, who was your faculty leader?

TG: Oh, we had several.

ER: The first one.

TG: I think you're thinking of Art Kibbe. [1:06:40]

ER: That's who I'm thinking of. Art Kibbe would get up, and he would say—

FM: Who?

CB: Art Kibbe. Pharmacy.

ER: He would basically say to the Board, “You know, your responsibility is to raise the money. And you guys aren’t raising enough money.” I mean, he was murder. What did you think, Jim?

JR: I never knew Art in that category. I mean, I was Vice-President. I had very little to do with him. I dealt with Bernie.

ER: I think he challenged the Board at one point, that he would match \$1 for every \$10 that we [raised]. [Laughter].

TG: No, he would. Yeah, he made a show of that at one meeting at least. No, Jim never had the pleasure of dealing with Art Kibbe, the faculty governance guy. He was a huge challenge, and I really—you know, when you’re in the middle of the battle it’s very difficult to have the kind of perspective that you really need to have. But I felt Art was manipulative, and not altogether honest with himself, and with the faculty, which he represented.

CB: My challenges were Walter Placek, Bill Stein, Bing Wong, and Frank Sally.

ER: But who was on the Board, the Doctor? The poor guy died.

JR & CB: Kopen.

ER: Dan Kopen.

TG: Yep.

ER: Boy, he was tough. He would come in with the same presentation. He would read all these scores from this institution, that institution. We weren’t doing this, and we weren’t doing that. In the meantime, you know, you would solicit him, and he was out of town. [Laughter.]

CB: Well, I got him on the Board. He was presented to me—

ER: He was a bright guy.

CB: Presented to me by Dr. Reif as probably one of the brightest graduates of this place, and I got him. And then, of course, as characteristic of some surgeons, he felt he could master any problem, and become an expert. And so he took on our admissions policy. He took on our advancement policy. He took on our Alumni Affairs policy. And he did some wonderful things. For example, he did a directory of doctors, Wilkes doctors, for two years in a row. I don’t think we’ve ever done anything like that since. We tried lawyers. But those two documents themselves are invaluable for the history of this institution. Because he found—he worked—and we helped him, but initiatives out of his time as a practicing doctor to find as many doctors who graduated from Wilkes as possible. And then he got texts from them, so he’d find out what they’d done in their specialties. So he was remarkable. You know he is the first cousin of Mary Jo Kopechne.

ER: Oh, I didn’t know that.

CB: So this movie that's out now about Ted Kennedy has got to be rocking people in Plymouth, which is where they were from. Two brothers had—the one brother had Mary Jo, and the other brother had Dan and his sister, and that was the family. So that was a huge, brutal experience for that family, and I've talked a little bit with Dan about it.

JR: We had Kopechnes here as students.

FM: And Dan Kopen was a Dr. Farley product, a product of the '60s. Dan was student government president, or very active in student government when Dr. Farley was in his last two years in administration. And we've talked about the relationship of Dr. Farley to students, and George Ralston to students. And Dan Kopen was in that mold of the '60s rebels, questioning everything and anything. And he was the only student leader—or the first student leader—to actually deal with Dr. Farley on a policy level with policy issues. As a student! And Dr. Farley respected that, but he didn't have the confidence of dealing with Dan Kopen because George Ralston always dealt with student issues, and things. So Dr. Farley was in an interesting position there, before I became President, and Dan Kopen educated Dr. Farley to a lot of the issues, the student issues that emerged during the '70s. But at the same time, Dan Kopen was a rebel, and a troublemaker his whole life! [Laughter].

CB: Which I didn't appreciate, to the point that I pushed to have him on the Board. [Laughter]

FM: And apparently, one of his techniques was to wait until the end of a meeting, and then pose a zinger! Instead of posing it at the beginning. But that was the '60s student style!

CB: That's well put.

FM: Wait until the TVs come on at 11:00, and we'll be out on the steps of Columbia University because that's when the cameras are going to start rolling. They were a different generation, and you were part of it, but not that active.

ER: No.

CB: No, he's before that. We're the same age.

FM: But that was Dan Kopen his whole life.

CB: We were '50s kids. I mean, we were learning what is it we have to do to succeed, and we'll do it.

ER: But life was good. As many girls as you could handle at any given time. I mean, it was a wonderful period. Really. But I can remember at the time of the Vietnam War, when schools were closing shortly after the—

CB: Bombing in Cambodia.

ER: No, no, but it was the shooting that occurred at the—

CB: Kent State.

ER & TG: Kent State, yeah.

ER: I'm in our law library, and I look out in the garage, which is the old Guard building, and there was a parking lot, and I see a massive number of kids—students—and as I'm looking out there, they're demonstrating because they don't want final exams. They want the final exams to be postponed. Take them next year. Hey! Not a bad idea. That'll help the Vietnam War! [Laughter]. So, suddenly I see—

CB: Notice the tone of skepticism in the air!

ER: I see Dr. Farley climbing up on the roof—not on a roof but a—

FM: Hood. Hood of a car,

ER: Yeah. And he's standing up with a bullhorn, and his message—I could hear it; I opened a window—his message was, with a bullhorn, "Ladies and gentlemen, final exams will continue as scheduled, and I strongly recommend that you go back to your rooms, and start studying." With that, he gets down from the car [laughter]. And the river opened up! And that was the end of the demonstration. But you know, he had a presence. He had a physical presence. He had the biggest hands of any human being I ever knew. Enormous hands. And when he grabbed your hand, I mean you were intimidated from the get-go.

CB: Metaphorically, I still felt his hands on my shoulder when I came, and Essie [Davidowitz] did everything she could to keep that reality.

ER: I remember when she came and moved your furniture in your office!

CB: She bought it and moved it! I mean, she came in, and decided how it should be decorated. [Laughter].

ER: But Essie was part of that.

CB: Say something about the Board dynamic. Just the members of the Board over time, as you've experienced them as a fraternity and sorority.

ER: Well, you know, I can't say that there was any real intimate association among the Board members. I think a lot of us were honored to be there. [We] never thought in our lives that we would ascend to that kind of a position. Man, woman, and child loved Wilkes. Had such a wonderful experience here; learned so much; gained more than certainly their families ever believed they could. I mean, I remember when I graduated from law school, I mean for my mother and father—two refugees from Hungary—it was something they never thought they'd ever experience. But there was mutual respect. There was a supportive attitude, and I think that's been consistent. Today, I see some people who are a little more moody on the Board. [Laughter]

And I'm not quite sure why that is but I mean there are some people who are not like Dan was. But I think there is that kind of mutual respect, and I think there is the unification with the president. I think they're loyal people, and they understand the issues. I think [they] are very defensive of those people who want to nitpick.

CB: Let me ask you a tough one. You've got 3 presidents here. The 3 surviving presidents. Speak about your sense of the Board's relationship to us as chief executive officers, and the dynamic that you've seen over time in that relationship. I mean the fact that they made you a trustee after we adopted an age limit is an indication that you've played a unique role as a trustee, and I think all of us—Tim, you speak for yourself—you have been a supporter for all of us in ways that we deeply appreciate. So you're in a position, I think, to look at the board relationship to its presidents. It's probably unique.

ER: Yeah. Well, I wasn't on the board when Mike was the President. I came on the board when Bob came. And I would say that, in terms of Bob Capin, the Board was supportive. But Bob was a little tentative because he didn't have a doctorate. And I think that imposed certain constraints. So he would look more like somebody who was there on a fill-in basis. I think when you [CB] came, there was an attitude that you had such a broad background. Your pedigree was untarnished, and you have a way about you that they liked, and that's why you were the president for I don't know how many years.

CB: 17.

ER: 17 years. I mean, that's a long time. And there were some very difficult times that I shared with you. Some that never should have happened. But ultimately tied back into the faculty who never showed any courage. I mean, with all due respect. I remember the day I was in your office, and we were talking about terminating one of the professors.

CB: Tenured professor.

ER: Tenured professor. And I said to you, I'll never forget: "well, what do you want to do?" And you said to me, "I have to get rid of him. Because it's the right thing to do. But I want you to know," this is what you said to me," but I want you to know that this is the end of my career at Wilkes." And I said, "I cannot believe that." I said, "Oh, that's foolish. That's nonsense. Let's just do what we have to do and that's the end of it." And of course, you were right. I mean, I couldn't believe. Today, in this time period, there would have been no question about what you did. Because there was an issue about, maybe there was some sexual thing was at issue. But boy, oh boy, the faculty folded, and came back with the most ridiculous suggestions at that time. And made—

CB: They used the accrediting visit as there time to put in the spear. But I knew that would happen, and I've been part of that from the faculty side at another institution. So I knew faculty behavior. You use the power you've got, and it was only about four or five people, but they were determined, and they were creative, and they managed to end it. But I knew some of it—I didn't know what the scenario was going to be, but I knew that to take that action, particularly with that individual, that began a process that would unfold my presidency. So when that became clear, I

made the decision virtually immediately. The same day. It was time for Wilkes to get a new President. And it went to you. You were my lodestar throughout the whole thing.

ER: And with Tom. Tim, rather. Tim came with a whole new approach. It was received extraordinarily well. It had measurements. It had substance. People could know how were progressing, and so forth and so on. And then out of nowhere, from my standpoint, started this discussion that I don't think the board ever understood. That well, there was a communications issue. I didn't understand what the communications issue was between the administration, and the faculty. I think, bottom line: they just didn't like the direction we were going in. Or they didn't like whatever they didn't like. I mean, Tim would be in a better position to explain that than I, but ultimately, I think he came to the same conclusion. It certainly wasn't performance, and it certainly wasn't the board. So I think this whole thing that's going on, even now—I mean if you look at presidents of major colleges, I mean what they're doing is just—you know, when the President of Dartmouth says, "I'm going to appoint a committee that's going to take a look at what Dartmouth has done over the last 200 years, or 500 years, or however old they are. And they're going to do this analysis, of what? Of a guy who died a hundred years ago? So I'm just not sure where things are going. I mean it's like the prisoners have taken over control of the prison. I wouldn't want to be a college president. I would last as a college president today about 15 seconds. Maybe not that long. [Laughter.]

CB: Well, part of it is—go ahead, Tim.

TG: Well, I don't know if I could add a whole lot but I am—I don't know whether it's good fortune or bad fortune—but I'm looking at these issues, because a bunch of us are thinking of putting together a presidential evaluation system that the Association of Governing Boards might adopt. But the point is that as you read the literature, the general view is that being a president particularly in these times with all the things that are going on on campuses now, with all these basically social issues, are making the job extraordinarily difficult. And while I had my fair share of issues with faculty, what Chris, and Mike, and I encountered is not that unusual. It's this shared governance idea, and so when you put that in context of higher education in general, shared governance tripped up a lot of presidents. And many of them are going in a much shorter period of time than we did. And in many cases, the boards have less understanding than you did, Gene, in fact probably care less, and are less supportive of their presidents as a result. So there's that broader context that we need to understand, and it's only getting worse, and if you read what the Association of Governing Boards is now saying about what presidents need to be able to do, they are truly recognizing how difficult the job is, and that they need support.

ER: Yeah. But from an educational standpoint, I mean if you're an educator, and you look at some of the curricula that kids are paying tens of thousands of dollars to major in, and when they're finished they have what? I mean, I don't think that we should be a trade school, but I think you should be able to come out with some sense of—

CB: Well, your perception of that problem—I would turn the diamond to look at a different facet—which is that there's a real instability between the cost of education, and what individuals and their families are having to go into debt for, and the outcome of an education of what students can realize. Now, in many cases, going on to law school and medical school up to now,

you've been able to recover from that debt relatively quickly. But as I look forward, for example in medicine, I think doctors are going to be corporate people. They're going to be on salary. And so when you have a \$200,000 debt from your medical school, and you have a salary of \$120,000 or whatever it is, it's going to take a long time. There's something basic and unstable about that. And that's a countrywide problem. I think Wilkes is probably in better shape to negotiate that, but not in great shape because kids are coming out of here with five-figure debt, and some of them pretty high. And another facet of the diamond a faculty member who goes through to [get] the PhD, the pressures on you are to be impressive in terms of the specialist in your field. That has not typically socialized you, even with your fellow graduate students, to work together. If anything it's to show in your [field]—and it's probably different in the Sciences—but it's to show that what you've done as a graduate student, particularly in your dissertation, really stands alone. If you look at the socialization that goes along with that, it's not to be teaching undergraduates; it's not to be seeing how knowledge is connected in a way that you can help student' experience as they come in as freshmen and sophomores. So we've got a training mode that is not very effective in preparing you to be a teacher. And the institution then takes you on, and either has got a departmental structure that wants you to be a specialist first, or they want you to come in, and be a teacher of undergraduates. And the success of institutions is how they balance—how they manage that balance. And leadership of department chairs, and of deans, how do they—particularly the younger faculty. How do they help them achieve that balance? Both to keep up to speed with their careers, so they can generate new knowledge and to be the generalists to help students come into the intellectual community. Those issues are very separate from handling power, and the shared governance Tim is talking about—and Dan Kopen's a good example—approach the PhD candidate with a sense of his or her own power in the field. And that becomes linked with the power of the faculty. Vis-à-vis the administration, and/or the trustees depending on where that is in that particular institution. And so in some ways it's a very inefficient preparation of each constituency: the trustees, the administration, and the faculty, to manage a really crucial institution for this country to developing new knowledge, and new technologies to breakthroughs in cancer research, and all of that. How that all pulls together. And we do it the best of any country in the world. But it's got some inherent that have been there for a hundred years, anyway. And Wilkes has got its own particular tradition. The fact that you've got 3 presidents here, who can discuss this with you as a board member, shows part of Wilkes has had going for it. I mean, your comment about the reward to trustees to be able to play that role, to me, it's a real signal of why this has worked. I mean the devotion of people like you, and Essie, and Patty Davies in my time is temperable for Wilkes' ability to have pulled this off. [1:33:35]/. So these were not trustees passing through, adding to their vita.

TG: Resumes.

CB: Yeah. It's much deeper than that. Now, on the other side of that, as I came to the institution, first you see the whole board was local. Nothing could happen on campus of any kind of controversy that wasn't known by trustee X, Q, and Z, and they were on the phone, and my own inauguration crisis was my lead experience of that, when my Dean implicitly ended up criticizing my predecessor, who was on the stage, putting the chain of office around me. I had people at the house celebrating that night, and I got three phone calls from 3 trustees, saying "You've got to get rid of him! Fire him! And I said I'm not going to fire anybody until I'm satisfied that that's the appropriate thing.

ER: I don't recall that.

CB: Essie was the first. And we're going to try to talk to her, by the way. She's open to having this interview at her home. So that's our next effort. But the Wilkes trustees are worth a study in themselves. I mean, it's a remarkable board. And it's before all of our time, but I've said this before, Mike, that first advisory board that was put together in '37, and '38, in which Charlie Miner was the young secretary, it had Annette Evans, it had Dorothy Dickson Darte, it had a Jewish department store owner, it had a rabbi, it had a Polish Catholic doctor, plus a bunch of WASPS. For that period, which was a period of incredible racism, and antisemitism, throughout this country, particularly in higher ed. That was a foundation and I think there were four or five women on that board, which again, for that period, was extraordinary. And they all were women of major strengths, financially, and intellectually. And by the way, gender fluid, so we dealt with those issues without even labeling them, but they were people were acknowledged for what they had to offer. And so we represented, as a new college, the strongest parts of the community intellectually and religiously, with the proviso that there'd be no religion. And that was, I think, Farley's real commitment, and was part of what made this place. And one of my other moments of truth came when I was a new president, who had just gone through a major curriculum change process at my previous university, which was brand new. They tried to get us to revise the core curriculum, and I thought there should be something on comparative religion. As a Unitarian, I just that this was something that [was needed]. Well, I hit those Catholic alumni at Wilkes, who'd come to Wilkes to avoid the impact of the church. They were not about to allow a comp religion—comparative religion—course to come in. So there was a commitment for this to be non-denominational, and non-religious orientation, that I think was a fundamental characteristic of why we were so open to an area that was so tribal in its little separate communities.

FM: Nothing that would be divisive.

CB: That's right.

FM: Because, you know, you have to stop and think about what our generation, and I'll include all of you have experienced, either through first-hand, or what our parents went through. You went through WWI, which none of us experienced, but probably all of us had some awareness of historically. Went through the Depression, in which the roles of government changed dramatically. The government assumed a responsibility through CCC Camps, through WPA, through a variety of programs that provided support, provided jobs.

CB: Including someone named Frances Perkins.

FM: Frances Perkins, yeah. But the Depression prelude when Wilkes was founded, always boggles my mind: What were those trustees of Bucknell thinking to establish a branch in Wilkes-Barre, coal town. What was their motivation for saying, we will even help you become four-year and give you the \$250,000 required for endowment to become a college? So there was some very thoughtful, altruistic powers at work that hired Gene Farley, and in effect, supported him in an direction of saying, the things that have divided this culture, that kept the coal miners from union organizing; that kept the businesses—that kept people divided, and hating each other are

doing more harm to our community than good. And that's to me what caused the founding of Wilkes. These were people who wanted change. They wanted opportunity for the sons and daughters of their generation.

ER: I would just make this observation: in terms of Dr. Farley, and everyone who followed him, including the 3 of you guys. For most, if not all of presidents of colleges, their job from morning to night is to grow the college, to make sure everything is going well, and so forth, and so on. Deal with the faculty, and so forth. That's never been the case exclusively at Wilkes. Because at Wilkes, it has always been, not only all of that, but to recognize that there is a community that is relying upon this, now university, to make sure that they're going to be okay. I can tell you this: the University of Scranton, they don't care. I mean, they're always fighting with the city. I mean, I don't know about Marywood, but I look at King's: I mean, King's for all intent and purposes they're isolated.

CB: Holy Cross Fathers.

ER: I mean they have their own vision, and I respect that. Misericordia, they have their own vision. We have a multiple of visions, and that's—I think that's what is significant to the Board. I think it's significant to the community; I hope that the faculty has an understanding. You know, when you pick up the newspaper, and you're 82 years old, and you're still working, and you're still enjoying life, thank God, and reasonably good health. And you pick up the newspaper: the front page, it talks about a young girl, 21 or 22 years old, who's just got an award—it's \$10,000, to start a new business that has enormous potential, and it's on the front page of the newspaper, and happens to be a Wilkes graduate, or about to be a Wilkes graduate. I mean, so why am I reading that article. That's because that's how the people in this community think, and that's how Wilkes thinks.

FM: [inaudible] 1:43:28

ER: So, to you guys, I mean, you've done your duty.

CB: I've got to indulge the 2 of us, while we've got you on recording, to give your perspective on the earth conservancy.

ER: On the earth conservancy?

CB: Because you were critical. It never would've happened without you. As a lawyer, as a member of the board to say, yeah Chris can go and do this.

ER: Yeah. Well, the earth conservancy has turned out to be a wonderful, wonderful thing.

FM: What is it?

ER: The earth conservancy was the old blue coal property in the Nanticoke area.

CB: 17,000 acres. [whistles].

ER: Yeah. It was loaded with cone banks. It was just undesirable, non-developable property. And to his credit, the congressman—

CB: Paul Kanjorski.

ER: Paul Kanjorski came up with this idea, of forming an enterprise that would be a non-profit, and would try to do something that would cultivate that whole area, and make it a potential growth area. Without being unfriendly, but he had his own reasons for doing that, that weren't all purist. But fundamentally, it was a good idea. And I don't remember how I got involved. I think he came to see me, or, whatever, and had this thought, and we were willing—our firm was willing to do it on an oncoming—you know—we weren't going to charge anybody, and so forth. Chris became involved pretty early on. But Paul Kanjorski was a real challenge? [Laughter]. Were you laughing?

TG: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

ER: So he was a real challenge, and we had to go into court to fight with one of my classmates.

CB: A Wilkes alum.

ER: Yeah, A Wilkes Alum.

CB: Who was a lawyer for the bankruptcy.

ER: Yeah. And he had his own view of what should happen with that problem. So we fought that out in bankruptcy court, and that went on for a long period time, and ultimately we were successful, and we got the ownership. But the Board, the Board was really controlled by Paul initially.

CB: Well, my side of the story, which complements what Gene is saying—I got to know Paul well and seen in Washington a couple of times, went to the Kosciuszko Ball, where he and his wife, and Jane and I would spend time together, and he used to say that Paul's idea was really to see if we couldn't link Earth with Mars, and do some twisting to create an energy of a brand new sort. I mean, his imagination knew no limits, and he knew that he had this property, which the Chamber tried to buy it, and then it failed. And there were other efforts by individuals. It's the oldest bankruptcy in America at the time, and the plan, which ultimately he came up with, was to link up with a Republican Congressman from Missouri. They'd been pages together, and at the point that the house was shot up by the Puerto Ricans, and they both were involved in carrying out the bodies, which they had pictures of, which they were very proud of. And this guy, Bill Emerson, was in Rola [name/spelling, 1:48:20], and they had an engineering school in Rola, and we had our engineering school, and so between the two of us, we came up with a program to do waterjet technology to clean conventional ordinance from WWI, as well as WWII, and so to justify federal investment in this, we came up with 3 projects: one of which was building wetlands to demonstrate how you could clean up the acidic mine that was pouring out from the mines, after the Knox Mine disaster. And the waterjet, and I forget what the third thing was. Anyway, Umi Najib is our head of Engineering, was a critical intellectual part in this with the

folks from Rola. So we came up with a proposal that went to the federal government, and Paul, at his end, ended up, and we got \$14 million, eleven of which, I think we used to buy the land from the bankruptcy. And the other 3 were used on the project, and we actually went ahead, and developed the technology. The machine was developed in our Engineering lab. And the Army, then, and the Navy, and the military, the Air Force, their politics in Washington would not allow it to happen. But we actually demonstrated how you could clean out the shell, take the contents, and turn it into fertilizer, and recycle the brass. It was Paul's kind of concept. Anyway, we got the money, and he said to me, "Okay, you've got to put the board together. And so I went to my two key people, Gene Roth, and Frank Henry, whom I at least assumed were Republicans, and they didn't trust Paul as far as they could throw him. And I said, "Do you really want me to do this?" I said, "You know, this exposes me, exposes Wilkes." And they both said, almost in choral speaking, "If you don't do it, it won't happen. We have to have this happen for the Valley." So this tradition we've talked about, I said that my tombstone's already been created, so it just has dates. But I said, at the time, if anything is on my tombstone about the job, it would be "he created the earth conservancy." Because I pulled in Jim Blackenmeyer, the President of King's, I got Harold Rose to be the first CEO, and while I had to put up with Peter Kanjorski, and Jim—his son is now the state senator from here, and future governor of Pennsylvania. Wonderful guy. John Polshane [name? 1:51:10]. They were the three, which, conceptually, Paul wanted to control the power. And I then fought the fight through—I got Claire Schechter on the board, or I guess Ed Schechter was on the board,

TG: Ed Schechter.

CB: And I got—I'm terrible on names—your friend, the realtor, she's the realtor.

ER: Oh, Simms. Ronnie Simms.

CB: I got her on, and I decided it had to be an assembly of notables of Wilkes-Barre that had power, that would be able to control Paul. And we had a clinch point, on a Saturday, where that all came into its own, and I stood up to Paul and won. And we broke through the power of the little 3, so the Board had the ultimate control, which then brought that money into this area. The trustee of the bankruptcy was all supportive of us taking it over. It was his lawyer that resisted. So I had to testify in federal bankruptcy court. [I] thought my life was about to end. He was furious with us; tackled me in that courtroom. Never had an experience like that. So that was where I paid my dues in the way that Gene was describing, where the Wilkes presidents, and Tim can give his own story with the Chamber of Commerce. We were regarded as key leaders in this community, and when the 3 banks were local banks, those three bankers, and the presidents of Wilkes and King's represented a power structure that could move things in this Valley, in ways that you can't do anymore because of the way that the banks have been bought out, and so forth. But the earth conservancy, to me, was the equivalent of, in your era, of getting RCA in Mountaintop, to get the Wilkes Hahnemann Program to prepare the future doctors. The whole education computer thing that the Beluccis did, training people all over the state of Pennsylvania. All those things were absolutely natural, for Wilkes as private institution to do. So we came in my era with what was called the Private Institution of the Public Mission, or a private land grant college in effect which, of course, was a direct challenge to Penn State as they marketed themselves. But Gene and Frank Henry, if we isolated the trustee leadership through the period

that I was here, absolutely embraced this role for Wilkes to play, and then Gene, as a lawyer, literally did the lawyering with his colleagues to make these things work, particularly the earth conservancy.

ER: We still represent you.

CB: Do you? That's good.

FM: What's the current status?

ER: They are reaching a point, from what I understand, of completing that whole project. I mean, it's unbelievable.

FM: Now, that includes land reclamation?

CB: Oh, it's a major land reclamation.

ER: Yeah. They have the roads that they're now connecting. Roads that have been accommodated by earth conservancy lands that connect onto I-80 and I-81. It works beautifully with the major developments, and the major manufacturing, and storage and so forth that's in some of the investments.

FM: Does that extend down into I-81, is that—

CB: Oh, yes. Both sides. If you could see the playing field

FM: [Simultaneously] Is that where I drive by, and see the old landfills, or—?

CB: Yeah.

FM: Strip mines became landfills, and then became reconstructed, and are now I think PP&L treats telephone poles, and a whole long area there.

CB: Well, the point when we did this, we thought two things: that we had superfund sites, because the land was unexplored. It was like the moon. In fact, when we sent some of our faculty out to check some of the sites, and we were attacked in court that we had trespassed on some of the bankruptcy land to do this. So, I mean, that was how exposed—

ER: Well, John was the—

CB: That's how exposed we were.

FM: Changed the watershed.

CB: Changed the watershed, and Mike Dziak has been the leader. Mike Dziak was a Wilkes graduate, who had a career with IBM, up in Binghamton.

ER: He's done a remarkable job.

CB: [He's] done a remarkable job, and protecting him from Paul Kanjorski is among my more creative acts, and Mike was as tough as Paul was, and these two Valley guys went—and I forget what Ciak is, ethnically. He's not Czech, but it was the Pole vs. the Slovak, or whatever it was. I mean they—[laughter].

FM: That's worse than the Jews and the Christians! [Laughter].

CB: But it was Wilkes. And that's what you both said to me, it won't happen if you don't do it. Me, not just as me, Chris, but me, as the President of Wilkes. I had the shoulders politically to bear the burden of that with the unknown events that surrounded Paul, who was controversial. In fact, one of our great moments was that by mistake, we had got a second check for \$14 million, which was the fault of the Defense Department, because this was all being funded through Defense, because of cleaning the shells. And I, with great reluctance, gave the check to Paul, and I said, "Now, I want to know when you return that." And he took a long time before he finally went to Wes Aspen, who was Secretary of Defense at that point, and gave him the check. And Aspen was extraordinarily relieved, because this was a large enough bookkeeping error to have been very embarrassing to the Clinton administration. But Gene, it never could have been pulled off without you, and your colleagues, and [name?], your son.

ER: I don't know about that.

FM: He's kind of reluctant to take any credit! [Laughter]

CB: Well, that's his style.

ER: No, but I remember—and I think I mentioned this once before, and there's one other thing that I want to mention. When I first started [at] Wilkes in 1953, maybe in my second year, Dr. Farley invited a group of people to meet with him. I think I mentioned this, but let me do it again. And I don't know if they were parents alone, but my mother and father were invited. Which to them, I mean, they couldn't believe it. So they assembled somewhere on the campus, and the issue presented by Dr. Farley was the following: the enrollment was at 700. And he said, Wilkes is at a point now, where it has to make a decision. And here are the two choices: Do we become the kind of school that Swarthmore is, an elite academic institution with small enrollment, or do we become more like a public institution with much broader interests, and so forth, and so on? And the group that was assembled said, "No, we think it ought to be focused initially on the Wyoming Valley, but it should be more expansive than that. And that was the last time they had a meeting. But the bottom line is, you know, when I walk the dog in the morning, and I walk by this campus, or when I drive by this campus, and I say to myself, what would have happened, if there had been no Wilkes? And the fact is, there would be no Wilkes-Barre. Absolutely unequivocally, in my mind, there would have been no Wilkes-Barre. So who else can say that? I mean, there probably are similar stories, but I'm not sure that there are. I think we are a very unique institution, and I think that story sums it up. I've never been able to really express how that story should be put together, but maybe this oral history that you're doing is the answer.

Because the people who listen to this, whenever, should know that that's the reality. And there is a history even before that. I mean, during the Second World War, with the flight training, and so forth. So you guys deserve an enormous, enormous acknowledgment for everything that you guys did.

CB: Let me ask Tim to respond to that, particularly what you feel you were a part of, in terms of as a key part in the Wyoming Valley community, and the role that was incumbent on us as presidents, in effect to be community leaders.

TG: Well, you know, the fact is that the opportunities continued, obviously in a different form, and I recall—but you know the idea of helping to develop the community had a self-interest in it as well, because it was imperative that the surrounding community be one that potential students and their parents felt was a good place to come. And I remember sitting with Bill Montag. I think you probably remember, Gene.

ER: Yeah, sure.

TG: And Chris, I think you got him on the Board. [CB: Right]. But he was an alum who was very, very successful, and was based in Buffalo. But I remember he came down, he was visiting his mother. And I remember he came in; we had breakfast, and I presented the mission, and vision, and all that stuff, and he said that's really good, but frankly, if you don't clean up Main Street, you're in trouble. It's not going to work. And I remember thinking, oh my God. I really just don't want to do this. But coincidentally, Ed Rendell had been elected governor, and saw that there were many mid-size cities in Pennsylvania that really depended upon their institutes of higher education, and that they could become economic anchors for the development of their community, which Wilkes had pretty much always been, and that led to a significant investment in the city of Wilkes-Barre, and then there were certain people in the Wilkes-Barre Chamber. In this case, though, Tom O'Hara at King's was very much engaged as well. I really do think the combination of Rendell, the Chamber, and the two higher education institutions led to the current resurgence of Wilkes-Barre as a viable metropolitan entity. So we were very, very much involved in that, and as people know, I was the chair of the Chamber for a couple of years, which were transitional years, in the leadership of the Chamber. And I do think you just see Wilkes as being clearly a key part of the development of the city. But two comments I'd make: one is that when we were doing sort of the final iteration of the strategic plan at Wilkes, and my last couple years at Wilkes, the faculty was very much concerned about my level of involvement in the city, and the surrounding community, and felt that I had gone too far. And wanted us to scale back our mention of that in the strategy. In fact, we did modify it some, and downplayed it, because I felt it was a plan for my successor as well. But clearly, without the participation of all those entities, Wilkes-Barre would not be where it is today, there's no doubt about it. But I would also say this kind of involvement, and I don't want to take it away at all from Wilkes, but this kind of involvement I've seen in other places, in different forms. But it's when the institutions get engaged in their communities that the best things happen. So when I was at Georgia Tech, Georgia Tech was very much involved in the '96 Olympics. Georgia Tech was a critical player in that, in the successful bid. So, I think what it really comes down to is institutions that are in urban settings more often than not get involved in some productive way with the advancement of

their communities. I think Wilkes has done a great job, especially as small as it is, but it's in a thick-scented tradition that we need to recognize elsewhere as well.

CB: You know, one of the—as a historian, I love dates even if I can't remember them—one of the things I discovered, in 1933, when Bucknell Junior College was formed, and in which we were the largest metropolitan area without higher education in the country. I think we were the 6th largest, the Wilkes/Barre Scranton area in 1933. That year, the YMCA was built; Ohav Zedek was built; and BUJC was built, in the very depths of the Depression, there was leadership in this community by the people at the very top to, in all those institutions, among other things, invest in youth. That was a very prescient expression on their part of what was needed to survive. The coal industry had already declined in the '20s, before the Depression. Before the bottom fell out everywhere. And there was an impulse by key people, and I don't even know their names. But they were part of those early boards. Gilbert McClintock, Evans, William Evans, and others. And I don't know who in Ohav Zedek.

ER: Max Rosenn.

CB: Max Rosenn, that early. So there was a sense, and as that board got formed under BUJC that I was describing earlier, it was to take the leadership elements to the community, to make them part of this Bucknell Board. They had no power; they weren't a fiduciary board until after the war, as I understand it, when we became our own independent institution.

FM: Tim, we ended our last meeting with a brief discussion of the future. And for Gene's benefit, because time is ending now: the latest appears to us to be a challenge, and that the media is beginning to pay attention to, is how higher education will adapt in this period of artificial intelligence that will be doing via computer decision-making, and so many elements of life, from driverless cars to remote developed delivery with packaging, and so on. And so the capacity of Wilkes to adapt from the 1930s Depression years, to the training of young people for professional careers for, business careers, for all kinds of things that have evolved that Wilkes foresaw, and for all practical purposes in its curricula, in its program development, its schools of Pharmacy; its schools of nursing—we began by taking 2-year RN students, and hospital schools to train them. And we're trying to look ahead at what the missions of the contemporary institutions, facing a future of artificial intelligence, and Tim is working as a consultant on some of those issues of looking ahead. And you're in a unique position, and a [unique] generation. I consider myself to be in a unique position, because I was born in 1925, and I understood WWI, and I understood and participated in WWII, and all of the evolution of our science and technologies since then. What would you see if you were looking five or ten years ahead as the major cultural, or political, or geopolitical drives that are going to affect our mission?

ER: And you have ten seconds to answer! [Laughter].

TG: Gene, I don't know if you have a hard stop or not, but I don't know that I had any questions of you specifically but—and Mike, I don't know whether Gene wants to hear my answer, but Gene when do you have to get out of there?

ER: You know what, I have a 1:00 appointment. I didn't realize. I was having such a good time here! It's almost 12:30.

CB: So he's got a few minutes.

TG: So could I put a hold on that question, Mike, unless he wants to hear it, and I'll tell you it's a tortured answer that I'd probably offer. So maybe I could take us to Gene back, and just say, you know, in the time that we've got left, what is it that you would like to contribute to this effort to get a perspective on Wilkes history that would be helpful to future presidents, and probably others, from your experience? Is there anything that you haven't been able to say that you'd like to say now? I'd love to listen.

ER: You know, no, there is just one thing that I've been thinking about ever since the last time we were here. And I began to talk about some of the folks that I went to Wilkes with, and the province that they've achieved professionally, and otherwise. But I omitted one person, and I don't know if you'll remember—maybe you'll remember, the president of the Class of 1957, unfortunately long forgotten, but not by me, was a young man by the name Neil Dadurka. And Neil Dadurka as I said was elected the permanent president of our class, and I was elected the permanent vice-president. And in my second year of law school, and I had not been in a position to stay in touch with Neil, although we were really good friends. But Neil had joined the Marines, and he became a pilot. And some time in my second year of law school, which would've been maybe 1958, or thereabouts, I heard that he had been killed. And here was the incident: he was flying a jet out in the California area, and something happened to the plane. And he had 2 choices: one was to eject and save his life. The conundrum, and this had to be in seconds, was that he was in a residential area, and if he left the plane, the plane was going to kill God knows how many people, or to stay with the plane, and crash it where it wouldn't affect the population, and that's what he did. And I think about Neil.

FM: I remember him.

ER: Do you remember Neil? He was a handsome, tall guy.

FM: Yep. He was a football star. Wonderful.

ER: Yeah. Just a very unusual guy, and the kind of guy that would be a poster child today for Wilkes. And I just wanted to mention that.

CB: I think that's a wonderful way to conclude this session. The one topic that I wanted to ask you about today, and you may feel that there's not enough time, but to say a little bit about the Jewish community's relationship with Wilkes, which I found in the larger scope of the Wyoming Valley, was as close to unique as anything I've experienced.

FM: Except it was not only with Wilkes. Harold was on the board at Misericordia.

ER: But that was much later.

CB: Yeah. So I'm thinking of the '30s, and the WWII era, which is when I think it really took shape.

ER: Yeah. Look, from a community that had all kinds of issues, I mean it was broken up into 2 different ethnic areas, and so forth. And one had a history against the other, and so forth and so on. But I think as I might have mentioned, for the Jewish community, Wilkes was an avenue for their children to do something that they didn't think they would ever realize in their lifetimes, and that's that they could go to college. And as a result of that, and the fact that Dr. Farley reached out to the Jewish community, which was you know, obviously pretty unique because of what I described earlier. So they became donors; many of them became board members. If you were to ask them, although they don't send their children, including my own children or grandchildren—well, Steven graduated from Wilkes. But they have nothing but the best attitude when it comes to Wilkes. Unfortunately, the Jewish community has shrunk, and not what it was some time ago. But I think, in terms of supporters, I think that continues.

CB: Jim, you've been very silent. Any [thoughts]?

JR: I'll close with one. As a great sports fan of Wilkes, as we both have been over the years, what was the greatest single moment for you in Wilkes athletic [history]?

ER: Oh, it goes without question: with Williams.

JR: That's it! I would've said [that]. What's the worst?

ER: Oh, the worst was this past season. I stopped going to the football games. So I'm hoping for the best. But that was—

CB: [Jay] Williams, which sent us to the Final Four.

JR: No, not that one. We lost the next night to Trinity. But that Williams game, we were down by about fifteen, twenty points and won it.

ER: The gym had been packed, because the community really followed Wilkes basketball. And Williams, who was a 3-point shooter—

JR: Oh, I'm sorry. We're talking about different things.

ER: Oh, oh.

JR: Yeah, we did get to the Final Four with that one.

ER: He—

CB: Beat them by one point in the last second at Trinity, and my wife was there, disciplining the drunken Trinity students, which was another story.

ER: But in any event, to this day, nobody understands what happened. The gym was packed, and everybody started to leave, but they turned on the radio; Wilkes was on the radio, so they were listening. And so there may have been a minute?

JR: 43 seconds. We were down by 12—we were down by 7 points in 43 seconds.

FM: Wow!

ER: And Williams comes out, and midcourt, it seemed: he shoots the basketball, and gets 3 points. Then we recover the ball, and he scores another 3 points. And then we get the ball again—this is with about 40 seconds—and he shoots again. And another 3 points, and we win the game. Now, nobody could understand—what was the team?—why they never fouled.

JR: Um, it was Acadia.

CB: No, it's a Catholic school, beginning with "C" in the greater Philadelphia area, not Canadagua, but—

ER: Well, in any event, it was the greatest game I ever saw in my life. I mean, people went crazy. It was unbelievable.

CB: We were with an alumni group, having an alumni event, listening to it on the radio in some hotel. And I mean, the dynamic of listening to the radio was unbelievable. I mean, there was screaming.

[Inaudible group chatter.] FM: I never heard that story.

CB: And this guy was a guard. He was about 5'7." And he was a tough—

ER: He was a pharmacist.

CB: Yep. He was in the first Pharmacy class.

ER: Bright, bright kid.

CB: Gene, we see you're getting ready to leave, so let me thank you for this wonderful—

ER: It was my honor, absolutely. And any time you need any more information [laughter].

CB: Well, as you think about other topics that you'd like to talk about, or to ask us about, we will schedule a session.

ER: You got it. Okay. Tim, be well!

TG: Say Gene, I think I speak for every one of these guys: you are absolutely the best, and your service to us—and you know, it's not just us—I mean, everybody in the community values your

ability to tell the truth, and to get people on the right track. And I just want to thank you again for all this.

ER: Thank you very much, Tim. Give my best to your lovely wife.

TG: I'll do that.

ER: Okay. You guys be well.

CB: Okay, we're finished. Thanks, Gene. Tim, thank you.

TG: My pleasure.

CB: We're adjourned unless you have something else to say with the three of us.

[End of interview; discussion of future sessions.]