

Oral History--Terri Wignot Interview, 2021 March 18

Participants:

Christopher N. Breiseth

Tim Gilmour

Suzanna Calev

Terese Wignot (interviewee)

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Transcribed by Kara Beerley

Christopher N. Breiseth: You know everybody--um

Terese Wignot: Yes, hi Suzanna

Suzanna Calev: Hi Terese

CB: So you've probably heard, in dealing with Suzanna, and Paul, and others, even [being] at this now for several years, it really--well, Tim gave his license to start it when he was president. It was really Dr. Mike who was enthusiastic about getting Wilkes' history down in this format. I think particularly he wanted his own residency and his experience to the flood to be remembered and organized, and I won't go into the whole history of how this evolved, but it evolved quite naturally and Tim became a very active part of it along the way. Mike died, Bob Capin was part of it in the beginning, although not an active part. I keep forgetting the numbers Suzanna--how many interviews have we done?

SC: Probably either 24 or 25.

CB: So you're in a--[phone rings]--carry on, Tim, I've got to take this call.

Tim Gilmour: Alrighty. Well, just quickly what I'd say is that we'd been working on this for quite a while, Teri, and we had moved from quite a bit back in time and are now moving forward to the important, current players--and that's where you come in. We're very interested and have found in these interviews a lot of information from people who have been with Wilkes for some time, like yourself, who essentially look at--can tell us about their Wilkes experience and can give us a real feel for what they know about the Wilkes culture. And I think when somebody does finally do some analysis on this that extends beyond our capabilities, they really are going to have something of the essence of what Wilkes is all about. And the thing that I would say is that all of us here have learned a lot. And it runs from learning much more about Farley than I think any of us ever knew, and it's all been very useful, but I think we've also found that Wilkes really does have a true beating heart that is meaningful to so many people, and I think special, in terms of all the institutions that I've been associated with over the years--not that they haven't had interesting cultures and so on, but there's something remarkable about Wilkes' culture and its resilience. So, basically I'll let Chris pick it up but the transition is that we really spend most of our time listening to our interviewees and there's no need to feel like it has to somehow be perfectly outlined and so on, but we're really interested in your perceptions, we may ask you questions,--

TW: Mhm, sure.

TG: --it'll take you to routes you didn't think about, but again, I think we found all of this to be a real value.

TW: Okay.

CB: And you're going to be able to see a transcript of it, no edit or anything also, because we do not want history to vanish. I frankly hope that everything I've said is kept, even whatever swearing I did.

[Laughter]

CB: The authenticity of it.

TG: There were times when he got out of hand, there's no doubt about it.

CB: That was my granddaughter calling, it's only the third time she's ever called me in my life.

TW: Oh, goodness, yeah you have to take that call!

TG: Yeah.

CB: Her brother had just hung up calling me from Maine, so this is totally unusual. I know Jim's grandchildren are in touch with him all the time, but mine are a little more...independent of their family roots. Anyway, Tim used the word "culture" and I think--really, to go back to the moment that this whole thing was born is important, and that was at a John Chwalek golf tournament, and Tim had just discovered he was going to have a limited contract. Bob was there, Mike was there, at Wyoming Valley country club, and we stayed for--way past the time that the waiting staff thought we should, talking about the unusual relationship between the faculty and the administration, and between the administration and the trustees. We all kind of opened some of the wounds, we all felt, from our time with these different relationships, but also just what an incredibly strong culture Wilkes was--it was a place for students to learn. Tim then started having us come meet on campus. We went to the Westmoreland Club a couple of times. And from that, we decided we should capture our thoughts, with our president, whoever that person was going to be after Tim, and do a memo. And ultimately we did--and that way we got it, and it's a statement of what we collectively thought characterized this unusual academic culture that we'd all been part of. We didn't create it, we came and were captured by it for a period of time. And then we decided, after Tim retired, and Bob and Mike and I kept talking about this, we started to do some oral history interviews. We've had trustees, we've had alumni, we've had faculty. We want to do some more with some community people--we'd like to do one with AJ Sordoni. So, there's no book that's going to come out of this. We think, in the future, books about Wilkes will find this very valuable. Suzanna has done an extraordinary job with the archives for the first time in the history of the institution, and she found an oral history that Farley had asked one of the faculty members to do with the founding fathers. So all of a sudden we had the transcript of his interviews with Arnold Martz, with Farley himself, with Gilbert McClintock. So the project, in fact, all of a sudden got us back to parts that we thought were not

touchable, and we hope it just keeps going because it's become a great vehicle to get people to reflect. So I think to begin with, we usually ask a person to just give us a little bit about your own autobiography, which is what you were and where you were before you came to Wilkes, and how you came to this beautiful paradise on Earth.

TW: Okay, so we have--this is back in 1988--I was a grad student finishing up my dissertation, was defending late in fall of '88, had applied to maybe three places--

CB: Where was it that you worked?

TW: I was at Lehigh University finishing up my doctoral work. I had applied for a postdoc at a pharmaceutical company in Philadelphia and then saw an ad for a sabbatical replacement at Wilkes and applied for that. I might have applied to one other place, some other industrial position. My mother, for years, said I would never leave academia and I said she was crazy--that's not what I wanted to do. But then it came down to do I want to drive into Center City Philadelphia for an hour, two hours, three hours, depending on the day, or do I want to potentially drive a nice easy drive up the northeast extension, because it was a one-semester sabbatical replacement. So with some encouragement from my mother, after being offered the job here, [she] said, "why don't you take it, see if you like teaching, it's only one semester, it's not that far." I commuted. And I remember interviewing with George Waldner. I think it was right before--and George was not here long after I was hired--and I was actually the sabbatical replacement for Howard Swain [who] was on sabbatical that semester. I came here, and the department was Owen Faut, Bill Stine, Frank Sally, Jim Boning, Ralph Rozelle--did I forget anybody? I don't think so.

CB: I don't think so.

TW: And then Bill was the closest to me, having been here at Wilkes 25 years and then me walking straight out of graduate school into the department, so with that group, Frank was here probably--we only overlapped maybe 4 or 5 years, so. And he had a 40 plus career at Wilkes. So I--

TG: Wow.

TW:--was green out of graduate school coming into the department of all these seasoned--

CB: And somehow he settled and appointed you.

TG: [Laughter] Yes. So, but not intimidated, they were fantastic. I tell the story all the time of coming into this department, and how each one of those men--yknow, mentored me and helped me learn the ropes in a different way. And yknow, so the culture we do have of the mentoring, I felt from day one when I stepped on this campus into that department. It was not intimidating, which it really could have been, but wasn't because of, again, just because how mentoring each and every one of those men--and they didn't, as you all know, they didn't get along really well, a few of them in that department, but I certainly--

CB: I remember that.

[Laughter]

JR: We all remember that!

[laughter]

TW: Never forget some of the department meetings with Owen and Bill, but it never affected our students, that's for sure. But anyway, I enjoyed teaching. And again, a welcoming department, I was interviewing, obviously, because it was a one semester sabbatical replacement. And I'll never forget this either: I had an interview at Kutztown in the chemistry department during that semester--and, yknow, I didn't feel the tension between Owen and Bill until much later--but I went to this interview at Kutztown and I said "these people can't stand each other in this department! Is this an environment I want to go into?" It would have been a 20 minute commute for me versus an hour and 20 minutes. And I remember talking to my husband at the time and saying yknow, "I'll stick with the commute--I like it up there much more than I think I'll like it at Kutztown." And I happened--during that semester, they approved the biochemistry program, and obviously I'm a biochemist and was offered a 10-year track position at the end of that semester. And that's sorta how it all started. And the other thing I will never forget is signing that contract for--and I'm not sure, Chris, if you remember this, but I remember signing the contract and then telling--I think Owen was department chair at the time--and saying, "Yes, I'm thrilled to death but I'm going to need maternity leave!"

[Laughter]

TW: I was about six months at that point, because my son Owen was born in January the next academic year. So that's sort of how it all started. And I remember saying--and who was--? Cause George had left, so who was interim? Was that Jim? Jim, were you interim?

James Rodechko: I think that might've been Bob.

CB: Bob [indistinct last name, 00:13:32]

JR: Yeah.

TW: Okay, because--Oh no, it wasn't there, it was--cause I had three of four of my children, my three younger children, during my probationary period year at Wilkes. And again, just the support of the university, everyone in the department, Maria. Yknow, Maria and I are still best of friends today because her kids were running up the halls and my kids were running around the halls. She was very helpful to me as well in those early years. But it was when I found out I was pregnant with my third--my fourth child, third while at Wilkes, and I remember telling, again, whoever was the chair, I'll tell Bob or whoever was there--Mike Lennon might have been in then, just saying--and I'm telling whoever the chair was "I'll tell Mike Lennon but you tell[Umid] Nejib." I was--I couldn't tell Nejib.

[Laughter]

TW: Within 6 years--or five years--I was pregnant again and was gonna need a little bit of leave. And so Nejib would always kid me to this day--well, until the day he died about it. And again, another person who helped me and I respected greatly. And he helped me in those early years quite often

CB: And since you mention that, one of the consistent themes of many of these sessions are discussions of Nejib. He clearly cut a figure in Wilkes in the period that he was here that was profound. So tell us your sense of him, your interactions with him. Anything about him that sticks in your mind.

TW: Oh, boy, there's a lot that sticks in my mind with Nejib. Again, very--to me personally he was very supportive. And he always was encouraging of me and helping. He was an intimidating character at times. He fought for what he wanted. And I'll share this--getting into administration later, and having to deal with some of the culture built for the engineers was a battle after the fact--still battling it now with yknow "No, we can't do things that way anymore, and yes, you can't have all the release time in the world because we just can't afford to do that. No, I don't have a stash of money in the desk to help support what your pet peeve project is." So I mean I think there was some of that that I didn't realize at the time, being in the school and in the department. But he did build strong engineering programs that are still very strong. But just some of that culture in the engineering areas. And I think they're changing now.

CB: How about the dynamic of women in that department? I'm sure that this is ancient history by now, but certainly in my years, one of the things that struck me about Nejib is how sensitively and carefully he handled what were pretty difficult dynamics, because you had Indians and Iraqis and Iranians with views of the role of women, and arguably, the top teacher there was a woman,

TW: Right.

CB: who was dealt with very roughly by people of her own country, on a kind of male-female chauvinist relationship.

TW: Mhm.

CB: I mean--struggled with that. It was really a huge issue. She was blocked for professorship by [indistinct 00:17:52] the male faculty.

TW: And then she left shortly after that, Chris, right? Yeah. and Vasu [00:18:00] was great and I mean she never let that show, I think, to those of us. She was supportive of the women in the school and she was the only female in engineering for quite a while. But she never let that show to us. So I didn't really get a sense of that until probably when she left, but I know he struggled with that. I did not feel it--or I didn't feel it in the chemistry department at all. And again, if it was there, I didn't let it affect me, or I didn't notice it. Sort of a way I was raised.

CB: Jim, had there been female faculty members in chemistry?

JR: Yeah, Barbara Buckman was there at one point.

TW: and of course Catherine Bone.

JR: Yeah and she was there--I never met her, but she was there before I came.

CB: And there was a great biology woman who we honored with a lectureship.

JR: Yeah, Kimball.

TW: Grace Kimball.

CB: Which is worth noting, Suzanna, because one thing that comes out of the Farley era, while I'm sure there was no lack of chauvinism, there were strong women in almost every department at some point in the post-war period. And they may not have, in their own assessment, been treated as fairly, I think Farley respected women intellectuals without complication. Which I think set a tone that was not always observed in later days, but I think was part of the format of Wilkes.

JR: Just an observation, but I think they had to be strong.

CB: They had to be strong. I mean I looked at Kimbell, well we never met, just knowing Chuck Reif's comments about her and knowing his kind of different way of dealing with some of these problems. He really respected her. Catherine Bone was--I mean she produced a lot of major students in chemistry.

TW: Yes.

CB: But now thinking of you, as both faculty and administration, comment the big picture on the role of women on the faculty over the period you've been at Wilkes and what have been the changes? Are there still issues that need to be addressed as there are on Wilkes' campuses? What's your view of the gender picture?

TW: Well, and that's a great question because when I-- I talk about having my youngest three children during my probationary period--Wilkes didn't even have a maternity policy then. And it was just working with the department for when and if I had to leave during, yknow, I guess I was out the beginning of one semester, my daughter then was over a summer, and then my last, youngest, was in August. I remember coming to the faculty meeting and then two days later having the baby in August, she was born the end of August. And so I was out a little bit that semester. That poor thing. I came back six weeks and she was in the Y and I would run over and nurse her and then come back and teach.

TG: Oh wow. Memorable.

TW: That was fun. But it--so time has gotten better in that sense, of having yknow, obviously forced legally to some of it, but I know we would have done it anyway. But there have been very strong women, I think of Jane Crahall as being a faculty leader and yknow others throughout. Jane comes so easily to mind because she was so involved with FAC and for many years and again a mentor, and Waghiya who is

still a strong female voice on this campus. So I think we still struggle somewhat in the engineering area to get women. I mean we do have right now some very talented--we're holding on to them--but right now we have a really strong woman mechanical engineer that's doing fantastic work but right now we do need some more female role models, in specifically engineering. Environmental is doing very good, and again we have strong Marlene, Holly, and now **Ceretha**. So environmental is doing well with women. Bio's always had women in and out. And chemistry we're now finally all caught up. At one point we were 50% women in the chemistry department, which was really good. And again, more women going into science and the STEM areas, so we need to ensure we have those role models. Where we have fallen behind, and it came up in our most recent Middle States was promotion of women up through the ranks. We still have a small percentage of full-professor female faculty. And part of it is, some of us--and again I have never gone to full professor rank, I would have, I think if I didn't go into administration. But Deb Zbegner, again another very strong female faculty member that moved into administration and now has done fabulous things with the school of nursing. But that's one area where we need a little more mentorship. And this was brought to my attention: "you're the interim provost, you need to be out there mentoring the female faculty up to get to the full professor ranks, so that's where we need a little work."

JR: Just I'm wondering if you could give us a brief timeline of your various positions at Wilkes. You were in the chemistry department and then obviously went into administration, and I assume you were in and out on occasion.

TW: Okay yeah, and my path is always really yknow--whenever I tell somebody, it's been pretty interesting. I'm trying to think of when I became... So the chemistry department, when I came, it was a stand-alone department. And then we merged with physics, so it was chemistry and physics and Roger Maxwell was the chair. When we merged with physics, I took on a role as coordinator of chemistry, so basically Roger took care of physics, I took care of chemistry. So that would have been maybe early 2000s, right? It's probably right after--and I'm sure you've heard the term--pharmacy and the "college of everything" so when the "college of everything" broke up and we went back to other departments, chemistry was merged with physics, and I was coordinator. Then we merged with biology; physics went with electrical. So Less was chair, I was still coordinator of chemistry. When chemistry broke off as a stand-alone department, this must have been... I wasn't chair, believe it or not, Ralph Catron I believe was chair, and then when that disaster ended, I ended up, I think, being chair. So I was chair for maybe 12 years, between coordinator and chair. And then there was a very nasty tenure case right at the end of, Tim, your era. I stepped down, said I had it with administration. It was probably 2010. So I co-chaired with Amy Bradley. And then Amy chaired for a year and that's when Pat came in and I was asked to serve as interim provost. So I served as interim provost for 2 years, interim dean of the college of science and engineering, because that's when Dale Bruns stepped down, then Anne Skleder brought me in as associate Provost under Anne, and then I was asked--this was the biggest. If you can do things over again, this is the one thing I would do over again--I was asked to serve in enrollment. So in 2016-ish we had a couple failed searches for DP or Directory of Enrollment, we kept going back and forth, so I stepped into enrollment for 2 years, and then into this role as Interim Provost. So a bunch of different areas. And I have to say, when my first "tour of duty" as Interim Provost, that was incredible--that was a learning experience because coming right from that tunnel vision of a faculty member--and a chair, chairs are still tunnel visioned on their departments--into the role of Interim Provost was incredible, but again, when I talk to the prosperer families, again that was a completely mentored situation. Paul was there as the VP

of Student Affairs, who was incredibly helpful, and Pat himself, and Chip! All of the VPs [like] Mike Wood. They all helped me out the whole way there, of learning the ropes of that type of role. I'll even say Jack Miller because he was chair at the time. Again, very supportive and helpful in helping me learn that role and do what I needed to do to help the university. I used those, coming as this young, green female into this all-male department and sort of being hoisted into higher level administration. Just the mentoring and support of the people around me, it just solidified that that is just such a part of who we are and what this institution is.

CB: This is a very personal question. It's a topic that I've been fascinated by ever since I was a young faculty member at Williams College. I watched the transition of people from the faculty into administrative positions, and how their perception of them changed instantly, and how they changed, some very good friends of mine. I saw--I thought I saw--how they were defining themselves. How have you handled that as like faculty and administrator? Clearly you have moved back and forth probably as much as anybody at Wilkes. I'm thinking about people who might have done something similar. I can't think of anyone who has had quite the variety of departmental existence and central administration, keeping a faculty identity, as you. How does it look from your point of view?

TW: well the broader perspective certainly opened my eyes, but I remember going in initially knowing I had to learn a lot about the overall functions of the university. But I also felt, in anybody who sits in this seat, part of their role is to also be that advocate for the faculty and help educate those that don't understand the full academic workings of what a faculty member does. So I sort of really saw it as needing to wear those two hats almost in every one of those--and even in enrollment, to help the admissions counselors understand the role of what the faculty members do. But then again, going back to the faculty and saying, "Hey, kids don't just plop into your seats because you're so fantastic. There's a whole group of people out there working really hard to get those students into the seats in your classroom." that was an appreciation that still many of the faculty don't understand. Personally I always felt that it was important to always hold on to what it means to be a faculty member, and then to educate the faculty about the other aspects, and vice versa. I'll never forget sharing with a board member who was complaining on how the faculty were approaching something, and really is it their role to do this? I just remember saying that as a faculty member--and this is the end of my 32nd year--I've seen both of you as presidents, and two more, and now another one. I've been through five presidents and many of our faculty, the administration comes and goes. The faculty are the lifers of the institution. They dedicate their entire career so they feel vested, they should be vested in the institution that they've dedicated their lives to. So that's something I've always tried to keep in the forefront and help those who may not recognize that to understand it. The other thing I've learned from this side of the street, as they say, because Weckesser on the other side of the street is what we're all used to--is that the faculty aren't always right, and they make demands that are unreasonable and that you can't do. But trying to keep that balance is very important and that's what I've tried to do in these multiple roles.

JR: Terese, what would you say has been your biggest problem as provost?

TW: As provost?

JR: Yeah, or any big ones that you've faced.

TW: Well yknow, things run--as all of you know--things run so much more smoothly when there's trust between the administration and the faculty. When perceived or real (and generally it's more perceived), distrust is an uphill battle. Building trust, trying to be transparent. So there is trust--I think the first go-around in the provost seat and then this go-around--that's been the biggest challenge. Trying to continue keeping trust, maintaining trust, and when there is a lack of trust, it takes time to build it back up. But a lot of that comes through transparency and communication. But if they don't trust the communication, then you've got to prove that what you're saying is what you're doing. I've been lucky in the sense of--well this cuts both ways--I don't know how to be dishonest, you can tell it on my face if I'm trying to pull something on you--I get all red, and then the hives come out. So it's just easier to be open and honest and that's at least helped me. When you can! And there's times you can't, when it's a personnel issue you can't be transparent.

TG: What are the things you worry about when you make a person an interim, in a very senior position as you've been in. Sometimes, literally these people can't go back. But it sounds like you have been able to do that. I would just say, as you start to answer this, I think this has to do, in part, with you and who you are, and you should probably give yourself a lot of credit, yknow you're in this interview for being able to keep those connections. Have you worried about that issue of going back after being in this kind of role?

TW: Absolutely. And I've thought about that a lot. Fortunately I'm not gonna have to go back quite yet, which is a good thing, but there are times where I think, man it would be so nice to just teach a bunch of classes, and be in my lab and shut the door and do some work... but no, I've enjoyed this. And yeah, I worry about--it would be a huge adjustment going back to the faculty. I'd have to sort of... I've thought about it, and I think probably what I would do is when I started again, go back and just keep my mouth shut and just listen for a while and not feel like.. Knowing me I'd want to jump in right away, but just try to get the sense of the culture in the department again before I start jumping in and giving my opinion, which is hard not to do anymore! But I have thought about it and it would be a big transition going back. Not to deal with the students--I've always tried to keep my foot in the classroom.

TG: Yeah.

TW: The students have never been the concern. It's the colleagues, of course.

TG: One of the best lines I've ever heard was by a guy who had just assumed the deanship and one week I was having lunch with my friends, and we were talking, we were interacting, and it was great, and then my appointment was announced and everything was cut off, and I went to a friend of mine and asked him, "what's going on?" and he said, "you have the odor of vengeance about you."

[Laughter]

TW: You know, people did treat me differently, when I was in the first tour of duty and I was like, "what the heck is going on?" Yeah I didn't get it. I really didn't get it.

CB: There's another dimension of this that you may not want to even speak to, but one of the mentoring things that I did when I was asking people to consider moving up to deanship-type positions is that you have to realize: if you do a good job at this, there's going to be demand to take the next step up. And if you're in a vice president or provost position, if you do a good job, people are going to want you to be president of some place. And you need to know before you make this step that you're open to that, or that you really have surveyed the scene and said "I don't ever want to do that." That's got to guide you as to how to approach this administrative thing. Have you ever been tempted by going up to that next level?

TW: No. No, I wasn't tempted to come to this level.

[Laughter]

TW: But no, I'm enjoying this work. I think part of it is that we've all been--you as presidents--you need to have that really outgoing personality to engage complete strangers all the time. I'm an introvert by nature and I have to work really, really hard at being that front-facing part of the institution, and that's actually the thing I'm most uncomfortable with in this role. So going to even that next level is even ten times worse and my heart couldn't take that. And I remember [my] first tour of duty and being in front of families and prospective students and having notes with me all the time because I needed that. And I'd share my story and say I would be much more comfortable going through the Krebs cycle with you than the comments that I'm gonna bring forward because that's really more my comfort zone than being up in front and having to speak. As long as I have time to prepare I'm okay, but I'm not very good off the cuff and I'm uncomfortable in meeting new people, so I've really these past couple years had to work at that, so that next level was really never something I was interested in.

TG: Interesting.

CB: Talk to us of Wilkes students, in your sense of them. Now, you've got a longevity that has got to be compared to the top 10% of people who have ever taught at Wilkes. So talk to us of Wilkes students.

TW: Wilkes students are, in general (as we all know because there's all levels), they are incredibly hard-working students. I've always loved about Wilkes--and one of the reasons I think many of us have stayed as long as we have is obviously the students. But the fact that we still have such a high percentage of those first-generation and a high percentage of the Pell-eligible, and those students work hard. They know what it's going to mean to get that degree and be able to change the trajectory of their families. They work hard and they want to learn, they want to succeed. They're not all as prepared as they could be to come into college, and teaching freshmen chemistry for as long as I have--I have a freshmen lab right now--it's not always easy, but they work hard. Because it's a subject where it doesn't always come easy to folks, and they need a little extra work. I think that the faculty here, in general, are willing to put in that work, to work with the students. And when you do, as you all know, you see them walking across the stage. I had a nursing student a couple years ago in freshman chemistry, and man, she struggled. I remember within the first week, asking her because I give a quiz the first week (and this is typical of our students), I said, "Cayla, what are you doing in this course? You should be in the other chemistry course for nurses."

“Well, it was full, I came too late, they said if I go in here, it will count.”

And I’m like, “Okay, are you sure you don’t want to go to Chem 111?” which was the nursing [course], and again, considerably easier than the regular science, the ones that chemistry, bio, pharmacy take. She said, “Nope, I’m gonna stick it out.” She was in my office every week. Every week. She got a 2.5, and I was thrilled for her, she was thrilled! She had graduated last year during COVID, I hope she comes back for her graduation. But I remember a couple of us were out putting signs around the fence of Weckesser because we didn’t have graduation because of COVID, and she was there and it was like, “I want to give you a hug but I can’t because it’s COVID!” So that was four years later, she got her nursing degree, she passed her NCLEX. And it’s one of the most rewarding things and so many of our students are like that, and that’s what keeps us here I think.

TG: Yeah, I think we’ve heard another quote that she gave was, “the NCLUX was a picnic in comparison to Dr. Wignot’s class.”

[Laughter]

TW: Absolutely! And again, the nursing faculty are tough, that’s for sure. I thought I was hard in chemistry, I’m probably nothing compared to some of the nursing faculty.

TG: That’s probably true. [Chuckles] Did you want to talk, at all, about your experience in student recruitment and any things that you might want to pass on to history?

TW: Oh goodness. What I will say, and again, they hired a coach with RNL that worked with me because again it was a true incredible learning experience for me.

TG: Oh, yeah.

TW: The team over there is good. Again, it’s young people. There’s high turnover as there should be because that’s hard work. They’re on the road and when you’re at the whim of 18 year olds and their parents on what they’re gonna do--man, that’s a tough field. I wish I had done better when I was there. But trying to learn it and thank goodness I didn’t have financial aid, but I learned so much about financial aid and all the ins and outs and the regulations related to that. I think that experience helps me in whatever role I’m gonna be in, if it’s back in the faculty at some point later, or in this partnership role that I’m gonna be going into, just having that experience is helping to understand the overall processes of the institutions. It’s just getting harder and harder from the recruitment standpoint.

TG: It is.

TW: There’s still so many options. There’s good options, and that traditional market is just going to be taking a dive soon, so I’m happy I got out of it.

[Laughter]

TW: And we actually have Kishan, our VP, doing a great job. And again much more knowledgeable than I was. And marketing--marketing is so critical. Making sure you're marketing the right way to the different constituencies. And there is an art and a science to that in the whole process. I remember telling the person who was my coach, "I like the science part, but the art part? Not so good!"

[Laughter]

CB: For those of us who've not been around for a while, what is the niche for Wilkes right now in this dramatically changing world upon our education, upon virtual learning, on student debt, the whole shmeer. Where does Wilkes fit and what's its viability over time.

TW: Oh, goodness. I think the thing that helps us in this--because it is the fact of, if you will, being diversified--that again credit [to] Tim and Chris for starting the online as early as we did in the graduate education space. I mean, there were ebbs and flows, but being an early adopter to online education is really paying off for us and paying off in areas that I think 10 years ago, none of us thought you could do graduate nursing solely online.

TG: Oh, no.

TW: So having the experience there, having graduate programs in different areas as well as strong undergraduate programs right now where there is a demand in nursing and engineering. And we know that's gonna change and we need to be able to adjust and pivot if we need to into whatever markets. We're looking now more into, because we're strong online and have good support for it, more workplace certificate programs that can be credit bearing, they don't have to be credit-bearing. And workshops that are stackable into credits and then can be stackable into degrees. And we're poised very well to do all of that because of the experience we have on campus in the remote space, so I think that's going to help us in the long run. And personally, and again maybe I'm still old-school too, our brick-and-mortar face-to-face isn't gonna go away. I don't think it should go away, I don't think it should ever go away. For 18-year-olds to have the opportunity to live away from home, that's such a growth period in people's lives that I don't think it's ever gonna go away. It may look a little different, a more hybrid--technology. In more hiflex and hybrid but never get rid of the face-to-face and that campus experience--I hope. Or not in my lifetime anyway.

TG: Just to say, I think you're right on target because I think the coming-of-age experience is just not gonna go away. But I think it will evolve. Are there any discussions about evolving the coming-of-age experience on campus now?

TW: Uh... Yes, but I probably couldn't articulate very well.

TG: What you were talking about, I think was right on target. I also think--not just engineering, but being in STEM in general--the general core strengths of Wilkes there are really important as well. I think the demand and the coming-of-age is gonna continue to be there and grow there.

TW: And I think we're gonna be working more towards and I think we have to focus on more integration. We're still a little siloed especially in STEM and in a lot of our areas. So I think we need more of an integration approach, less siloed, hierarchical. And you can't totally get away from that, just because you have to know the content, and to know the content it has to build on each other. But more integration across those disciplines because I think that's what's going to continue to be needed in the workforce.

JR: So Terese, has COVID affected your relationship with faculty? Or between faculty that you're aware of?

TW: I think it's gonna be interesting to see how this plays out. It's hard to tell right now, Jim. Only because you can't have the water cooler conversations. Though some are, some areas are. Speaking of the sciences, most of the science faculty and engineering faculty are back. They have to be because we have face-to-face labs. But there are other areas where folks haven't been on campus all year basically, so it'll be interesting when we come back to see if it really has affected. I think it's hard to tell now. One thing I will say, and I'm not sure if you've experienced it in any of your meetings. For the faculty meetings, the chats are always on. So instead of leaning over and saying something to the person next to you about something somebody just said, you're typing it into a space where sometimes they don't keep it private!

[Laughter]

TW: And I think people say some things in the chat when they're typing that they would never stand up and say in a full faculty meeting and say out loud. So that's been really interesting. The one meeting we had to capture the chat and see how are we going to address some of these issues, because some of these are not good! But I don't know if it would have come out in a full faculty meeting. Standing up and having to physically to say that in front of your colleagues

CB: What are the best things coming out of the COVID disaster in terms of the education process at Wilkes?

TW: I think that one of the positives is that we had many faculty very reluctant to do any type of remote learning, and they had to. And this won't surprise any of you, the one hold out for having fully online options for our core was English 101. There was no way you could do English comp remotely, even though we had experts from Drexel that were willing to come up and do workshops, and someone from Penn who was going to talk to our faculty--there's no way! We wanted that magic in the classroom. Well of course now they had to go remote, and some of the courses probably will--the English 101 will remain remote. But I think getting faculty over that hump of 'there are advantages to having the ability to do certain things remote'. I think we're gonna use some of the tools that we learned--were forced to learn--in having a fully remote environment, that that will then get integrated into a better educational experience for students. So I think that's definitely one of the positives that has come out of it.

TG: If you had to--and you've obviously read The Chronicle and other publications and yknow, one week you hear "it's really working pretty well," and the next week you hear, "this is the most dreadful thing that's ever happened to us and we need to get back into the classroom." But you do have a sense that there are some institutions where it really was a negative experience,--

TW: Yeah.

TG: --and I think it had to do with the amount of support--

TW: Right.

TG:--that the faculty made the transition. If you had to characterize it at Wilkes, where do you think Wilkes is? I think I have a sense, but I'd love to hear [from] you.

TW: Part of it, I think, depends on the area of discipline. I think we fared this pretty well. And we really have a mix of how people have experienced it. We have some students that are saying, "I never want to go back to face-to-face" and other students that said, "I never want an online class again in my life." So of course you have that mix, and I think the faculty are the same. Some of the faculty are like, "Wow, this is really convenient, sitting at home and doing the majority of my work." One thing we are sort of, I don't want to say struggling with, but thinking about what's going to be the best approach of what really will be the expectations when it's back to normal. And we've sort of--and we've started those discussions--on the faculty side--staff side is different--and no, we're having it on the staff side too--who can reasonably work from home all the time and who can't, and is there the balance? And on the faculty side, especially on the undergraduate [side], the early consensus and feeling of most, at least the academic leadership, is [that] we want undergraduate faculty here to interact with students, to be physically here to support the undergraduate students. Now graduates are completely different. There've been online programs, those students are never physically on our campus. And not that undergraduate faculty can't have online courses, but they need to physically have a presence on campus at some, yknow, a certain amount of time during the week to really ensure that we keep that culture that we've been talking about intact because that is such a key component of it. I don't know, Tim, did that answer what you actually asked?

TG: Oh, yeah, it's just [inaudible, 00:58:59]

TW: I might have gone on a tangent there.

TG: Well, I mean, yknow there are no clear answers right now. We just have some information, and you really did a good job of putting that together. And I completely agree that this coming--if you can get this coming-of-age concept in your mind, it really is a valuable experience and we really shouldn't be on the defensive about it. Where we should be is, "what have we learned in COVID? What can we do to make it better--

TW: Right.

TG:--and maybe a little more convenient for everyone?" but this connection, and I think particularly for Wilkes, I mean, you stand back and look at Wilkes, what it really has done is it's taken first-generation students and given them an opportunity consistently.

TW: Right.

TG: That's gonna be needed, even more so, I think.

TW: Absolutely.

CB: My daughter is in her 17th year as the head of a charter school in Inner City Baltimore, southwest Baltimore, and it's just been hell. These little kids and families in overcrowded conditions, when the only computer is the one the school has given the child.

TW: Right.

CB: And she's got them all started a week ago, Monday, for the first time all year, and COVID appeared by Thursday, so they had to go back in quarantine for the 7th and 8th graders. But she's got her faculty working on, "what have we learned by this sobering experience about having more effective teaching of students?"

TW: Mhm.

CB: As it's clear, we've learned in the process of this tumultuous year [that] we've done a lousy job of reaching these kids who have so many strikes against them.

TW: Yeah.

CB: So they're saying, "how do we transform the whole experience?" so that they really can be more successful than we've been before. So they've got a real enthusiasm to turn this negative experience into something positive for students, so I suspect that's going on in almost every professional situation. But Wilkes--and you've been talking, and I've been thinking, the period I was there, and this goes back... I came in '84, so yknow I'm younger than Jim Rodechko in this regard, so that's way back. The tension for faculty was learning how to use computers. We look at **Will ??? [1:02:02]** and Rich Sours, who took on the process of teaching their fellow faculty

TW: Mhm

CB: how to get comfortable with computers, and how we could institutionalize that, which is kind of--I think happened on my watch. I had a computer on my desk in Weckesser Hall. I was afraid to turn it on for four years.

[soft chuckles]

CB: So I was--any time I was encouraging the faculty to use computers. It was a student who came in and overcame my fear, and got me to use it, and I've not been off it since. But for that year, that was the problem. But the distance learning--there were people doing distance learning when I was there--we set up a lab so we could do some distance learning courses. The basement of Stark, I think, was a special kind of studio. But I think the innovation among faculty who've really gotten excited about distance learning and virtual learning--

TW: Mhm.

CB: --they're going to be the leaders.

TW: Absolutely.

CB: In other disciplines, yknow, you can imaginably do this.

TG: Well the interesting thing is, we're probably talking more than we should, Teri, because we're really trying to get you but--

[Laughter]

TW: That's fine!

CB: We know it's fine [indistinct, voice cuts out 1:03:49]

TG: Besides, we're old!

CB: That's true. [Laughing]

TG: But as you look forward... By the way, what are you doing next year?

TW: Well, I will be the associate provost for academic partnerships. So how our Keypath partnership is exploding with nursing, it's--I don't want to say it's getting over--and we're looking to expand that out to other areas outside of nursing.

TG: Right, right.

TW: So I'm sort of going to sort of be the key person at Wilkes to make sure that all the 'Keypath' trains keep running, if you will. Try to circumvent any process and procedural issues that come up. Streamline some of the things that are happening to take the burden off of the units that are involved. As well as then work on other partnerships and including articulation. So I'm still gonna stay in academic leadership next year, so.

TG: But that's probably one of the most exciting new areas in higher education.

TW: Mhm, yeah.

TG: Your problem is you'll never get out of that.

TW: [Laughing] Well we'll see. But here's the thing, yknow, and I'm hoping.. I want to enjoy part of my life--not that I'm not enjoying what I'm doing now--but I will retire at some point and then maybe just

teach a couple courses, do some consulting and yknow... but on my time! So I've got a couple years left, so we'll see. And again, Pat Leahy, he did always say this often, he still kids me today that when I accepted the interim provost the first time around, I said, "I'll do it and I'll do it for one year only," and it's now nine years later that I'm still in administration!

CB: Which is-

TW: I am now more open minded to, "Maybe I might like that and I may do it longer than I think I'm going to do it."

TG: Well I think this whole area that you're going into, though is probably the most exciting area in higher education coming up, because I think it's also this whole coming-of-life experience is not going to go away but it is going to diminish in size simply because--

TW: Right.

TG:--of demographics. In fact, Wilkes might be in a niche that is gonna grow because that's where the growth is going to be.

TW: Right.

TG: But nevertheless, having something like Keypath, which has been a huge, as I understand it, a lifesaver this year--

TW: Yes.

TG:--from a budgetary point of view. I'm just really glad to hear that they have someone like you pursuing this because there are other partnerships that I think could be equally as rewarding as Keypath. Including augmentation of what you do in the coming-of-age area. Because there's some really interesting A.I. kind of things going on now. I don't know if you're looking at those or not.

TW: I'm sure we will be.

TG: Yeah, it's uh--many of them are pretty positive from what I can understand from people that I've worked with, and they really do help.

JR: So Terese, I have the impression that our main enrollment areas, or focus, would be engineering, nursing, and pharmacy. Is that the case? Are there other areas that are drawing attention from students?

TW: Well those certainly are. Pharmacy actually is diminishing a little bit. The interest in pharmacy is dropping, so we're trying to adjust, and again that's one of the areas we are looking seriously into getting into with Keypath to do a hybrid or a low-residency pharmacy to get students that are in areas where there is the need and the desire for pharmacists, but the access isn't necessarily there. But definitely engineering, nursing, pharmacy. Our criminology right now in the past couple years has been very, very

strong as well. And I personally think that that's gonna grow. Even though I think despite what's happening in our society, I think there'll be an interest of young people to get into that field and make it better.

CB: Just [indistinct 1:08:49]

TG: Yeah, yup.

TW: So those are probably... psych is still always strong. Biology is always strong. Biology had a year or two that was down, but that's coming back. Yknow, our sciences in general, but with biology being probably the strongest. Our integrated media is a growing program, too.

TG: Really? That's great.

Yes. I mean it's not huge, but it's an area that students are interested in.

JR: Is that under communication?

TW: Right now it's in arts, humanities, and social sciences.

CB: What's the status of our affiliation agreements of our medical school in Philadelphia? Is that still going or has that stopped?

TW: That has stopped. I shouldn't say that, I think we still have SUNY. I don't believe we have any in Philadelphia anymore, but we still have the SUNY program. And so there's SUNY and the Guthrie R. Bert Packer Hospital. Or, the Sayre medical center, I believe. So those are other areas that I think we'll have to look at reinvigorating. The problem--what happened with those if I remember correctly, is our students were doing so well--the students who were in the program and were doing really well then decided, "I don't want to go to that medical school, I'm good enough to go to Penn, Jefferson..." and so the places we had the affiliations with were like, "well if they're not gonna come here then that doesn't help us," so some of those fell by the wayside. Definitely worth pursuing again because the medical... and actually it's the biotech side that I see growing in the future.

CB: Mhm. I've got two broad questions, and others can push me off on this now, leave it till the end, but I'd like your reflection on some of the major personalities at Wilkes. We talked about Umid Nejib. But others that you'd like to have your portrait of. Then, I'd like, to the point that you're comfortable, I'd like to hear about your kids.

TW: Oh, thank you, on that!

TG: Me too!

CB: [indistinct 1:11:22] If you really want to get to me, you ask me about them, so.

TW: well and I'm going to--so the figures at Wilkes, and I mean several of them obviously are here, and Jim, you've always been very supportive and I know you were VPAA and interim at some point in there, and [you] were very supportive. And obviously, Chris, you were president when I started. And Tim, lived through your whole experience and even through part of mine. But I think of Mike. Mike Lennon's been... he was a great mentor and I loved seeing him every time the residency's here, I always try to make a point of taking time and saying hello and catching up with Mike a little bit. He was, again, very supportive and someone that influenced me greatly. Marvene! I'll never forget sitting--Marvene's office was in the room next to this one in Weckesser. I'm in that corner office. I was chair of chemistry at the time and I think we were going through an evaluation, or Middle States were coming or something, and she sat down and she said, "so when are you going to get into higher leadership?" and I said, "I'm never doing that, Marlene." [Laughing] You know, that's not where my interests lie. And then when I was interim the first time around, obviously she was still alive. And I don't know why she was here on campus, but she popped in, and again I was sitting in this desk right here and I can still picture at the door just popping in and coming in and giving me a hug and saying, "I'm so proud of you," and she said, "I knew it, I knew you'd get here." so she was a big influence on me. And then in the faculty, as I already mentioned, Jane and Waghiya. Obviously, Owen and Bill and Ralph and Jim. Frank Sally, huge influence for me. Very supportive and helpful and never...they had years and years of experience on me but never was anyone ever, condescending or because I was a woman or because I was green and didn't know... it was just really great. Umid.. Dale! Dale was fantastic as well. I mean, and Dale was really interesting, and I've used Dale as references if I've ever been looking for positions at times when I'm thinking, "I have to get out of here," which I have never done, thank goodness. But Dale was interesting because he was Dean when I was chair in faculty, and then he was Dean when I became interim provost. So he would always say he had the unique perspective of being my direct supervisor for many years and then my being his direct supervisor for a couple years. So we sort of had a very unique relationship. But then even going back to **Anne Kolanoswki**, when she was here, I remember we had that women's group when I first started, so very helpful and influential. **Jim DeCosmo** I'll always remember as such a kind man. So those are the folks around Wilkes that will always be near and dear to my heart.

CB: That's great, that's great. Your kids?

TW: Okay, now my oldest, Steven, he's 41 believe it or not.

JR: Oh, god! [Laughing]

TW: I did have him very, very young. And he's actually in, and thank god, thank god-- [audio cuts out, 1:15:35]

CB: My youngest is 41 today.

TW: Yeah I mean he's 41 years old. So which means I don't look old enough, I hope, to have a 41 year old, is what I keep telling myself!

TG: We can verify that!

TW: He's actually living with me now. Last November, he moved in with me because he had left the job he was at, he was taking a couple months doing some online work, and was saving money. I said, "come live with me, save some money," because he planned to go to Europe for about a year and just travel through Europe. He could do his online work, and he said, "I'll be home whenever I feel like it." "Whenever I'm tired of Europe I'll come back to the states." And I'm like, "Fine with me!" And he was leaving last March. End of--and he actually had his ticket booked for early April. It was supposed to be mid-March, but then in January it was pushed to early April, and he's still there with me because the world hasn't opened up again, so. I'm very thankful though, because I was happy he was here with me during COVID. I woulda been alone. So he'll be going to Europe whenever the world opens up again.

TG: Hey, Terri--

TW: --son number two--Oh, go ahead, Tim, sorry.

TG: We may have lost Chris.

TW: Yeah.

JR: Yeah, I think so.

TG: He was gonna try to come back in, I suspect. Let me just see what he's..

TW: Okay, sure.

TG: Because he should get to hear this too.

TW: Okay, I know, I know.

JR: I remember--

TW: Because again, they grew up at Wilkes.

JR: I remember when your oldest was making a decision as to where to go to college, he went to Sienna, I think!

TW: Yeah, that was son number two.

JR: Oh, okay!

TG: Are you gonna try to come back in?

[CB speaking indistinctly through TG's phone]

TG: Well why don't--Chris, why don't I leave you on the phone so you can hear Terri talk about her kids.

CB [on speaker phone]: I'd love that.

TW: So Terri can you hear? Just speak up, Chris, just say, "Hi Terri, you don't look like you have--"

CB: Hi Terri, I wanna know about the kids!

TW: Okay, I can hear ya!

TG: and by the way, Chris, you told me when it was coming through my hearing aids, that you were gonna tell her that she does not look like a woman who--

[Laughter]

TW: Like I'm old enough to have a 40 year old !

[Laughter]

CB: Okay, just the fact that your son is 41.

TW: Yes. So I was sharing, Chris, that he's living with me. He was--he moved in about a year and a half ago with plans just to spend a couple months, save some money, and then go travel Europe for however long he felt like it. And then the pandemic hit. So all his plans were cancelled, so he's still with me, working part-time, now saving even more money so he'll have a bigger and longer trip, I think, when the world opens up. I was happy he could be with me during the pandemic, especially those times when we were stuck at home. So he's with me, and that's son number one. Son number two, Owen, he works, actually, for Banko Dental. He lives in the area. He's married, they have a puppy. He's been married about two years, and God bless him and his wife, his wife was diagnosed with stage 2 breast cancer four months after they were married.

TG: Oh, wow.

TW: So she had surgery, chemo, and radiation all during COVID. So it was a rough year for them, but she's doing very well now and cancer-free, knocking on wood. So he works for Banko Dental. He was coaching, assistant coach for basketball, our Wilkes team for a while

[Noises as CB gets off speakerphone and back into the Zoom call]

TW: Oh! There we go. But now he's coaching, assistant coach at one of the--at the Wilkes-Barre, the combined Wilkes-Barre high school. So they're doing well. Um, and then I have my two daughters. They are both out in Pittsburgh. My oldest daughter has her MSW and is a social worker at Presbyterian Hospital out in Pittsburgh. And my youngest daughter has her Masters in public health, and she was working, well, currently working for the women's hospital, UPMC Women's Hospital out in Pittsburgh.

But she just got a new job and will be moving to Cleveland. She will be a clinical regulatory monitor for a company out in Cleveland. So she's my only scientist of the group. But they're all doing well and um.

CB: That's great.

TW: Happy and proud of them.

CB: You should be!

TG: It's the best job in the world, right?

CB: [audio cut off by TG]--all that you've done at Wilkes is amazing.

TW: And I'm not sure how many of you know this story, but it's the one I always-- cause again, my children grew up on this campus and running the halls. And my children went to--my three youngest went to grade school at St. Nick's. And there was a time I was living in Jim Thorpe and so, but the kids went to school. I'd drive them up to go to school at St. Nick's and I'd come to work. And then they'd either come to my office, but many times they'd have practices right after school. So it all worked out. But when they didn't they'd come to my office and hang out for a while until I was ready and would drive home. Well my son, Owen, and this was when my office was in Stark on the second floor of Stark, and it was yknow, it used to be Frank Sally's but he wasn't there. Frank Sally, myself, Bill Stine, Owen Faut. That's the way the offices went. So my son Owen. I was at my desk and he left the office and was going up to get something probably from Maria's, and so I just yell out the door, "Owen, sweetie, come here, I need you a minute." not even thinking who was in the hall hearing me ye;;, "Owen, sweetie," not having any idea that I had a son named Owen. And I don't even know if Owen Faut was in his office or not, but I told him that story, and you know Owen well enough, he turned like beet red! And I said, "I promise, Owen, I'll never yell 'Owen, sweetie,' out my office door again when I wanted my son." So that's one of my favorite stories of my kids around, not even thinking. I don't know if rumors ever flew after that or not, but. I kept saying, "Owen, my son! Not Owen Faut!"

CB: Where did they go to college? Did they go to Wilkes?

TW: No, actually my oldest son graduated from DeSales. And then my son Owen was on full athletic scholarship at Siena College in New York. My daughter Monica was on full athletic scholarship and went to the University of Pittsburgh. And then my youngest went to Duquesne. So I was lucky, by the time my youngest went, I had two through school already and they all came out with no debt whatsoever cause of athletic scholarships which worked out well for me.

JR: And you were quite an athlete yourself!

TW: And now I'm paying for it, Jim. In a couple weeks I'm getting my knee replaced!

JR: Oh, I know all about that!

[Laughter]

TW: But I would not have traded any of it for the world, yes. And again, that's another memory I have very fondly of Wilkes is our lunchtime basketball games.

JR: Oh, I remember!

TW: Yeah, Fred Sullivan--

JR: Fred Sullivan!

TW: Yup. Fred, myself, Mark, Allen, um... oh yeah, we had Larry Kuhar, Bob Tuttle, I'm trying to think of who's still here. Plus Mermon, God rest his soul. Even Scott Byers played with us a couple times.

JR: Well you've played at Penn State, didn't you?

TW: Lehigh.

JR: Oh, Lehigh! You played at Lehigh.

TW: Yup, Lehigh. I was a Lehigh grad. I played at Lehigh.

JR: and your brother was--your brother was **[indistinct, 1:25:18]**

TW: My brother played football at Penn State, yes.

JR: and the Los Angeles Rams.

TW: Correct, yup. Yeah, so but the lunchtime games were fun. We usually stayed pretty cordial. Unlike the games at the Y. The Y games, I used to play there, too. They would get pretty--they would get a little more intense than our games over here. But that was fun, we had a good time

JR: Who's doing your knee?

TW: Michael Banus.

JR: Oh, okay.

TW: He's an orthopedic in the area.

JR: He played ball at Scranton.

TW: Yes! Yeah, he was an All-American there.

JR: Yeah.

TW: Yeah his children went to school with my kids at Holy Redeemer. Or Bishop Hoban then Redeemer.

CB: What's the COVID situation in Luzerne County now?

TW: Oh, it's not good.

TG: Oh.

TW: Yeah, we were, um, I think this week is better than the past couple weeks, but Paul keeps--Paul, we meet daily. Every morning, there's six of us that meet to go over where we are with COVID, what are we doing? And so we were high risk, and then it moved to extremely high risk. I think we've come down a little bit this week, but recently it hasn't been good. But what--I think what's been driving some of those numbers are younger, and not just, I mean, high school. Like, several of my colleagues, their children in grade school were COVID positive. So I think children now are getting exposed and that's driving some of the numbers, and they can't get vaccinated yet, so. That's the scary part of it.

CB: So what is Wilkes doing about it right now? Do you have some students in class?

TW: Yes. We've had, um--so Fall and Spring, we've had just around 50% classes that were face-to-face, where everyone needs to be masked, classroom capacities are 50-75% to ensure that we're keeping proper social distancing. Each classroom or parts of halls would have cleaning, so there's-- there were sanitization stations and wipes in classrooms that everybody could wipe their seats down. We were one of the few institutions last fall that got through the semester without having to do a complete shutdown. And we're gonna make it through spring, too, so knocking on wood.

TG: It's interesting when you look around the country, Terri, and I think the Wilkes story is a really good one, but there've been institutions that have done pretty well like Wilkes has. And you think that the students might not be totally responsible, but they seem to have done very well on this.

TW: Absolutely. And I remember last fall, just walking across campus and students not having masks on outside, but it was policy if you're on campus, you have to have your mask on and saying, "I'd really appreciate it if you had masks on even outside." and so they're like, "Okay, thanks!" and put them right on. Now, maybe they took them off right when I left, but students were very compliant, and they continued to be here. Because they wanted to stay. They didn't want to go home. They wanted to have the campus--as much as they could of a campus experience, so.

CB: My granddaughter called me as a freshman at Williams, and they--with all the sources of the world, they have monitored this thing to the nth degree. And the kids very much want to be on campus and not have to do it virtually. My grandson, at Dickinson, just couldn't take the virtual.

TW: Yeah.

CB: So he's dropped out for the year, will start again next year. He just--he couldn't function that way.

TW: Yeah, and--

CB: In front of computers, he's been upon that, but the interaction of classes that way, he just couldn't do it.

TW: And the one thing COVID has really highlighted is the digital divide as you were referring to, Chris, that... and we were very intentional last spring, and into the fall to ensure, making sure students had what they needed. I mean, John Ference, who's our Associate Provost for Student Success, I mean we were mailing hotspots to students last spring to ensure that they could stay connected--and computers. If a student didn't have a computer, we supplied the computer and the hotspot. So they could stay engaged in their classroom. Because some of them didn't and I remember John bringing back the story of a round man that lived in--somewhere in the city, and would go from stoop to stoop in his neighborhood to try to find a good internet connection so he could do his classwork. And as she said, you could have a family that has a college student and grade school kids and there's only one computer. We really--we did our best to try to ensure your student body had what they needed to continue. And surprisingly, John Stachacz was really concerned, but he said, "I got all the computers back!" he was worried he wouldn't, but again, going back to how responsible all our students have been through all of this.

TG: That's great.

TW: We got all our technology back, so.

TG: Well, they're Wilkes students, I mean...

TW: That's right.

TG: Over at King's now... [Laughing]

CB: Well, this has been wonderful. What questions do you have for any of us, Terri? Or what final comments does anyone else have to make?

TW: There's one thing that I'll share to how our campus over time--and I'm looking on my shelf here because I have an atlas that Harold put together--

TG: Right.

TW: --of how campus, the physical infrastructure of campus has changed over time. And I just--I find it--that piece of all of this really fascinating. And is that gonna be part of this overall-- I know you're doing oral histories, but are you gonna include the actual physical makeup of the campus as part of this?

TG: We've been--

[multiple people try to interject]

CB: Go ahead, Tim.

TG: I think the other thing is I don't know if Suzanne is on or not, but she has just done a fantastic job with the, um.. The word's escaping me right now, but the, her job--

TW: [to someone in the doorway, whispering] Almost!

CB: Archivist.

TG: Archivist. With the archives. And I know she's taking special care and getting--she's come up with, not just on the physical side, but with some really fascinating documents that were just there that I think really add to people's understanding of the place. We cited the history that Farley commissioned, but there are others. We also have a film of Mike Michelini's installation and Farley speaks at that installation, so you get a sense of these people that you just didn't have.

TW: Yeah.

TG: So anyway, we should pay some attention to that and at least update what Harold did.

JR: We've done it in an incidental way, where each of the presidents, with the buildings they put up, we've talked about those. So I think in that sense, we have. And of course with the flood --

TW: Right.

JR:--and the physical damage, we have lots of photos of that particular period. But we haven't done it specifically.

TG: We probably should.

JR: Yeah.

[CB tries to speak, cuts out]

TG: We have to fact-check some of those presidents' claims on buildings, so I'm just not sure...
[laughter]

CB: Well we had Oedipus complexes right through.

TG: Right, right!

CB: Owen escaped.

TG: It's now a Cohen-Breiseth building, by the way.

[Laughter]

CB: I think updating Harold's--because Harold captured--he had two additions, so he really got back to the buildings that were there as houses before the flood so you can--that should be updated really on a kind of ten year basis. What happened each decade.

TG: Yeah.

CB: And I hope to have done that--I'm working on my memoir right now while I'm.. at this time getting my treatments in Burlington, my regard is a mixture of incarceration and a cruise.

[Laughter]

CB: and the cruise part of it is working on the memoir.

I don't know if you've been on a cruise, lately, Chris, but that's what they are! A combination of incarceration and cruise--with good food!

CB: But I had pledged--and I think Tim you've got my memoir, a very rough draft. I think I show us an appendix to be done of all the changes that went on buildings in my 17 years. Which is representative of something to almost every building on campus which is significant. Either tear it down, or renovate it, or build new. So each presidency could have that segment. It would be a nice pamphlet on the... Jim, you may remember, I can't remember the two guys' names who were architectural buffs who did the mansions in Wilkes-Barre. It was a booklet that Betsy Condron used.

JR: Oh, yeah.

CB: That showed who the architects were when they were built, who the owners were, and so forth.

JR: Yeah.

CB: I mean the architectural heritage of Wilkes-Barre around the Wilkes campus, has really got to be one of its major signatures.

JR: Queen Anne architectural style, from what I've always understood.

CB: Well some of the buildings have Queen Anne, Victorian, and art deco kind of all mixed.

JR: [Laughing] Yeah. They were overlaid on each other.

CB: It's horrendously beautiful buildings at Wilkes that show that mixture. But that's a good point, Terri. You planted a seed.

TW: And I don't know, I think I'm freezing, too, now.

JR: Yeah.

CB: We can still hear you, though.

TW: Okay that's good I'll try not to do some stupid face, so--

CB: Well you've got an uplift. I mean, you're looking up, as if aspirational. So whatever you say, it's gonna have an extra uplift.

TG: Terri, we know it's not to us--it must be to some higher being.

[Laughter]

CB: I'm trying to picture which room were you in? Whose would it have been back in my day? Was that a Jane Groh office?

TW: Uh, I don't--I'm not sure-- I know Ralston was in here orig--or, not originally. So this was Tim. Tim's office, I'm in where Tim was in, when Tim was in Weckesser.

TG: Yup. Then I got thrown out. Had to go across the parking lot, yeah. It was a nice office.

CB: [indistinct, 1:38:22] higher authorities. [inaudible]

TW: So the corner office facing the annex side.

TG: Yup.

CB: That was George Ralston's office, in my day.

TW: Yeah, yes. George Ralston.

TG: Can you feel him in there?

TW: absolutely!

CB: Well I have a Ralston bowtie, which is in a case with glass, on my bureau in my bedroom. It was given to me--not by Helen--I don't know who presented it to me, but I treasure it. I don't wear bowties anymore because I never have ties on, but at least that's a [inaudible, 1:39:10]

TG: Well Terri, do you have any parting comments that you would like to make to this assembled rabble group? Group of rabble, yeah.

TW: The esteemed group of gentlemen in front of me here. And Suzanna, who I know is doing a great job. No I think it's fantastic that you're doing this and I am just--I want to thank you very much for including me in this, I'm very humbled by it. And I guess that's what happens when you stick around a long time, right? That you get invited to do these types of things. But no I think it's fantastic that it's getting done, there's so much history here to capture.

CB: Terri, before you leave, who else should we interview? Who could you think of who would make a significant contribution to the history reflecting on? You mentioned Dale Bruns. I think Dale is someone we should get. Anyone else?

TW: I mean, if you haven't I think Bonnie would give a very unique perspective--

CB: We did Bonnie.

TW:--if you haven't talked to Bonnie.

CB: We've done Bonnie. We've done Anne Batory recently.

TW: Okay.

TG: We did Wagiha quite a while ago.

CB: Yes.

TW: Yeah, I would... I'm trying to think if there's--

CB: We haven't done Mike Steele.

TW: Mike Steele would be very good.

TG: Yup.

JR: We haven't done Jane Elmes

TG: Yeah, we should do her.

TW: Jane would be very good.

CB: Where is she now?

JR: I don't know.

TW: I don't--I'm not sure either. I think she's still local?

CB: Well we can bring her in, Suzanna, on campus. But even after this is done, do an email to Suzanna on some other people that you think--

TW: Okay.

TG: That would be very helpful. That's one of the things that we've gotten from these--

TW: Okay.

TG:--interviews is other ideas of people who should be interviewed.

CB: We're still hoping---

TW: Okay, have you talked to Les?

CB: Yes.

TW: Les Turoczi?

CB: Yes, we did less-- **[inaudible, 1:41:44]**

TW: Okay. So yeah I'll go through--I'll let Suzanna know if I come up with other names.

CB: Jim, do you think we can do this without Bill Stine?

JR: [Laughing] I think we could probably get away with it.

TW: I do, too. But don't tell him I said that if you're talking to him.

CB: Oh, we won't share, it'll just be there in the transcript!

TG: Yeah, somebody will really have a good time with that, Chris, so.

CB: I think "Owen, sweetie," is the one we have to--

TW: [Laughter cuts CB out]

CB:--on the whole interview. Honestly. That's the greatest story of the day. Is there anything else that we say or ask before we sign off?

TW: Sorry, Chris?

CB: What else should we say or ask before we sign off?

TG: Yeah, what questions haven't we asked, Terri, that we should have?

TW: Oh, goodness.

CB: We haven't asked of your most embarrassing moment.

TW: Well that was probably it right there, I shared that one.

CB: [Laughing] Unbelievable. Well Terri, it's been wonderful, and--

TG: Yeah, it's been great.

CB: Without being cut off by Tim, who tends to think I talk too much.

CB: The position I'm in, for the period that I was there, and I've continued this kind of investment in Wilkes which is really the--I just read the sentence in my introduction that Wilkes was the summit of my career. Your contribution is just outstanding. I mean it's, first of all, it's you. But also you've used Wilkes and its opportunities and its limitations to adapt yourself to its needs in ways that I think are really quite unique, and the university is very fortunate to have you.

TW: Well thank you. Thank you, I'm very touched. Thank you so much. And I do really appreciate having the opportunity to talk to you and be part of this project.

CB: Good.

SV: Thank you, Terri.

TW: Thank you, Suzanna! It was so good seeing everyone, even if it's Zoom. Hopefully we can see in person soon.

CB: Good.

JR: Good to see you, Teresa.

TW: Okay, great. Thank you everybody!

TG: Great, thank you!

JR: Bye-bye!

TW: Bye.

TG: Hey Chris?

CB: Yeah.

TG: You doing okay?

CB: I'm doing okay.

TG: Good deal.

TW: Oh. I'm stuck here. [shuffling sounds]

CB: I made it though the whole past year [inaudible] that's really quite amazing, frankly.

TG: Yeah. Yeah it is, innit.

JR: You look great!

CB: Well, I am doing okay. As I said, I'm exactly halfway. I don't feel any particular fatigue. There are areas that are affected, as you can imagine, that I endure, and they're not nearly as bad as I thought they were gonna be. And the doctors and the nurses have both said given where I'm at I have plateau'd, so what I'm experiencing is probably what I'll be experiencing from now until the end. And that'll be on the Lupron for 18 months total, so that's going to continue having an effect on me. And then my system will start getting back to normal. So they're pleased with my progress and um, it is incarceration, however.

TG: [Laughing] It sure is!

CB: To be in [inaudible] five days a week. But I'm getting things done, and I love going home on the weekend.

TG: Well, that's good.

CB: That's a great spiritual uplift.

TG: How long is the trip?

CB: Takes me about an hour and twenty minutes. It's beautiful. its going down Route 7 looking across the green mountains over the Adirondacks and crossing Lake Champlain, coming down to Lake George. So I've got a Magnolia right outside of my--a huge magnolia tree right outside my room here covered in. So I've got a sense of spring, we had snow last week. So it's typical spring in Vermont. So I'm-- you're nice to keep asking, as you do, Tim, by email and I appreciate that. So. I'm gonna make it.

TG: You sure are. You're on the downhill part now, I think.

CB: Yes. I can't--I can't in good conscious tell you the urology jokes that I've been asking the doctors to give me.

[Laughter]

CB: I respect Suzanna too much. But I am getting a collection.

TG: They're a bawdy group.

CB: Oh, I'm even asking the nurses. I said, "Look, it's not fair that I just get this from the doctors."

CB: [inaudible]--something you can tell each other.

TG: [Laughing] Yeah.

CB: So uh. But being in the hands of young people—I mean, the doctors and the nurses are so young. It has referenced my age as I approach 85. I mean I haven't felt my 80s, but it's coming. It's coming.

TG: Just keep moving! Just keep moving.

CB: I'm gonna keep moving.

TG: Suzanna, how are you doing?

SC: Busy! Just always busy. But getting a lot of stuff done. I'm very excited to get some of these collections processed and finding aids uploaded, and lots of exciting things coming, so I'll definitely be keeping you guys attuned to that, so.

TG: We really enjoy your notes.

SC: Yeah.

CB: Should we, by the way, before we go, pick one of these three people that we decided and can one of you, locally make an approach? I think Jane Elmes-Crahall.

TG: She would be great.

CB: She'd be great. Um, any of you have a--Jim, could you, with Suzanna's help in getting an address, try to approach her?

JR: If we can find out an address.

TG: Yeah, you know who would probably know is Paul Adams.

CB: Yeah, Suzanna, could you ask Paul? What the communication would be with Jane Elmes? Let's just find out what her schedule is like. It can be a Zoom. It probably needs to be a Zoom, so she can do it at

home. She certainly will have the top equipment, as one who helped us modernize our studios back in my time.

JR: By the way, in relationship to one of our earlier conversations, I was going to try and contact Joel Berlasky--

TG: Yes.

JR:--for an interview on Zoom, but I uh--and I sent him a couple notes. I didn't mention the interview, but we kept in touch. I haven't heard from him now for a number of months. And I'm wondering if something might have happened. He could be isolated somewhere because of the COVID. I think he wanted to go down to Florida, at least for a while. But I'll keep trying on that front.

CB: I've got four names down that were all--and we still have AJ Sordoni, but I guess we're leaving that for a point that Tim and I can be in Wilkes-Barre at the same time. He's not someone to do on Zoom.

JR: Same with Bob Heaman

TG: Yeah. Well I think we might be able to kill two birds with one stone there.

JR: I'll be seeing Bob for breakfast tomorrow morning.

TG: Well tell him we said hello!

JR: I have in the past. We go every Wednesday morning.

TG: Every?--

JR: The Bear Creek Cafe.

TG: Is that a good, hearty breakfast, Jim? I mean I hope you're--

JR: A little too hearty!

CB: This is the kind of structured routine that those of you who wanted to be priests when you were young can have the rest of your lives.

TG: Yep.

CB: Well Bob, he was very highly thought of by AJ Sordoni. So we might do something that those two are together and we can do Bob after we've done AJ.

TG: That's good, that'd be good.

CB: Okay, everybody.

JR: Have a good one!

CB: We've got Jane Elmes-Crahall, and if we don't hear from her, let's move to Dale Bruns.

JR: Dale might be the easiest to get to.

TG: Well why don't we try both of them. And whoever hits first, let's do that one.

CB: Sounds good.

JR: Okay.

TG: Something in the back of my mind--that something happened to Jane, health-wise, but I just don't--

CB: That's why I'm urging her number one. She's had some ups and downs.

JR: Last I had heard, she was doing very well.

CB: Good.

TG: Okay.

JR: But that was a while ago.

CB: Alright, well my screen says I'm going to be knocked off again. So I'm gonna go, I'm gonna leave.

SC: Okay!

JR: Have a good day!

CB: Thank you.

TG: Bye, Chris!

SC: Bye, everyone!

TG: Bye, everybody!

JR: Byeee!

TG: Nice seeing you all! Bye-bye.