

Oral History Interview---Les Turoczi, 2018 July 30

Participants: Dr. Les Turoczi
Dr. Christopher Breiseth
Dr. Francis Michelini
Dr. Tim Gilmour
Dr. James Rodechko

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Transcriber: Lawrence Kopenis

Francis Michelini (FM): the three of us got to talking about Wilkes and realized that of the four presidents---five presidents---at that time, four were still living. Me, Bob Capin, Chris Breiseth and Tim Gilmour. And in our conversation it arose the issue of what is unique, what would we tell a president elect if we had his ear. And so, the four of us--Chris, Tim orchestrating it--met for about three sessions and really began to see that there, from my understanding of working with Dr. Farley through the flood, and then Bob Capin as an in house, Wilkes had never had an outside-looking-in experienced educator until Chris came aboard. And that the evolution of the college was right there at our fingertips and how could we help a new president.

Les Turoczi (LT): Mmm-hmm.

FM: And so we had two or three sessions, not many, one was in the dining room at the Westmoreland Club....

Chris Breiseth (CB): Several.

FM: Yeah, and we realized that we could put together a précis of what we knew to help the search for a new president. And Tim, Chris, did the first draft and tim put it in a format to the chairman of his board, whose name escapes me at the moment. And, in retrospect, it was the year that Jane died. And so there is a discontinuity in our files but Tim didn't let the ball drop and he apparently had good communication with his board chairman and the board chairman adapted our three or four year analysis of the history and the evolution of the college, it's purposes, it's faculty involvement, the nature of leadership through that period of time, to the extent that his inauguration actually had all four of the past presidents in attendance.

LT: Ah. Wonderful.

FM: And what was the chairman of the board at the time, he died since then, he was Cromwell Thomason or something.

Tim Gilmour (TG): It was Jack Miller.

FM: Jack Miller (emphatically), yes, he was a wonderful guy, and, I forgot that you were on the screen (laughing), on the....line here Tim so I hope I said everything right.

TG: it was all right.

FM: So basically, Tim communicated to his chairman and the chairman took it seriously. And we lost, kind of, our interaction when Jane died, at least I did, and it was only after the fact that I went back and looked through the papers and followed the dates that I realized why there was that period in which I kind of lost track of where things went. But after.... President, excuse me....

LT and CB: Leahy.

FM: Leahy came aboard, he apparently understood and appreciated the, kind of, nuances of the analysis and incorporated into his projections for the college, which I thought was brilliant at the time.

LT: Mmm-hmm.

FM: And, so then after his inauguration we thought, "Gee, that was fun," you know. (Laughter) And we realized that the resources of first hand knowledge and understanding of the people and the history of involvement with the valley that colored an awful lot of the interactions, was important for any successor and we should try to do a history so what started out as just an initiative to give a good briefing to a prospective president became instead a, a historic....an effort to put in some format, and I'm not really sure what that format will be, all I do is talk a lot....

(LT Laughs)

DM: Seriously, I'm a biologist, I'm not..... I don't understand how one prepares this kind of thing for an archive or anything..... But, I think we've covered an awful lot of things that would give insight to anyone with a history....and if it's edited properly and can become more formal while we still are alive to critique it....

LT: Mmm-hmm.

FM: And I' not sure when or how that's even possible, but we've recorded maybe ten sessions to date....

Mollie Rance (MR): I think more than that....

CB: Nine?

MR: I think more than that.

FM: I read one transcribed session and I am embarrassed personally by, when you're talking freely you're not conscious of sentence structure, of wording.....and i got awfully embarrassed at the awkwardness of a transcription.

CB: We'll get someone from the English Department to.....

FM: Compared to what my mind tells me I talked about. And I'm serious about that. I don't understand that part of the editing process.

(LT Laughs)

CB: OK, I have one amendment to what you said. When we met at the Chwalek, and Tim had just sort of determined what his future was going to be at Wilkes, we began talking about faculty/administration relationships and how much each of us, and we knew----and I don't know if Bob Capin was there or not 'cuz he was in on the early meetings.

FM: Yeah....We invited him in but he was not at that initial meeting....

CB: We all kind of struggled with the issue that there was a pretty unusual relationship between the faculty and the administration. And that, as we started meeting, we thought, you know what would be helpful to whoever is Tim's successor, to have us as four presidents---whatever we were at that point---analyze Wilkes' culture as it related to that pivotal relationship. And along with that, also the trustee/administration relationship.....

FM: Mmm-hmm.

CB:and, to a lesser extent, the trustee/faculty relationship. So the document that we wrote, which has never been public was ultimately through Tim's hand was given to Pat Leahy. And, in it, you know, we got in to the just overwhelming impact of Dr. Farley and Dr. Farley on governance and on how the faculty/administrative relationships evolved from his long period of dominance. And it was, as we've said over and over, it was not atypical of presidents of college in that era to be the dominant figure and call any shots they wanted to call....

LT: Mmm-hmm.

CB: And that we did not build the administrative structure until Mike started as Dean and then became president.

FM: Vice president.

CB: And that the divisional structure prior to the flood, with Dave Leach and Ralph Rozelle and Ben Fiester, how was that?

FM: Yep!

CB:was tortured at the time. I remember one person saying to me, "Wilkes was saved by

the flood." That the flood created so much challenge that people pulled together after having been in a period of pretty acidic relationship before that. So we got into that kind of thing and I talked about my period and the problems that I was having with the faculty as a continuation of some of the same issues with a lack of authority on the part of the faculty because of Farley's role. And that just dissipated, when he dissipated. And some of my efforts to get power to the faculty....from the very beginning the way I handled faculty meetings, for example, ultimately created something of a monster. And Tim had his own saga.

So we---that document, and not, it's not in a personalized form----I don't think we talked about individual faculty, faculty members, but---we talked about some of the continuity of that early tradition. Which also, by the way, met a lot autonomy on the faculty level....

LT: Mmm-hmm.

CB: And, the tremendous power of department chairs in the absence of strong deans or academic vice presidents. So, what we thought we had our hands on was a culture. And it was a culture that fit within the valley. So it was informed by many of the peculiarities of this post-anthracite coal, steel railroad kind of era and the kids who came here out of families as first generation in their family to get to college. And many of the faculty were part of that culture, including some of the leadership people who grew up here and carried it. Just to name one, Walter Placek, for example. So as we talked and interviewed each other, and Jim Rodechko, blessedly, was part of it from almost from the beginning, and Bob Heaman, brought another perspective as a long time faculty member. Also, someone who risked becoming an administrator and served through some very difficult transition times, including from me to Tim. So he, while he stays fairly quiet, he's absorbing it all and has observations he often makes after the recording is over.

(Laughter)

CB: So, we hope that you will find a way to bring him out...

LT: Oh!

CB:of the closet.

FM: We also brought some trustees, Gene Roth and Essie Davidowitz.

LT: Oh! Right.

CB: And I guess of the faculty we've had Ben Fiester....who else?....

FM: That's all.

CB: I think Les is the....

FM: Bob and Jim.

CB: Well, we've never interviewed Bob and Jim as.....

Jim Rodechko (JR): We had Clayton Karambelas, we've had Gene Roth. We've had others, we had Ben Fiester.

CB: I think, I think Les is the second faculty member that we kind of zeroed in on. And as I've been thinking about this session one of the things that strikes me, that we really should hear from both you and Mike, is to talk about the Biology Department. It's history. We haven't spent much time talking about Chuck Reif, Grace Kimball. So, I think for you to describe the Biology Department as you discovered it....

LT: Mmm-hmm.

CB:and what its roots were, gives us a nice example of a key department, and that was so much a part of what we did with medical, our whole medical program. That, and Sheldon....

LT: Cohen.

CB:Cohen....the whole research tradition....

LT: Oh, yeah.

CB:at Wilkes anchors in this department that Mike helped to build. So I think, I think we start with you talking about Biology and your----how you came into the institution....

LT: Mmm-hmm.

CB: Do you want to say something?

JR: Well, before you came, Les, I think this should be recorded, Les was telling us about how he happened to come in '72, right after the flood and his.....

CB: So, OK.....

JR:some of his impressions of the place.

CB: So, start with that?

LT: Alright.

CB: Les Turoczi.

LT: Um, storytelling is one of my trades....

CB: By the way, this is July 30, 2018.

LT: Yes, that's right. I should tell you that as I was completing my doctorate at Rutgers and thought about what the next step should be I was a little bit concerned about the balance between a career in research versus teaching. And while I was very engrossed in research at Rutgers I also had the benefit of being not only a teaching assistant for some lab courses early on, but the chairman of the department of zoology, which I was in, gave me an opportunity to actually teach a full course in the summertime after my third year of being there. And I then realized my old Sunday school teacher characteristics started to surface and I really enjoyed this summer class. Half of those students, was about 35 kids, half of those students were Rutgers students and the other half were from other institutions. And they helped me to craft some of my approaches in how to become a good lecturer and such.

In fact, the very first few lectures, I had laboriously written long extensive notes of what I did, this was a Genetics class, I wrote extensive notes and for the first three or so classes I read my notes. Fortunately, a very bright young man from Syracuse University who was there for the summer, he was a local boy but was in Wilkes Barre for the summer, came up to me at the end of the class and said, "you know, this is a really interesting topic but you're making it as boring as it can be because you're reading to us."

(JR Laughs)

LT: And I said, "Well, I want to get every fact through." And he said, "Could you just tell it to us?" I said, "Uh, maybe." That night I went home and sort of made bullets. And those were the points I wanted to commit. And ultimately it turned into a very successful course. The kids loved it. I made one mistake. The final exam I developed as an oral exam, and I thought it was going to be over in two or three hours, it took eight hours....

JR: Holy....

LT:to give that test that day. But, it really honed my ability to communicate. And I'm grateful to those kids. In any case, this issue of balance between research and teaching was very important to me. So, I had a couple of other interviews. One was at the University of Toronto. And as Mike was saying earlier about being up north in the wintertime, even though it was a very prestigious opportunity---this I should mention, and it may ring a bell for you Mike---it was at the Banting and Best Institute. Banting and Best were the two physiologists that invented Insulin, or discovered Insulin in diabetes. And so that was a one hundred percent research opportunity. And I decided two things were wrong with that position. One was winters in Canada....

(Laughter)

LT:and second, I didn't want a hundred percent research. The other interview I had was at Ryder College in New Jersey, which was my home state. And, I have to say I was not impressed with that visit. The facilities, the overall sense of the place didn't do much for me. And the third interview I had was in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. I did not know where Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania was. In fact, I knew very little about Wilkes-Barre in my formative years in New Jersey. I'm not proud of that but that was the case.

CB: You were not alone.

LT: (laughs) So when I finally arranged to come visit, and this was all done initially with letter and then with a couple of phone calls to Charles Reif, and by the way he gave me directions totally avoiding Interstate 80. I guess he didn't know Interstate 80 existed.

(FM chuckles)

LT: So, he gave me directions on the tiniest little highways that I drove over the mountains from New Jersey in the fog, I almost killed myself more than once, but I arrived. And it turned out that my visit to Wilkes-Barre was precisely two weeks prior to the Agnes flood, the big flood in '72. So I had a wonderful day! I got to meet all of the department members and a few others as well, that were casual interchanges. And then Chuck said, "We're going to lunch and I'd like you to meet our Dean of Students who will be coming with us, George Ralston." Great. So we then walked down River Street to the Sterling Hotel and actually had a truly wonderful lunch. I was kind of surprised by the fact that everything was served under these sterling silver domes, you know, as the waitresses lifted away and my turkey sandwich was served on sterling silver. (laughing)

(Laughter)

LT: It was a lovely experience.

CB: Great expectations.

LT: That's right! It was a charming conversation. George was a very impressive individual. Now Chuck himself, of course, certainly was but George had a charisma about him that was just, it's indefinable. But when we finished that meal we're coming through the lobby on to the Market Street entry of the Sterling Hotel and George, of course, gets sidetracked. Some person in the lobby grabs him and is chatting with him. So Chuck and I then move on to the sidewalk, it was a beautiful summer day by the way, it was actually a perfect early June summer day. '72. So, (chuckles) as we're standing there Chuck says, "You see these large stone pillars?" They were real stone pillars. And I said, "Yes..." And he said, "Do you notice the base of this one has some chip marks in it?" And I said, "Yeah," and actually I went over and touched them. And so the foundation area, which was maybe two feet off the ground, was definitely chipped away. And Chuck says, "How do you suppose that happened?" I'm thinking, "This is a test!"

(Laughter)

LT: So I'm quickly thinking and thinking and I said, "I'm sorry, I don't have a foggy idea of how that happened." And Chuck says, "Well, in 1933 this river came up so high that they had to evacuate guests from the Sterling Hotel with Red Cross rowboats and the rowboats came and tied up to, they put their ropes around the base of this pillar. And because of wave action the bow of those rowboats kept chipping away at this stone." And I said, "The flood was that bad?" He said, "That was in '33." And he said, "By the way, a lot of people call this a dike.

It's not a dike, it's a levy!" (laughing)

(Laughter)

LT: I understood a lot from that comment.

(Laughter)

FM: Yep.

LT: And he said, "Of course the army Corps of Engineers come through, they've raised the thing, it will never happen again."

(Laughter)

LT: Two weeks later Agnes happened. So that was my, one of my early comments about the charm of meeting two pillars of the institution---George Ralston and Charles Reif. Later, I fully toured the department. Don Tappa, who was in the department at that point, then got elevated.

FM: Yes, he became our Dean.

LT: He became your Dean. And it was interesting because I met with Don, probably for fifteen minutes in his office in Stark Hall, and he said, "I'm sorry, I need to apologize. I need to run over to the President's Office. I'm sorry we can't continue this conversation but there will be others to chat with." Great! So, the day went beautifully. I was very impressed, first of all, with the friendliness of people. That struck me. I loved the charm of the smallness of things. Again, I was at Rutgers, a big institution, a lot of no name individuals. But it seemed like everyone I was meeting knew everybody else. And that was appealing, it was appealing to me. Well, OK, the day goes through, it was probably 5, 5:30, and I say my goodbyes and I drive back to Jersey, you know, to Rutgers.

CB: On 80?

LT: On 80, that's right! I then found out from some other people that there was this Interstate. And so, that made a big difference.

(Laughter)

LT: In any case, I just had finished dinner. It was maybe about 7pm. Phone rings and it's Don Tappa. And he said, "I wanted to just let you know that part of the reason I had to run out this afternoon was they've just promoted me and I think they've given me a new position that I'll like, but I'm not sure about that. They made me Dean." (laughing) So, I said "Well, congratulations!" And he said, "But I wanted to continue to converse with you about the Department and the institution at large." And we had a wonderful 40 minute conversation. He filled in some gaps. It was, it's what I really needed, to be honest. And I had, when I left from that interview, had very good feelings about the institution and the 20 or so people I met.

But....

CB: You had a firm offer at this point?

LT: No! At that point they still had one more interview to do. So, as it turned out, the Tappa conversation sort of tied the ribbon for me. It was perfect. It was timely, it was appropriate. It was, I don't know....I think, he wasn't doing a sales job, it was just being a kind person. So I love that. Well, I'm in between things, two weeks go by. And I was telling this story earlier---and that is on that June day two weeks hence I get home from the lab. I'm looking at mail. I flipped on the TV to watch the six o'clock news, and the next thing I see is aerial photography over Wilkes-Barre which is now under water. And the Percy Brown's restaurant, which Chuck had told me about, by the way---I didn't visit it then but Chuck had told me about how neat this place was---it was on fire. There was smoke coming out of the top of the Percy Brown's restaurant. And my first reaction was, "Oh my God, these poor people! What's going to happen?" I mean, this looked devastating. So, I tried to find out as much....I watched every bit of news I could watch to get a little bit more information. And all the time I'm thinking, "Chuck Reif---this is never going to happen again." (chuckles) That statement.

(JR Laughs)

LT: So, in any case, trying many, many times to phone in, it was impossible because the phone service was out. But I did eventually reach Reed Atchison, who was the endocrinologist in the department then, who lived in Shavertown. And I asked what the deal was and he said, "if you really want to accept the position, housing is almost impossible right now. There are thousands and thousands of people that have lost homes. But coming here as soon as you can to find a place to live would be important." So he said, "You know there's a curfew? The National Guard has cordoned off the entries to the valley and such. But it can be arranged if you really want to do this." And I said, "I do want to do it. I want to come but I also want to know that the institution will survive, the valley itself will survive. And he said, "We're strong people, we're survivors. We're going to do it." So, he and I arranged that I would come in a couple of days after that. And I did. And he was very kind. They housed me, he and his wife and kids, housed me at their home in Shavertown. And this is the one other rambling story I will tell and then maybe get a little more focused. But, when I did arrive on campus, Reed said, "Weckesser Hall is the brain trust of the Institution and there is one working phone on campus, at the President's Office in Weckesser Hall. Maybe that can be used for you to find a place to live." So, we then walked from Stark---now, again, Biology was on the third floor, so it....

FM: Goes up to heaven.

(Laughter)

LT: That's right! It did not suffer any flood damage as the Physics and other Engineering people on the first floor and in the basement did. But, we walked across South Franklin Street and I was struck by the fact that as I walked down that little cobblestone driveway there were people in the back, behind Weckesser, stringing clotheslines. And then I saw a woman in a biohazard jumpsuit using clothespins and hanging papers on these clotheslines to dry out. And

then I said, "What's going on?" And he said, "Oh, that's Jane Lampe, let's go say hello." So, (chuckles) he introduces me to Jane Lampe....

(FM Laughs)

LT:and she said, "Well, welcome to the institution!" And I said, "What are you doing?" She said, "These are student records, they were in the basement, they were flooded. We're going to try to dry them out so we can read them." And I wished her good luck and god speed with that. But, that impressed me! The fact that, the---she was Dean of Women then, that was the title---and to just see that energy going into that was a good sign. So then I go inside and I cannot, I'm sorry to say, I can't remember the name of the secretary. But there was....

JR: Nance Korgey (sp?)?

LT: Prior to Nance, there was....

JR: Millie Connors?

LT: No, no, no. Actually, she was the secretary to the guy....she was filling in for Nance.

CB: Not Peggy?

LT: No, no, neither Peggy nor Nance. But she had been from Stark and worked for one of the Engineers or Physics guys, a younger person. Anyhow, she's at the desk. And, so Reed says, "Here's who's who and bah bah bah...." And she said, "Oh, wonderful! Here's the phone book, here's the phone. And real estate agents are in the yellow pages." So, at that point Reed Atchison says to me, "Good luck with that. All those real estate agents got flooded."

(Laughter)

LT: So, I started dialing numbers and numbers and numbers....no answers. OK. And someone came along that needed the phone and used the phone for two minutes and then, all of a sudden, the phone rings and this woman, this younger secretary, picks it up and she goes, "Oh, Mr. Bell! Hi, how are you?" Well, it was George Bell who was a real estate agent.

CB: That's Betsy Connor's brother.

LT: OK, and he's telling her that his summer house at Lake Nuangola was available if someone really needed to be housed. At that point she says, "Just a second!" And hands me the phone.

(Laughter)

LT: We worked it out. So, my first year, I lived in George Bell's summer house on Lake Nuangola, which was a wonderful experience, by the way. It had, ostensibly, been winterized. And I say ostensibly with great accuracy....

(Laughter)

LT:because I never realized I needed to wear coats inside that much. But it was a charming place and I really enjoyed it. So, my early introductions to Wilkes were somewhat strange in the sense that catastrophe was on the doorstep. But I was impressed with the survivorship mentality. So, at that point I thought this could be something really good. I liked the fact that these people had a lot of energy and commitment and motivation and heart, so....

CB: When did you first meet Dr. Mike?

LT: It was not early on. It was much later, actually. It was probably----'cuz this was late June at this point here. I don't think I met him until I arrived in late August. So, there was a stretch in between. So, the highest official I met was George Ralston. (chuckles)

FM: Let me ask, how much did the involvement of research facilities within the Department influence your final choice....

LT: Mmm-hmm.

FM:because that was part of the history of building....

LT: Absolutely. Yes.

FM:this college, was the foresight of board members who had worked through World War II and the research and evolution, and gave the money to build the original Stark Hall....

LT: Yep.

FM:which was designed to include research space for every faculty member.

LT: That's right, absolutely. That was a big plus for me. And in my earlier comments I mentioned about the balance between teaching and research. So, I quizzed Chuck Reif about that and I said you know I really would like to have.....maybe two thirds of my time involved in teaching and the other third, or whatever number, involved with research and he said "Oh, well this is the space the geneticists had carved out." And it was luxurious, to be honest. It was really roomy and it didn't have a lot of equipment that I needed. But, I should mention also, that my arrival coincided with the beginning of the Wilkes - Hahnemann program. And it turned out that, because the Feds were behind all this, there was a chunk of money available for research equipment and such. And I tapped into that and was able to get what I needed through, obviously, the Department, through Chuck and other people, and I was able to satisfy that need. But it did turn out that, ultimately, the balance point for me worked very, very well. It was a lot of teaching and a little bit of research. And I was blessed to have just wonderful students who were willing to be research students along the way. And the facilities fit perfectly. In fact I had, for teaching purposes, for the Genetics courses, I had my own lab to teach in. Which other courses would sometimes pass through but it was known as the Genetics Lab. So, that was another bonus that I had not expected. So, it was satisfying a lot of my parameters and, on top

of it all.... Now, as everyone knows, new faculty members usually get the bottom rung of the ladder of teaching opportunities. So, of course, I had to teach General Biology for the non-science majors---'cuz that's what the new guy always did---and I didn't know what to expect of that. It turned out to be absolutely marvelous. I met some very, very interesting---clever, funny---people, as students. And really enjoyed doing that. I did that for a few years until eventually I got my bearings and I could say something about, "Do I always have to teach an 8 o'clock lecture?"

(Laughter)

LT: So, then, all of a sudden I got a 9 o'clock lecture and then, eventually, I got the 10 o'clock lecture which I was thrilled....peachy keen about.

FM: Let me interject here....

LT: Sure.

FM:that you were lucky, because Chuck Reif insisted that (emphatically) he teach the freshman Biology course.

LT: Uh-huh.

FM: His view was, when we questioned him, because I never taught the first year course, you're honored to have had Chuck permit you to teach it.

(LT Laughs)

FM: And his view was, "This is the only Biology course these people will ever have in their life and I want to make sure, as Department chairman, that it is taught properly."

LT: That's true. Excellent.

FM: So you're the first person I ever talked to, you know, within the college that actually was part of that transition. Because he guarded that first year experience very....

LT: I'm honored to do that,

CB: Since you're talking about Chuck Reif, why don't you talk about him and other colleagues.

FM: How many were in the Department when you came?

LT: There were six full time faculty at that point. Grace Kimball, Chuck obviously, Wilbur Hayes, Reed Atchison, Don Tappa was still in the Department, and Bob Ogren.

FM: Yeah.

LT: So that was the crew at that point.

FM: When I started there were two and a half people. I became the full time third person in the Biology Department.

LT: Oh, wow.

FM: So we bridge a pretty good span.

LT: Mmm-hmm, sure!

FM: I did not realize when you came in the middle of the seventies.....

LT: '72.

CB: Did Chuck hire you Mike?

FM: Yes, he took me to lunch.....

(LT Laughs)

FM:and he didn't have the money to pay for lunch so I payed for lunch.....

(Laughter)

FM: And years later I mentioned that to him and he gave me a check for three dollars and twenty eight cents to pay for lunch. And like a fool I cashed it.....

(Laughter)

FM: I thought, man, why did you cash that stupid check. You should have kept that to be part of your (inaudible).....

CB: He would have been on top of you if that check hadn't cleared his account.

FM: You're right!

LT: So let me speak a little bit about Chuck. When I first met Chuck I was struck by the fact that he was very, very formal. Very, I would almost say, old fashioned in a way. I mean I was struck by the fact that in this blazing hot summer, high humidity, non-air conditioned building Chuck is wearing a suit with a starched shirt and a necktie and those tall, laced up boots he used to like to wear.

CB: Boots!

LT: And it looked like he was prepared for Christmastime but here it was blazing hot summer.

And that was one of his styles. As it turned out, as we got to know each other a little bit more, I realized that he wasn't as stiff and formal and old fashioned as the first impression was. And we actually got along famously. My office was, oh, four or five offices away from his, but I made a point everyday to stop in and say hello even if we were not going to cross paths otherwise. And Chuck, of course, has this old fashioned Remington typewriter, manual typewriter, and that big, beautiful, old roll top desk that he managed to keep in his office. And most of the times when I would come by Chuck would be typing away and, after a while, you know, sometimes I just had simple questions of him and other times it was a comment or something about that. But I saw him typing a lot. And then I said, "Well, are you writing reports or doing a paper or editing an article." He said, "No, I'm writing a letter." So, I said, "Oh!" And that's when I found out that Chuck's habit, pattern---I don't know what to say about it---style---was that he wrote a letter to someone everyday. Everyday.

CB: And many of those, many of those letters were to his former students.

LT: That's right.

CB: And he would pass them on to me.....

LT: Mmm-hmm.

CB:when I came. Particularly ones that showed the character of his friendship and relationship with those students. And many of them were going through great tragedies in their lives and Chuck was the person they wanted to be in touch with.

LT: Yep!

CB: So, when I got his return letters as well, with the way he handled errors on the typewriter.....

LT: Oh, yeah.

CB: He did not use.....white out.

LT: White out..... Right.

CB: Just an x.....(laughing)

LT: He x'ed it all. Yes, that's right.

CB: His letter production was voluminous.

LT: Absolutely!

CB: And I have a thick folder of letters.

LT: Oh! Wow.

CB: Which, if you wanted to do a psychoanalytic portrait of Chuck, there's some pretty good information.

LT: Mmm-hmm.

CB: My other point is that he and I and George Fenner would go out fishing at Catalpa.

LT: Lake Catalpa, yep.

CB: And when I was with him alone it was extremely personal, intimate....

LT: Wow.....Mmm-hmm.

CB:sex life, and all of it.....He really needed to download some issues that he wanted to talk about. And he discovered, when I came---how he did this I don't know---that we grew up within ten blocks of each other in Minneapolis.

FM: Oh my goodness.

LT: Wow!

CB: And so, this new president he had a special relationship with. So, our Minnesota roots were a constant in our relationship.

LT: Ah.

CB: And when he moved back with his second wife....

LT: Mmm-hmm.

CB:he went to the Westminster Presbyterian Church where Fritz Mondale was also.... And he thought that Fritz Mondale should know Chris Breiseth....

LT: Ah!

CB:since my father had been a Democrat....

LT: Uh-huh.

CB:in Hubert Humphrey's role in Minneapolis. So I was getting messages through Chuck from Fritz Mondale, sending me his good wishes. Chuck massaged those relationships very, very thoroughly.

LT: Wonderful!

CB: I met as many, I wouldn't say "as many," but I met students that felt very ill-used by him.

LT: Mmm-hmm.

CB: As well as students that said, "Without Chuck I never would have become the great doctor, or the doctor that I've become....." One of those is Dan Kopen.

LT: Mmm-hmmm. Yep, yep!

CB: Grace Kimball.

LT: Interesting stuff about Grace. So, I'm now in my first semester of teaching and the phone rings and it's Grace. And she was way at the other end of the hall, in the microbiology area, which seemed like a block away, of course it was probably 100 feet away. And, "Could you come by the office." And I said, "Sure!" I knew that Grace was a cigarette smoker....
(Laughter)

LT:but I had never really been in her lair. So, then I walked into that room, which eventually became the Bio Club (chuckles). It was a big room, so this was not her lab this was her office. And when I came into that room, first thing I noticed was that she offered me a seat next to her desk, was an ashtray that was just a pyramid of cigarette butts. And, she was a chain smoker, which I didn't realize at first.

JR: Yep.

LT: So, in our conversation, Grace probably smoked six or seven cigarettes. And that was not an hour conversation. In any case, I really was captivated by her charm. She had a grace about her, a sweetness that I really liked. But, of course, she was a tiny lady. So she was really small. I mean, being a micro-biologist was a perfect job for her. In any case, in that first conversation she said, "I need to tell you something. I know you're the new geneticist, but I have to reveal to you that I do not believe that genes are made of DNA. The old evidence about proteins is so strong---these Watson and Crick guys and the rest of them, they're all wrong and I don't believe in this DNA stuff. It will be disproven in ten years." And she said, "However, I know you need to teach that it's DNA. So, I'm not going to get in your way. You go right ahead and teach those myths....."

(General Laughter)

LT:and I'll just be quiet about that part and when anybody asks me I'll tell them, 'Go see Dr. Turoczi if you want the official story.' " So I thought, my goodness, that was, well, not only refreshing but it was shocking at the time. So Grace, of course, in addition to being the microbiologist and did a wonderful job at that, Grace also was director of the Medical Technology kids that were within our major. And she did a really good job with those kids, as well. Actually, she did most of the work and Chuck did a little bit of it, as well, for the med techs. Chuck was more the pre-meds. But, in Grace's history, she eventually decided to retire.

I remember at one point Chuck said, "She's built herself a beautiful home in the back mountain somewhere, in Dallas. I hadn't been there yet---but now that she's retired...." Of course, Grace was never married, she was an only child, her father was a physician in Rochester, which was where she grew up. And Grace, unfortunately, did not last very long. She built that new house and I think it was two, perhaps three years later that she had passed. Well, in the process I found out through Chuck, who---his best friend, of course, was George Fenner, and George was the attorney who handled Grace's estate---so, at some point, George had told Chuck that Grace had left a sizable gift to Wilkes College. And I kept thinking, "Hmmm, a sizable gift. I don't think this is 50,000 dollars." I didn't know what Grace's worth was really like but I knew she inherited everything from her dad who was a very successful physician in Rochester. So, a few months had gone by and this is working on me, about, I wonder what's really going on. Well, it turned out that I needed to create a will which I had never done before. I'd asked Chuck for advice and he said, "George Fenner does that stuff." So, I go to George's office which is right across the street from Weckesser as you know, or was. And we worked out a general will. A nice little simple will. And then we needed to get it notarized. So he walked me over to---I guess it's where the Moses Law Firm is now, beyond the Red Cross building there---because he knew a secretary there who was a notary. So we got the thing notarized and, OK, I had the will. So, in that exchange, in that time period, I said, "George, I understand you were the executor for Grace's estate and such." And I said, "Do you know how that gift came to the college?" He said, "What do you mean?" And I said, "Was it defined, was it earmarked, was it....?" He said, "No, it was for the general fund." And I said, "OK, thank you." Well, I went back to my office and I spent about two weeks and I crafted a white paper, is what I called it, a sixteen page document. Bob Capin was president then. And in this document I basically wanted to get some part of Grace's gift for the department. So, I included in this document three things that I thought were very important. One was to create an ongoing series of Kimball Scholarships for deserving students that had need. Because, as you know, a lot of our people, a lot of our kids, were first generation and some were coming from pretty poor financial bases. So I wanted one thing to establish Grace Kimball scholarships. Second thing I wanted to do was to bring in a notable, national scientist expert to give a lecture, once a year, as the Grace Kimball Memorial Lecture. And we needed money to not only bring that person in but to give them an honorarium. And then I thought, wouldn't it be nice if we could do a dinner before that? So, I included a chunk of money for a banquet. And we would have the Kimball scholars there, we would have our research students there, faculty and spouses, maybe an occasional administrator. (chuckles) But, typically, we had 40 to 50 people that would come. I'm jumping ahead of myself. But the third thing we needed was, in one of my talks to the parents.... Now, I was Chairman at this point. So, I was a young Chairman. In fact, I was a chairman for a year without tenure.

FM: (inaudible)

(Laughter)

LT: So, in one of those Admissions, pre-start of the Fall Semester events, I'm addressing a large number of parents in the auditorium at Dart Hall, the big theater auditorium, was a crowd there. And one of the things I happened to say at the end was, you know, I described all about the program, all about our institution, about Wilkes - Hahnemann thing, about research, about

student involvement, and all of the other things that were appropriate for a Chair to speak about, you know, forty minutes or so, blabbering. And at the very end I said, "And by the way, our department has a strong need for an electron microscope. If any of you have a spare electron microscope let us know."

(Laughter)

LT: Well, the event ends and then a gentleman from the back of the hall comes up to me and he introduces himself and he says, "I'm an engineer at Bell Labs, Murray Hill, New Jersey. And we just decommissioned our scanning electron microscope. Would you like it?"

(Laughter)

LT: And I said, "Yeah, we would." And he said, "It's a fussy machine. It's a very serious machine. It was used for ten years, used heavily. We maintained it and such, so it's not the most modern thing but it is an electron microscope." And he said, "I'm speaking off the cuff here, I need to go back to talk to my superiors but I know they donate a lot of things to good causes." So, I said, "I would speak on behalf of...."

CB: Pantingly....

LT: Yeah, "...on behalf of my quiet majority faculty members, that I think we would be happy to have that." Well, we did. We got it. So that was something that I built into this whitepaper, to have the maintenance contract, which was \$10,000 a year by the way.

FM: Yeah.

LT: A maintenance contract to support the electron microscope, which was going to be used both in teaching and research. So, three things: Kimball scholars, the banquet and lecture and the electron microscope. I make this whitepaper up and I bring it to Bob Capin and I hand it to him and he said, "So what is this?" And I gave him a shorter version of what I've just told you. And I said, "I'd like you to look at this." And I gave numbers, you know, I actually included dollar signs and such. And he said, "Give me a week or so and we'll see." And I shook his hand and left. Three days later I get a call from Nance Korgey (sp?) and she says, "The president would like to speak with you." I said, "OK, I'll be right over." And I come in, and Mike Lennon is sitting there with him, I think it was Mike Lennon.

JR: Jerry.

LT: Jerry Harty (sp?), I'm sorry that's right, it was Jerry Harty. So, (chuckles) Bob Capin has the document in his hands and he sits down and says, "Well, you've really asked for a lot here."

(Laughter)

LT: And I said, "Yep, that was my intention!"

(FM Laughs)

LT: I said, "You know, Grace meant an awful lot to the department. There are so many students that have great memories, fond memories of her. And I thought that, considering that a sizable gift was given...." And I never knew that value, I never knew that number. I still don't know what that number was. However, I knew what my numbers were. Bob said..... Now, I expected when I submitted this to him, I thought he's going to cut it by maybe twenty, thirty percent, see what happens. Well, he said, "I can't (laughs) I can't fault this. You're getting it all."

(Laughter)

LT: So, he gave it, he gave us all. So, I was thrilled.

FM: Wow.

LT: So, even to today we still have Kimball scholars. We still have the annual lecture and the banquet. In fact, it's done every April. And I go to them usually to give a little talk about Grace. And the electron microscope, however, has bitten the dust. After awhile it just wore out. We had to scrap it. But, for a good stretch we did, in fact, develop a course for it. We had research students using it. Wilbur Hayes was the principal actor on that. But, it was through the wonderful foresight of Grace to give that gift and, with a little help from George Fenner, and some finagling.....

CB: I think our first interaction, just the two of us, was the Grace Kimball Lecture, the first year I was here.

LT: Ah-hah!

CB: That was the first "name" lecture....

LT: Yes!

CB:that I encountered.

LT: Mm-hmm.

CB: It was.

LT: And we brought in lots of, it's been over 30 years by the way that this has been going on. So, we brought in several national experts, for sure. We never went outside of the country. But we brought in people from hot-shot places who gave wonderful lectures, whether they were from Harvard or Cornell, or UP or....

CB: Les, give.....

LT:California.....

(some inaudible interjections overlap)

JR: (Some were given by our graduates, too.

LT: Not for that.

JR: I thought one of them was, no?

LT: Well, actually, the most recent one was. Anne Bartuska.

JR: Wasn't there one who was head of the National Science Foundation?

LT: Oh! Oh, oh, oh, oh..... not "head." I can't remember who that was.

JR: It would have been around 2000, 2001.

LT: I'm pulling a blank right now.

JR: OK.

CB: Put two things together. One, the Wilkes - Hahnemann program.

LT: Yes.

CB: And how you saw that evolve.

LT: Mmm-hmm.

CB And really commit us to involvement in medical education.

LT: Sure!

CB: That really was, when I got here it was a feature of Wilkes.

LT: Oh, yeah! Absolutely.

CB: And link that with the undergraduate research....

LT: Mmm-hmmm!

CB:that Sheldon Cohen was so much part of....

LT: Sure!

CB:that really set---and I know Mike was part of this---that really set Wilkes apart as a small liberal-arts institution.

LT: Absolutely. So, the Wilkes - Hahnemann program had been planned prior to my arrival, for a couple years.

FM: Yeah.

LT: Ralph Rozelle was the main actor in that, as far as I knew.

FM: Ralph.....I think I was Dean at that time.

LT: Yeah, I believe.

FM: And negotiated with Joe DePalma who was a vice president. Morton Shober (sp?) was the president....

LT: Oh, yeah, right.

FM:of Hahnemann. And we negotiated the agreement and Ralph was put in charge of the implementation.

LT: Got it! Got it, yes.

FM: But Dr. Farley was.....I think I was still Dean at the time.

LT: Mmm-hmmm. I believe so, yeah.

FM: And our connection to that is a subsequent..... Morton Shober apparently contacted Wilkes, might have been Dr. Farley or I might have been president by then, to attend a Hahnemann commencement at which they were going to give an honorary doctorate to.....Somoza of Nicaragua. What was his first name?

CB: Antonio?

FM: He was probably the worst human being....

(Laughter)

FM:as far as....

CB: Since Hitler!

FM: And so he had arranged for, I guess through money, for Hahnemann to award him an honorary degree.

LT: Ah. Uh-huh.

FM: And the faculty rebelled at Hahnemann.

LT: Yeah.

FM: So, Morton Shober elected to have the presentation at his home....

LT: Oh.....

FM:in suburban Philadelphia.

LT: Ah.

FM: And I remember, I think Anne Marie went with me to this installation of Nicholas Somoza.....

CB: Yes.

FM: ---I believe it was Nicholas---and it worked. So, we went there and of course a few years later Somoza was deposed and I guess the degree was withdrawn like with Bill Cosby. (Laughs) But I'll never forget how Morton Shober....and I think we gave Morton Shober an honorary degree from Wilkes, because the Wilkes - Hahnemann program.

LT: Right.

FM: Joe DePalma was his academic....

LT: I see.

FM:vice president.....

LT: OK.

FM:and negotiated all of the conditions and the circumstances of the Wilkes - Hahnemann cooperative program. But Morton Shober was the president....

LT: Cool.

FM:and that was kind of our.....sure.

CB: Just in terms of timing, as I understand it, a study of doctors in Northeastern Pennsylvania and southern tier of New York, was in 1959. Which also was the year that we got involved in Mountaintop. So, two....

LT: RCA. Mmm-hmm.

CB: Dr. Farley got us going in two profoundly important tracks at the same time...

LT: Mmm-hmmm.

CB: And I say this for you all to correct because this is worth having on tape. That this study found that the median age of physicians at that time was around 59.

LT: Mmm-hmm.

CB: And they projected that forward 20 years and said where are the doctors going to be for this population.

LT: Right. Yes.

CB: So, from '59 or '60. You come in '72....

LT: '72, yeah.

CB:and the program is starting then?

LT: Right then, yeah. It started in the fall.

CB: So it must have got planned while you were still Dean.

FM: Yes, I think so. Yeah.

LT: Yes. So the intent was to provide Northeastern Pennsylvania with quality physicians to not only feed into the system but to assure an ongoing continuity.

FM: And they key local medical doctor was David Kistler.

LT: Ah!

FM: Who said, "We don't need more neurosurgeons or more cardiac specialists, or more orthopedic.....(emphatically) We need family practitioners!" And so the Wilkes - Hahnemann program, with help from Dan Flood incidentally---I don't remember how but we had a lot of support for saying "America is facing a crisis in the delivery system and (emphatically) family practice is important. And we need to cooperate in developing and shortening that timeline."

LT: Yes.

FM: And that was the logic behind the Wilkes - Hahnemann.... Now, that family practice identification so early on hurt in some ways....

LT: Yes. Right.

FM: Because it was originally perceived as saying, "Well, gee, what if I want to become an orthopedic surgeon...."

LT: Or a specialist....

FM: And I'm not quite sure how we handled that but I believe the curriculum had to be adjusted by both Wilkes and Hahnemann....

LT: That's right.

FM:so that you did not foreclose or require that every Wilkes - Hahnemann student become a family practitioner.

LT: It evolved that way, that's right.

CB: And at the same time, we provided a huge number of community physicians and the interns and the residents....

FM: Oh, absolutely.

LT: Mmm-hmm.

CB:at places like Packer.

LT: Yes, that's right.

CB: And as you remember from our time together that when Packer stopped, when Hahnemann pulled back from the program....

LT: Sure, yeah. Right.

CB:Packer started losing their residents.

LT: Yes.

CB: Because they needed kids who came from the area, who saw this as their track to continue their careers.

LT: Yep. And they came to us.

CB: They came to us.

LT: They said can you reinstitute....

CB: That we reignited that program and went beyond Hahnemann.

LT: That's right. Yeah, exactly.

FM: The other point that.... World War II always gets introduced, including your Rutgers experience because Selman Waksman....

LT: Oh, yeah!

FM:developed the second anti-biotic, erythromycin. Penicillin was Ian (it was Arthur ---transcriber) Fleming from Britain.

LT: That's right.

FM:But Selman Waksman at Rutgers, during your period, were preeminent in that combination of laboratory practitioner....

LT: That's right.

FM:experience, which colored Wilkes' whole approach to the sciences.

LT: I'm thrilled that you mentioned Dr. Waksman's name. Because I was at the Institute for Microbiology at Rutgers, which is right on a beautiful golf course, by the way. A gorgeous building, it looks like a Georgian palace. Of course, inside it's all modern laboratories. But from the outside it looks like it belongs next to Westminster Cathedral. In any case, I was taking an advanced molecular genetics class there from a very distinguished professor whose name, by the way, was Werner Braun---not Van Braun, but Werner Braun---who was a very, very distinguished, elegant, eloquent speaker. And excellent course, I really enjoyed it. So, sometimes I would need to use the microbiology laboratory. And it was right in the middle on the third floor of this really big building. Bigger than Stark, twice the size of Stark. And so, (laughs) one late afternoon, it had been late enough in the fall semester that things were starting to get dark outside earlier. And I had gone from the first floor to the third floor. And the entries to each level were at the ends of the building. So I go up one, you know, corridor, or stairway, and I come on to the third floor knowing I have to walk half the way down to get to the door to the library. And the ceiling lights had not yet been turned on so it was somewhat dark. It wasn't pitch black but it was dark. And I'm walking slowly and then I realized there's a figure coming from the other end of the building very slowly, shuffling along. And as it turned out, I thought, "I'm gonna just slow down and see what happens here." Well, that figure comes also to the library at the, I timed it so we both met there at the same time. And who is it but Selman Waksman.

FM: Well, I'll be.....

LT: It was the man himself. And so, he says, "Hello, young man." And he said, "Do you know who I am?" I said, "Not exactly sure." And he puts his hand out and he says, "I'm Selman Waksman." So I shake his hand. (chuckles) And he says, "What do you think of my building?"

(General Laughter)

LT: So, it was---I mean, their royalties from the antibiotic paid for this glorious structure.

FM: Yeah. Yep.

CB: I see.

LT: So, I actually got to meet Selman Waksman that one time. "What did you think of my--what do you think of my building?" Well, getting back to the timeline on things, Biology radically altered their program and curriculum because of the Wilkes - Hahnemann program. So, as you mentioned earlier, the timeline was to make things shorter in the training for the student and hopefully still do quality work with them. So, instead of a student needing to do a four year undergraduate degree and then four years of medical school, plus a residency. Instead of that eight years of being in academia the plan initially was that we could do it in two years. We could do basically at least three years worth of an undergraduate curriculum in two years. So, instead of having our normal biology sequence for the freshman and sophomore majors we converted it over to these half-semester modules, biology modules. So, there were two modules per semester for two years. Eight modules altogether. So, there was an introductory module that had basically general things. And there was a botany module. And there was a physiology module. There was an ecology module. There was a genetics module. It went on like this. Embryology and such. So, by that point we also had eight faculty members in the department. So, it matched each of our disciplines which was perfect. That was really good. I taught the genetics module, of course. Bio 205, as it was well known. And, typically, those students were very high achievers, I would say cream of the crop kids. And as freshman, when they would first....mine was the first sophomore module. But, as freshman, that number would be 200 kids coming through. By the time it got to the sophomore year it was more like 120. So, there were a lot of awakenings that happened along the way. So, then most of those 120 did continue to go along. But, it meant that we needed to teach in our seven week modules basically a semester's worth of content, and more. And I think we did it! We actually rallied and we did a great job. Now, I remember conversing several times with Ralph Rozelle because one of the other things they were doing through the Health Sciences office---and Ralph was now Director of Health Sciences---was that they were interviewing these kids very heavily. Basically, doing psychological work-ups on these kids. And, again, high achievers, excellent academic credentials. Sometimes not the nicest people, but....

(FM chuckles)

LT: I remember Ralph, of course, he used....from Psychology.....the eyebrows....

JR: Bob Reilly?

LT: No, no, no.

JR: Joe Kanner.

LT: Joe Kanner! So, he used Joe Kanner a lot for part of this. And then they brought in a younger, tall guy whose name I don't remember at all and he was sort of second in command to Joe Kanner. But they were doing intensive psychological work-ups on all of these kids and they were very busy doing this and they did it very seriously. Well, as it turned out, originally the plan was, those kids would spend two years at Wilkes and do all of the other stuff, too. They would do the Math and the Chemistry and the English and the Social Studies, and so on. And then they would go to Hahnemann for the next four years. Well, two or maybe three years' worth of students went through that track. And what they were finding out pretty quickly was these very young students were just being crushed by the experience at medical school. They just were not mature enough to be prepared for, not only the stresses of what was going on in medical school, but sociologically they were ill-prepared, as well.

FM: Too young.

LT: They were just too young. So, at that point what we did was we moved it to three years. So that the students spent three years with us and then went to Hahnemann for the four years thereafter. That worked really, really well. But, in the process not only were we---first of all we were teaching incredible amounts of content in the two years that Biology itself was doing. And, at that point, we had very good facilities. Everybody, all eight people were doing research in addition to teaching, including myself. And we, because of the research interests we had better equipment than other smaller institutions. Certainly better than the place down the street and maybe even better than the place in the other city north of us. So, we were turning out hot shot people. Especially once they had a little bit more maturity. And in that third year Kanner and Rozelle were priming the pumps on these kids to say, "Here's what you're going to be facing." This didn't happen to the first few classes.

CB: Was Sheldon still here when....?

LT: Sheldon was still here, yes.

CB: So, he hadn't....

FM: He was not here after the flood.

LT: Well, he....no, he (thinking)....he still had a research lab in the first two years of my being here---'72, '73. He was....

FM: Because as a practitioner locally....

LT: Yes, well, he got wiped out.

FM: I think they closed out his practice.

LT: Right, right. He lost all his records.

FM: I think we lost contact with Sheldon although I co-authored....

LT: Right!

FM:papers with him.

LT: I remember....

FM: And I've often wondered about his transition----cuz' he went to Washington and became a big....

LT: A big wig.

FM:a big wig.

LT: In my second year he actually---I think the reason he stayed around was he had a student who was a Masters-----we had a Masters program in Biology at that, awhile, it doesn't exist anymore---but he had a student who was just completing her Masters degree and he asked me to serve on her committee, for her defense and such.

CB: Correct me if I'm wrong---'cuz I made generalizations about this and maybe inaccurately---that Sheldon, some of Sheldon's students at Wilkes turned out to be among the first major researchers on AIDS.

LT: I don't know that.

CB: Under his leadership.

LT: Oh!

LT: I don't know that.

CB: And (inaudible).

LT: I wouldn't be surprised but I don't know that for a fact.

CB: Have you ever heard that (to JR)?

JR: No.

LT: Oh, interesting.

FM: The last....

TG: Me either.

FM: The equivalent of your electron microscopy....

LT: Yeah?

FM:in my relationship with Sheldon Cohen, was a technique of agar gel diffusion....

LT: Mmm-hmm.

FM:where he devised or utilized the technique of....

LT: The substrate, mmm-hmm....

FM:the diffusion through the agar gel to identify certain components.

LT: Right. It would be an epigenetic antibody reaction. Yeah, right, exactly.

FM: He had a good influence on students, ultimately, doctor professionals like Les Wygar (sp?) and the other crew.....

LT: Exactly. Yep.

FM: In being able to build that bridge of research and practitioner-physician.

LT: Yes.

FM: The other thing that is relevant to the history of the Wilkes - Hahnemann program is, prior to World War II medical education was three years of college and you went to medical school. Very few doctors or dentists, pre-World War II, had a baccalaureate degree before applying to medical or dental school.

LT: Mmm-hmm.

FM: The crush of post-war men and women, mostly men at the time, toward a professional degree was such that the medical schools had to say, "No, we can't take you from three years 'cuz, you know, we don't have the space, so we'll get four year students." So, the educational identification of preparation, pre-professional and post-professional, was in a state of flux.....

LT: Sure.

FM:in almost every discipline.

LT: Yep, yep, yep.

FM: And that Wilkes - Hahnemann evolution----now, although I was part of initially getting it, I really did not know that it was implemented as that rigid two year program.

LT: Mmm-hmm. Originally, yes.

FM: In my mind, I always thought it was three year from the get go.

CB: And I met some of the people that came through that, who were doctors, and were trying to (inaudible) alums, and they, it's too strong to say they somewhat resented being short-changed on their liberal arts experience.

LT: Hmm.

CB: They acknowledged this had gone too fast.

LT: Amazing.

CB: It was very interesting. Because they were loyal to the program, grateful.

FM: But that was a very creative approach to....

LT: Absolutely!

FM:a very real-world problem. And it went through many iterations.

LT: It did! It did.

FM: As I'm hearing with delight.

LT: And, again, the feds cut off the spending and support in the mid-80s. So---or even the early eighties. 'Cuz I think our last kids that went to Hahnemann were in '86. I think it was somewhere around there. In any case, I should mention that some of the students that came through, who I eventually got to know, they turned down Harvard to come to Wilkes College. Because of that program.

FM: Mmm-hmm.

LT: They were that bright, sharp and just super kids. And other institutions as well as Harvard but that's the one that stands out.

CB: Now, I have a question for Jim Rodechko.

LT: Mmm-hmm.

CB: Since we're both historians and I think have a sense of inferiority that goes along with that field, up against you scientists. We've talked about different programs, we talked about Engineering, unique role we played with RCA. Talk about the Bellucci's and before them in teacher education. All these slots that Wilkes filled to meet the needs of a wider community.

JR: Yep, yep.

CB: From your perspective as a faculty member, what were the real centers of excellence from a discipline point of view? As you perceived it?

JR: I think Biology was one of them.

FM: Right!

CB: Biology was one of them.

FM: Education was one. Our reputation in education....

JR: Yeah, our reputation.... Education was pretty good.

FM:with Gene Hammer. I remember, but, boy, we had a lot of very successful....

JR: There were complaints among liberal arts faculty that Education was expanding....

CB: But our teacher education was anchored in a discipline.

JR: Yes.

LT: Yeah.

CB: And that, as opposed to the teacher's colleges and state schools.....

FM: Yeah.

CB: ...was one. But, just, thinking of colleagues and curriculum....Biology clearly. If you asked me that question cold without these two guys here I would put Biology right at the top.

JR: I think Engineering was developing at that point in a very strong way.

LT: Yep!

FM: But the Engineering real growth was post-flood, Umid Najib.

CB: Yeah.

FM: If you look through the catalog....

JR: Yes.

FM:at the change in course numbers. I did that one time just 'cuz, with the catalogs I had, I think it was for his obituary or....'cuz I spoke at that. And it was amazing how, I think,

I think 53 percent of the curricula within the first 5 years of Umid shifted. And you know how long it takes to get a course changed.....

LT: That's right (chuckling). Sure.

FM:or a definition, but that's how rapidly the computer involvement and things was happening. Umid was.....

CB: Umid.... From my perspective, coming in in '84, and what happened in the 17 years I was here, Umid was the top intellectual....

LT: Mmm-hmm. Yeah.

CB:of Wilkes. We would not have the pharmacy program without him.

LT: That's right!

CB: And we would not have had the expansion in Environmental Engineering.

LT: Mmm-hmm.

CB: And the graduate programs in Engineering. And he found a way to hoodwink virtually all of us in the Administration....

(FM chuckles)

CB:to carry out his imperial ambitions. But he....

LT: Well intentioned!

CB: Well intentioned. But he used techniques from another part of the world....

LT: Mmm-hmm.

CB:that we were not very well equipped to resist!

(General Laughter)

CB: But when you....I mean, ask the question I'm asking Jim.... He had a credibility about scientists and engineers outside the institution....

JR: Sure.

CB:that allowed us to go very far for an institution as shallow as we were in money.

LT: Yep. Yeah, that's right.

CB: We were able to do things that were really quite remarkable. But, any other reflections on economic excellence?

JR: Well, I think the Liberal Arts were well regarded. English was strong.

FM: Yes. It's more difficult to evaluate subsequent impact.

JR: Yeah.

FM: But that strength of that core curriculum, I think, was devastated by the Vietnam protests, when students thought they knew everything by that time. And you lost the strength of that core.

JR: What really happened in the early seventies and through the seventies was, higher education changed across the nation. I mean, we went from liberal arts to specialized programs. The Nixon years were a tight economy. And parents were reluctant to send their kids....

FM: For a liberal arts degree....

JR:for a liberal arts degree when no guaranteed job was available.

FM: Yep.

JR: Now, let's fact it, Liberal Arts was strong as long as teacher education was strong. And that faded out around '70. It started to slip. And, therefore, you had specialized programs developing. We didn't call it a Pre-Med program but Biology was basically a pre-....

LT: Right, right.

JR: We were doing things more in Business. Nursing comes about with Ruth McCamry (sp?). We had the, I got into the Co-op Ed program, which was getting students into agencies for internships.

FM: Back to Nursing, you mentioned, now, and Grace Kimball. In anticipation of being here today I was thinking that, you know, "What will I learn about,"---I've learned so much, so thank you. But, Grace Kimball. I was thinking, "Well, microbiology." But that wasn't a course, Lou (referring to Les---transcriber). I totally forgot the medical technician side of her responsibility.

LT: Yeah, that's right.

FM: And the Nursing, the evolution of the Nursing program from the diploma schools through the degree things. I think she also....

LT: Well, she certainly taught those students, yeah, yeah.

FM:had some of that thing, too. I remember one anecdotal story I have to add to the record. Grace was a chain smoker.

LT: Yes.

FM: Chuck Reif absolutely abhorred smoking.

LT: Yep.

CB: With Bob (inaudible)!

FM: And she had a habit, she always opened her cigarette pack from the bottom and, (chuckles) I forget whether I asked her the question or somebody asked her the question, "Well, why are you opening it from the bottom?" She said, "Well, because when you're pulling the cigarette out of the pack your fingers are not touching the tip you're going to put in your mouth."

(General Laughter)

LT: A true microbiologist.

FM: (Incredulous) So logical, you know. I thought....now, here's a person whose a chain smoker but God forbid you should contaminate it by pulling out the filter-tipped end with your fingers, that you're going to put in your mouth!

JR: On that note. I was thinking of that. I never saw Grace when she didn't have a cigarette, right? How did she get along with Chuck?

LT: I think reasonably well.

FM: She accommodated by.... I was thinking the same thing, how did she get along? I think she finally said to Chuck, "I'm a chain smoker. I'm addicted and, you know, I'll stay in my office." And I think that's the accommodation that made it work.

JR: I had a similar reaction with Chuck with my coffee.

LT: Ah! (Laughs)

JR: He was after me, in Sark he followed me.....

(Laughter)

JR: And, uh, I'd hide it!

(Laughter)

JR: I may have said it, you know, one....at night I was walking into the building, third floor, to teach I think at 334 and I had a cup. And there's a light on in his office and I go (gestures hiding coffee) into my coat and....

(Laughter)

JR: But he finally caught me and I think it was 334. And I said, "Chuck, I need the coffee to teach. I cannot....my voice goes without it." And he said, "OK. You can have it, but nobody else. Don't let those kids have any...."

CB: He assumed he had some kind of authority over the lounge in Stark....

JR: Oh, yeah. That's right.

CB:and put great pressure on me to modify the behavior of the student body, so that they didn't do certain things in the lounge, which included coffee.....

JR: Oh yeah!

CB: So we put these vending machines in that had coffee....

JR: I remember one of the last years Chuck was at Wilkes. I was walking down the hall with him and there was a student sitting on the floor and Chuck went up and kicked him!

(Laughter)

JR: (Imitating Chuck Reif) "You're not supposed to be sitting here!"

LT: Well, he had rules, you know. You couldn't wear a hat, so that was a big thing. If he saw a student with a baseball cap on, he'd take it off their head.

CB: Infuriating, infuriating.

LT: And you had to walk on the right side so that the opposing walking traffic....he has all these little funny rules and....

JR: Yes!

LT:you know, of course, that's gone. But, speaking of coffee, I should mention that in that first session with Grace when she told me about DNA being fake.....ah....

(Laughter)

LT: She said to me, "I'm going to have a little snack, would you like some cookies and coffee?" And I look at her, past the pile of butts, and I see a dirty old coffee mug and a jar of Maxim freeze dried crystals of coffee. And then she had a package, half eaten, a package of Archway

cookies. So, I said, "No, no, that's quite alright." She said, "Well, excuse me while I..." So she gets an old spoon, well, I guess it was clean, and she takes a couple of spoonfuls of this crystal, dumps them into the bottom of her cup. And then, from where I was sitting I could see, she went out into the hallway and, directly across from her office door was a water cooler---the old fashioned water coolers?---and she steps on the pedal, and she's now filling this putrid coffee with ice water and comes back and stirs this murky thing up. It didn't really totally dissolve in cold water, and then she breaks open the Archway cookies. I later found out that was her survival stuff. She barely ate food. She lived on black Maxim coffee and Archway cookies. And I'm almost wondering if I should have accepted the offer, but I didn't.

(Laughter throughout story)

FM: How old was she when she died?

LT: (Thinks)....I'm going to say 82, something like that.

FM: For a chain smoker that's pretty good....

LT: Yeah, that was pretty good!

JR: Yeah.

FM: That was pretty good. One other.....uh, lost my train of thought. Oh!, my Chuck Reif story. When I came to Wilkes and Chuck blended his research on lakes, and got to know more people at Lake Catalpa, the Nesbitt properties and the Nesbitt Hospital and so on.... And so, it was my first winter, Wilkes. And Chuck said to me, "Mike, what are you doing on Saturday?"

(LT chuckles)

FM: Well I was young, married, I think I had a baby by then---maybe we didn't have a child yet. I said, "Well, nothing Dr. Reif. What would you?...." "I'd like you to come with me and help me with some of my research." I didn't know what his research was. So, I met him and we drove out to Lake Catalpa, which was frozen over.

LT: Yep. Yeah, yeah.

FM: And I said, "Well, Dr. Reif, what are you doing?" He said, "I'm mapping the lake, the lakes in the region....

LT: And the bottom. Right.

FM:and you can only do it when it's frozen. You have to drop a plumb line to measure it." And he hands me a crowbar!

(Laughter)

FM: (Emphatically, Laughing) A 20 pound crowbar! And I'm chopping holes all day for him to drop the line down to.....imagine where the bottom is in Lake Catalpa?

CB: He knew the power of youth.

LT: That's right. And he convinced lots of people to do that for him, as well.

FM: That's right!

CB: At Harvey's Lake....

LT: I think....and I got away from it, so....(overlapping voices, inaudible)..... I think 'cuz of my size....worried about the ice....

FM: Another Chuck Reif story. I remember he came in, and he kept trying to teach freshman students in that BIO 100 course---the application of science to living your life. And he said,"I drove in from the back mountain this morning." He had his place out there.

LT: The summer place, yeah.

FM: And he said, "I timed my stop at every traffic light, when the light was red but there were no cars coming through the intersection. And do you know it took me two and a half minutes at every, at the total of the intersections, during which my car was idling, burning gas, polluting the environment."

(Laughter)

FM: (Laughing) His trip to work became a lesson in environmental science!

CB: And he observed the 35 mile limit on the Dallas highway which, in driving with him, was very scary. Because other people were going 55 and we were in the right hand lane going 35. And he was complaining, "That is the speed limit. All these people are disobeying the law." So, he had a very structured....

FM: Yeah.

CB:structured role.

LT: I want to talk just a little bit about some of the research students that I was honored to have. I had quite a few. I tried to add that up over my 35 years of teaching at Wilkes. I think I wound up having about 130 research kids working with me as independent research students. I'm going to say 95, 96 percent of them went on to medical careers. A very small percentage went on to be Biology teachers in high school. And the others went off for graduate school, for doctorates and such.

FM: Mmm-hmm.

LT: What I'm thrilled about is I still am in touch with a lot of these people. In fact, just on the weekend one of those former students, who's now a radiation oncologist in Raleigh, North Carolina, called to say hello. A boy originally from Old Forge, Dan Kresella (sp?), and we were just chatting. One of the other things was my main hobby has been music and music reproduction, sound systems, stereo gear and such---and so a lot of those students, as now their spouses say, got contaminated by me exposing these kids to high quality music reproduction. So, Dan now has a very extravagant sound system which I helped him make some choices about along the way. So, he called to say hello and talk a little bit about music and new music he had discovered, but he's done very, very well for himself. And he originally, actually, when he finished Wilkes, went to Osteopathy School in Philadelphia. And then he broke the mold because he wanted to become a radiologist. And, of course, osteopaths were not specializing in those days, this is going back. So, he ultimately wound up spending time at M. D. Anderson Hospital in Texas, in Houston, and really got the bug. And then he spent further time in Rochester, at---is it Strong Memorial?, I think that's in Rochester...

FM: Mmm-hmm.

LT:---where the Oncology part kicked in. So, he's done very, very well for himself. But we probably exchange an email once a week and then a phone call maybe once every 3 or 4 weeks. But, he was one of those research students. Probably, I have two stars that really were stars as research students. One was Eduardo Marban, who lives....

(overlapping voice, inaudible)

LT: And Eduardo has, of course, become a highly distinguished cardiologist, research cardiologist. And he's now in Los Angeles running a big department there. When Eduardo was finishing at Wilkes, and by the way he graduated from Wilkes at age 19, so he was way ahead of the curve. He was genius IQ, obviously. But he was a real gem of a research student for me. That's when I....in my early days I was doing fruit fly genetics, for (inaudible?) genetics, so Eduardo was part of that. Even though he was a math major he took my genetics course and then decided to come on board and spend time, for a year, as a research student. And went to Johns Hopkins from Wilkes. Did the medical degree there and then stayed on. I remember, at one point, he called me, he was finishing up his training in his residency at Hopkins and he said, "I need some advice." I said, "What's that?" And he said, "Well, Hopkins is making all kinds of offers to me to stay here, to become part of the faculty at the medical school." He said, "But I'm also being wooed by Harvard Medical School." And he said, "I like 'em both. I certainly know this place, but I like them both and I'm just wondering, prestige-wise...." And I said, "They're equivalent. I mean, they're up there. I mean, this is world-class stuff." So, he said, "Well, the other thing is money, in terms of money." And I said, "The best advice I can give you is pit them against each other. You know, just, play a little one-upsmanship. And whatever Hopkins is giving you, add several thousand dollars to that and tell Harvard this is what you're getting. And then when Harvard comes back and says, 'We'll match that or do better,' then you go to Hopkins and say, 'Hey! Harvard is going to give me this.'" So, he did that!

(Laughter)

LT: And he stayed at Hopkins, incidentally, and really did very well. In fact, he was kind enough that, along the way, in the pipeline, we had several students that were Bio pre-meds who were looking for places at that level and I called up Eduardo and said, "If this kid comes down can you interview, meet with, and so on," and he did that a few times. It was very kind that he did that.

CB: By the way, in timing---how did the Optometry and Podiatry School relationships in Philadelphia evolve? Did you do that as soon as Hahnemann started, or did it....?

LT: That was already in place, but at a very low level.

CB: Really? Before Hahnemann?

LT: Before Wilkes - Hahnemann and before my arrival. So that had already been....

FM: If you couldn't get in medical school then you applied to....

LT: Dentistry or podiatry....

FM: Not dentistry! Dentistry took a special kind of three-dimensional mindset.

LT: Yeah, yeah.

CB: We never had a pre-dental program here.

LT: Oh yeah! We had....sure, sure! They were part of the pre-med (inaudible).

(Overlapping voices, inaudible)

LT: In fact, my dentist....John Handley is one of my former students, he's my dentist. So, yeah, we had that.

CB: Tim, let me ask you a question I asked Jim Rodechko. From your perspective, as someone who brought the new Science Building online. What is your perspective on the strengths of the curriculum in different areas? As you did the elevator speech for Wilkes and other places, what really struck you as the long-term academic strengths of the institution?

TG: Well, Biology continued to be probably the premier discipline. By that time, students' interest in curriculum had evolved somewhat and so Communications was very strong while I was.... That's a, kind of a national trend.

CB: Right.

TG: And Pharmacy just stood out. In part, because it's a professional school, but they attracted really good students during my time there. I think that's abated somewhat. But those are the

strengths. I might add that we did have strengths in Education but they really weren't so much in the Department, they were more on the Continuing Education basis which evolved from Joe, Joe's work early on in Computer Science. And then I held on to Engineering just because I thought the region needed it. And although the Department has had some internal issues, it has a reputation for producing engineers who tend to work better immediately, because they do get a lot of applied experience in the department.

LT: Mmm-hmm.

TG: So, those are the areas.... I'm sure I'm forgetting something, but those were the ones that we sort of picked as areas that we wanted to emphasize during my time.

LT: Maybe I can chime in a little bit about Engineering in a tangential way. Back in the '90s, one of my research students, Elizabeth Montalby (sp?), was a very bright young girl and in Stark when we used to wait for the day to be ended, the classes and such, we would spend time in the lab doing some research into the evening and my office was right next to my research lab. And so, she'd be....I'd get her started and she'd be working in the lab and such. But, then, sort of approaching 10pm or so we would wind things up, we didn't want to keep it going forever, we had already put in 5 hours or something like that. So, it turned out that her boyfriend was an Engineering....he was an Electrical Engineering major. Nice young guy from Mahoopeny, Neil Williams. So, it turned out that Neil was kind enough to basically come at the end of the research night to walk her to her dormitory. I think it was not only just a security issue but it was a lovey-dovey thing, you know. That sort of thing.

FM: Courtship.

LT: Yeah, exactly! Well, sometimes he would come a little bit early and he'd find me in my office, which was right next door, and he'd come and we'd gab a little bit. And, again, he was an Engineering major. He wasn't doing Biology, he wasn't closely related. But, we started talking about music and audio and so on. So, we became fast friends and are to this day fast friends. But it turned out that Neil then went to Penn State main campus and got his doctorate in Electrical Engineering, microwave technology. And he now has a really wonderful, high-level position with the W. L. Gore Company, the people that invented Gortex. Well, they have a very big electronics wing and Neil is a hot-shot in that. He lives, he and his wife and kids, live in a place I didn't even know existed, down near Chadspport, it's called the Lincoln University.

FM: Oh, yeah!

(overlapping voice)

JR:Black College.....

LT: I didn't know that....Black College, right, yeah!

LT: So Neil and his family live there. Well, it was funny because last week.... So, he has two children. A daughter who is going to be a senior in high school in a few weeks and then a

son who is 15 years old, or....14 years old. So, he calls me and he said, "I'm going to be in town with Brianna because we're doing a tour of Wilkes. She's interested in going on in genetics. So, could we meet?" And I said, "Absolutely." So, as it turned out, they first got a general tour from Admissions, and they sat with the Director of Admissions---I don't know who that is anymore, I don't, do you know? Who is Director of Admissions now?

CB: Any of you know?

LT: Doesn't matter. So, they had a session with that person....

CB: The redhead, right?

LT: It was a man....

JR: Melanie Bell left...

CB: Did she?

LT: It's a man. And so, then, they had another hour after that with Mike Steele. And Mike gave them a very thorough view of Biology and the facilities and such. So, then....

CB: And squirrels.

LT: Pardon?

CB: And squirrels.

LT: (Laughs) Maybe. And then they came to my house and we had some coffee and we started talking. And I asked the daughter, her name was Brianna, I said, "So, tell me the pluses and minuses of your visit." And she said, "Well, I was very impressed with the Biology facilities. I could see the excitement there. There's some kids working there this summer, they're on grant money, in fact, and they're doing quite well." Mike's done a great job on that. So, along the way, I said, "What else?" She said, "Well, you know, the tour guide didn't seem to know a lot." And I said, "Huh?" And she said, "Well, it was this goofy guy and he seemed to be more interested in looking at the girls walking around and such, like that. He was OK, but not great, not compared to the tour guides we've seen at Carnegie-Mellon and at Bucknell," and she named three other places. I said, "OK." And then I said, "Any other weaknesses?" And she did say, "Well, you know, the Director of Admissions that we saw...."---the Admissions counsellor, that's the name she used---"that we sat with, he talked about the programs and such but he never talked about the social aspects of being at a small college and being at Wilkes." And I said, "Hmm, I probably should talk to somebody about that." So, I'm talking to you about it right now, but I'll see who else. In any case, it's interesting that her father, Neil, is just such a good guy and he has been doing....his wife is a Bucknell graduate. And he has been invited for the last 10 years to come once a semester to meet with the Engineering students at Bucknell to talk about the career. What it is to be a, and they spend a whole day. And he does a great job on that. What Neil is upset about is, he's now offered, multiple times, to do that here at Wilkes

and he's never been invited. He's never been asked.

TG: They never took him up on it.

LT: Never took him up. Which he, sort of, has a bitter sense about it.

CB: Yeah, I know.

LT: And I don't know if there's a new echelon in place now that should know that, maybe, they should look into this. But Neil is, again, one of these former students who, even though he wasn't a major, we're in touch all the time. And I just cherish the fact, and I could name for you a handful of other former students who enjoyed their time at Wilkes so much that they want to keep in contact. And, of course, whenever I can, especially if I know that they're doing very well, I'll say, "Have you talked to the Development people? Talked to the Alumni relations people? (Laughs) Do you need a tax write off?"

(FM Laughs)

CB: I should add, if it's not obvious already, that one of the great strengths that Les brought, and continues to, is that dinners at Les's house, for students....

TG: Yeah.

CB:And there were a lot of faculty who have done that, so that it's (inaudible)....

LT: Mmm-hmm.

CB: But I don't think anyone I know has done it with such panache and love and very good food, as Les Turoczi.

LT: (Laughs) Thank you.

JR: And the Kimball lecture dinners were excellent.

LT: Oh yeah!

FM: There are two things I wanted to talk about. One is in connection with the Communications program and the other one is saying, "Can't we do something as follow-on that might be productive in dealing with this most recent issue you're bringing up?" I have shelves of electronics stuff. I have 78 rpm record players, I've got 45 rpm record players. And records. I got cassette tape, 8-track cassette tape record players. I've got these.

(Laughter)

FM: And I often wonder, and I've got movie film, 18 millimeter movie film and a camera, dirty as hell 'cuz I had a film run through it a couple of weeks ago with a neighbor who wanted to see

it. Is there any potential for the Karambelas Communications Center, or anybody, is there any interest in developing....

CB: Museum.

FM: Yeah, kind of.... But, an active museum.

LT: Mmm-hmm.

FM: Because I have a set of Benny Goodman's Carnegie Hall....

LT: Oh, wow....yeah, yeah, yeah.

FM:jazz concert, on 45 rpm, that my wife bought me on our honeymoon and Christmas of 1952, when we were married. And I don't think those, maybe occasional, I might have played one or two. But with a 45 format, it's like 10 records in a box.

LT: Mmm-hmm.

FM: That, to sit and play them in sequence and listen is so complicated.

LT: Sure!

FM: But! They're original recordings in Carnegie Hall of his concert. I mean, there must be some way to utilize or convert. I've since gotten, you know, that was also reproduced on the seventy, you know, on bigger records, so....

LT: The LPs.

FM: But, is there any potential---and I've thought about this for the Karambelas Center, I have no idea of what a definition of purpose or mission of that center is----But, you're mentioning guys who are former students who have the capacity, both financially and the knowledgeability, to say, yeah, let's put together a historic recreation laboratory....

LT: Wow!

FM:in the Karambelas Center, and be able to convert film from.... Because it costs 200 hundred dollars for me to get a 15 minute CD made of film of my wedding, on 8 millimeter film.

LT: Ah. Uh-huh.

FM: Now, I can't do that for all hundred films that my father spliced together....

LT: Sure!

FM:through our life, but we're talking about forties, fifties, sixties. I mean, real

sociologically significant, I think, type of family history. So, when you mention this, guys that really can do that, and know how to do that, I'm saying think about the potential and maybe, if they're in a position to do something about it, say, "Oh, jeez...." 'Cuz my kids are never going to use that again.

LT: Sure.

FM: And I'm.... It'll go out in a dumpster or someplace unless I make a specific decision and say, "This whole shelf of equipment, and the records, I've got records for all of them, (emphatically) should go to Wilkes when I die."

LT: Well....

FM: And that's an active concern.

LT: Yeah.

CB: In my sense of academe, what would be required is someone on the faculty, or staff, but particularly faculty, that has a passion for something like that and that sees a way....

FM: That's how the radio station started.

JR: Carl Brigido might be the one to talk to. I think he's still in charge of the TV.....

LT: The studio?

JR: Yeah.

LT: Well. Yeah.

CB: I want to shift gears.

LT: OK.

CB: This, of all the sessions we've had, has been most curriculum-specific, most department-specific.

LT: Mmm-hmm.

CB: What we typically have dealt with is the different presidential administrations, the issues that confronted us in our different periods. And, since you and I talked about this when I was president, I think your reflection on presidents and faculty relations, as you perceived them before your time here....

LT: Mmm-hmm.

CB:particularly when Dr. Farley was still around, and coming up to the present. Your thoughts on that from a faculty perspective, but also a Department chairman who had carried some pretty major governance responsibilities through the years. Your view of Wilkes.

LT: One of the comments that was made earlier on was because of the culture and the nature of operational directives early on, chairpeople had a lot of authority and a lot of control, lot of power. And, I didn't realize that under Chuck because, quite frankly, Chuck seemed to be a little low key on that side of things. He almost wanted to avoid....

FM: He also knew every board member in Wilkes Barre.

LT: Well, he did. He did. So there may have been some undercurrents that I just wasn't tuned into then, it could have been happening. But, in general, when, and Chuck hired me of course, in early days I saw him as being more on the low key side of interacting with the higher ups. Then, when I became chairman, I started realizing there were gaps that needed to be filled. And part of that---in fact, I should say, of the twenty plus years that I was chairman, my earliest years were a very steep learning curve. Because I had not really paid a lot of attention to administrative needs, perspectives, power, things of that sort. But, now again, at that time you were president, I only ever saw Dr. Farley one time at an event, shook his hand. He didn't know who I was. I certainly knew who he was. But we never interacted. So, it was a brief, one minute interaction. Certainly when you were running things, and of course the flood made a big impact on how things went here. But, as time went on, one of the things that I noticed when Bob Capin was president, for instance, was that, he was, for me at least, easy to get along with. I think that we had a good rapport and I always felt good about him. But, he struck me as much more managerial than leader. And I thought he did some of the managerial things very well. Tell me if I'm off target with this.

JR: I agree.

LT: OK. But I felt that the institution needed a better sense of leadership than was happening at that time. So, he was very good at paying attention to the minutiae, and the things that an accountant pays attention to. And I think, you know, progress certainly happened under Bob's tenure and I certainly was happy to know him and always had a cordial interaction with him. Then, when you came along---I'm pointing at Chris Breiseth---when you came along, the nature of things shifted very differently, and you had indicated this earlier....

FM: Oh, I've always said Chris was the second president of Wilkes.

(LT Laughs)

FM: Seriously.

LT: I understand that.

FM: My total experience was at Wilkes, from Phd granting to retirement as president. And Bob Capin was not only a student at Wilkes, graduate of Wilkes, president of Wilkes, there was

never an external look at....

LT: Correct. That's right. Mmm-hmm, sure. That's right.

FM:at the college from any standpoint other than immediacy until Chris came.....

LT: I agree. Mmm-hmm.

FM:with that fresh look and totally different background in University administration, I will say, even though it was at Deep Springs. You had to deal and think at a different level than Wilkes.

LT: Absolutely. Mmm-hmmm.

FM: So, there's no question, no one should argue about the transition importance of going to an outside president and.....

LT: Yeah. And I felt that the, one of the things---of many things---that one of the things you brought along was a sort of inspirational or motivational side to all of our intellects. That we were, I'm not even sure how to say it.... The aspirations became higher in terms of what we were doing, certainly as a chairperson, what we were doing for our own people, but in the broader sense. And because you were not coming from a science background, which of course all scientists and engineers are wary when the leader doesn't have a clue about---"Is DNA really the stuff of genes?"---that sort of stuff....

(Laughter)

LT: But you had more of a clue than that. But, in any case, aside from those initial worries, I think the direction that you were laying out for people had this broader perspective that was not here before. And it presented challenges, it presented motivations to be a little bit thinking out of the box. And I cherished that. I liked that a lot. I was unhappy when difficulties started coming up in terms of faculty noise, let's call it, things of that sort. But I was very, very pleased when I saw you were on board and I always felt we had a good relationship, in terms of interacting with each other, and we could, you know, laugh with each other and we could moan, sometimes, with each other, but....

CB: And eat.

(Laughter)

LT: And eat, that's true. Absolutely. When I was retiring Tim was just coming on board so I barely interacted with Tim, and I'm sorry about that, I just didn't get that opportunity. I think we maybe overlapped by one, perhaps two, years. Something of that sort. But....

TG: I'm thinking two, Les.

LT: Yeah, yeah it was something like that. And, unfortunately, I just never really got a handle on Tim. So I couldn't say much about that cycle. I don't really know. But, generally, I would say, as far as the culture of things was going, I never felt that the place was in shaky hands. Never, through any of that cycle, did I worry about shaky hands. I mean, there was a time when Soder (sp?) worried me a little bit, but, you know, he was VP, but he was boisterous and loud and....

(Laughter)

CB: Turn around and focus on your sense of faculty culture, OK?

LT: Ah, mmm-hmm. OK.

CB: Particularly, not as it related to the disciplines, but as it related to the college and the university.

LT: Yeah. I was always very pleased to make new friends outside of the Department. And, it was strange to me that a few of my colleagues in the Department weren't interested in that. They really wanted to stay, sort of, with the blinders on. And I think that was OK for them. But, for me, I remember when I first started meeting people like Bob Heaman, for instance. I was thrilled to become a friend of Bob and Pat. I learned not only a lot about Dickens, but I learned about other things that would never have crossed my path. Another area that I spent a lot of time on, spare time with, was with the Music Department. So, Dick Chapline. Actually, I took a Music 101 course 'cuz I never had one in my life. I enrolled in, I have a transcript at Wilkes, (chuckles) not many courses, but I took Dick Chapline's Music 101. Loved it! He did a spectacular job. But, through Dick I got to meet other members of the music faculty.

CB: Mmm-hmm.

LT: So, I was getting invited, every Wednesday afternoon at lunchtime, they had a student presentation, a music student had to perform. And it was one of those, bring your brown bag lunch and come sit in---what's the name of that downstairs room, that big one, it's named after somebody?---can't remember the name....

CB: In Dart....

LT: No, in.... Uh, yes, in Dart. Yeah.

JR: I can't remember it.

LT: Anyhow, I'd go there and I'd hear a piano recital or a string quartet or a clarinet, or whatever. And I got more and more interested, and I became good friends with a member of the piano faculty then, who is not here any longer, he had, well, he's moved away, but Mike Haberkorn. Not too many people knew Mike, he was sort of low key. But, Mike was another person that helped me learn a little bit more about Herb Gardner's stuff, and, you know. I got to meet more and more people outside of my discipline and I started realizing there's a wealth of,

not only knowledge, but experience and sensibility that I wish I had tapped into earlier. I think it could have been helpful for me in my formative years, personally, if I had had some of those perspectives. I mean, as a young biologist, I had blinders on as well. So, I was not broadly exposed. Although, I have to say, my music interests started early. Again, growing up in Jersey City, one of the things that impressed me early on was when Leonard Bernstein was doing those TV shows, on introducing young people to classical music. I was glued to those sets. So, I remember, at age 15, I said to my parents---my parents were old-world, you know, they were both raised here but they were old-world people.

And, for instance, I knew that I had to take very good care of my good suit and all those sort of things. And shine my shoes and dad's shoes. I was an only child. But, I remember at one point, after those Bernstein TV shows, which I was glued to the big black and white set then, I said, "I want to go to a concert at Carnegie Hall. I want to see Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic." And my mother said, "I don't want to do that." And my father said, "Do they do polkas?"

(Laughter)

LT: So, I said, "No!" I got my suit on and I took what was then called "the tubes," which was the subway underneath the Hudson....

FM: Yes, under the Hudson, the Hudson tubes.

LT:and I got myself to Carnegie Hall many, many times, by myself. When I talked to my peers, my friends and said, "Do you wanna go?" They said, "What, are you crazy!" you know, "We're gonna go play softball." So, OK, so I got some of that sensibility where it sharpened my interest in music, but I was pretty ignorant on a lot of other areas. So, running into these faculty, I was doing catch up. And when I met Don Henson in Philosophy, all of a sudden I got exposed to the world of philosophy. In fact, on my transcript, the other course I took was Philosophy 101 with John Jardine.

JR: Oooo.

LT: Remember him? Was a hippy (chuckles). And that was a wonderful experience. But I then tried to broaden my sense because I realized, "These people are pretty sharp cookies." And I didn't know that that wealth was here. That awareness, that cultural wealth, was really here. And I was just, I would say, not only stupid, but ignorant about that fact. While my whole time was at Rutgers, and I did my undergrad at Rutgers, by the way, also. So I did my Bachelors, then I did a Masters, and then the doctorate. And it was between two different campuses. 'Cuz I originally thought I was going to be a pharmacist. And I started in Rutgers Newark because, at that time, the Pharmacy School was in Newark. So I did my first year, which was a liberal arts year, and if you did well enough you could apply to the pharmacy school. I got admitted and I did a year, actually a year and a half, in pharmacy school and I realized this wasn't for me. So then I moved to biology. And then, eventually, moved to New Brunswick and stayed.....

FM: And met Selman Waksman.

LT: And met Selman Waksman, among others!

FM: That's amazing!

LT: I had a wonderful time because, along the way, there were big time lectures at Rutgers so I got to meet many Nobel Prize winners. You know, Joshua Lederberg from the genetics side. Francis Crick, people like that, I mean, big names. It was wonderful experience for me.

CB: You shared that with Grace Kimball, I hope.

LT: I didn't!

(Laughter)

LT: So, I think in terms of the faculty that I encountered, yeah there were some people that, just, it's not that we had anything negative about each other, they just weren't inspiring people. But that was very small, that was a tiny minority. And, generally, I was very pleased to meet people in other disciplines and even people, like Joe Bellucci for instance, became a very fast friend. And we would have wonderful conversations on the strangest topics along the way. I mean, maybe baseball or something like that, but other things. Now and then about the computer side of life, but lots of other fun.....

CB: Mmm-hmm.

LT: In fact, I only saw Joe....it was a little over a year ago, was at a funeral in Hazleton. He knew the same family that I do so we got a chance to say hello to each other then. But I think that there was a larger sense of access to people who could open my eyes than I ever assumed would be the case. And I was thrilled by that.

CB: How about governance?

LT: Oh! Governance, OK. (pauses) Again, speaking as a chairperson, I think that whenever I needed to approach the administration with requests or proposals I was usually met on very good ground. There were only a couple of times when we had to wrestle and, not really wrestle but, you know, tug, do a little tug of war on a few things. But, generally, my sense of being able to do things for the Department came pretty easily. And I was very pleased about that. I know, in talking with other chairpeople about similar experiences, they had it tougher than I did. I don't really know why but maybe because Biology was one of the better disciplines, more notable disciplines, I don't know. But my sense of how things worked between me and the administration was at this sort of root level. I never really understood the higher workings of administration or even governance, to be honest, at that point. And I think there were periods of time when the general gossip among faculty was, not only anxiety about how things were being steered, but sometimes even animosity. And maybe it was because I was naive about some of those areas that I let that sort of stuff roll off my back. I mean, there were certain times when I know I had to go to Jim when he was in his Deanship and did a little bit of begging. And it turned out, in one instance in particular and I won't go into any real details, but Jim basically

said, "We can't do it. Can't do it." So, I was, OK, I'll take him at his word---we can't do it. So then I just redirected some of those energies into something else. But, you know, it was a good wake up call for me. And there was never any harshness or bitterness. It was business, you know, it was dealing with business. And I thought he handled it really well, and the fact that I didn't start crying or do anything funny, like throwing a tantrum.....

JR: (inaudible comment)

(Laughter)

LT: So to be honest I..... You know, there was always the question of should the faculty unionize.

TG: Mmm-hmm.

LT: Because we always knew that the University of Scranton was very big on this and there were epistles who would come, you know, and try to tell us why it was so important to do that. But, largely, I was pleased that the faculty said no. And that was something that I cherished. I have to be honest about that.

CB: Now, thinking of classic tensions, one of my great tensions was between the Navy and the Air Force. Lennon was Navy and O'Hop was Air Force. And as certain crises developed it was very clear that those two mindsets were different. In that spirit, let me ask you about Chemistry.

LT: Mmm-hmm. Well, there was tension between Biology and Chemistry, I would say. Now, I have to tell you, that when I became Chairman, which was in '78, Jim Boding (sp?) came into my office, and he was Chairman of Chemistry and had been for a long time, and I always liked Jim. And he said, "Well, I want to extend both my congratulations and commiserations on you being appointed as Chairman." And I said, "Commiserations?" He said, "Yeah, you'll see."

(FM chuckles)

LT: And he said, "But, I'll pass on to you the one bit of advice that given to me when I became Chairman, and it has worked for me. Maybe it'll work for you, too." And I said, "What is that?" And he said, "Put them out when they're brush fires before they become forest fires." And I thought about that for a little bit and he was right. You know, you need to nip things in the bud early on before they explode and become beyond handling. So, I took that as good advice. So, Jim and I got along pretty well. There were other members in the Chemistry faculty who had negative feelings about Biology. I don't know if it was a competition-based issue. Part of it was that we were big and Chemistry wasn't so big. There was also the issue about resources, we were getting more support than Chemistry was. Not that they were poor but they weren't getting quite the resources, support resources, that we were. And then there were, well, there was one individual in particular who will go nameless, who I think really just didn't like me. I don't know if I would say despised me but there were times I felt that. And it was never possible to resolve that situation.

CB: He despised me, too.

LT: Oh, OK.

(Laughter)

JR: He despised a lot of people.

LT: OK. We know who we're talking about.

Mollie Rance (MR): This won't be on the record?

LT: No.

CB: I'll tell you later.

FM (?): Yeah.

LT: In any case, aside from that, I mean, there was the wonderful basis of people. I mean, Frank Salley, for instance. And Frank and Chuck, of course, were close buddies. And Frank was a real gentleman. I mean, I always....every interaction I had with Frank was kind, it was sweet, it was lovely. And I really respected him on what he was doing with his courses. Because the kids that went through his Quantitative, Qualitative Chemistry courses, they knew that stuff cold. He really.... Not all of our majors took those classes. Chem majors, of course, had to take it. But, some of our majors did actually take those courses and I remember hearing from them, "It's tough but I'm really learning and I'm gonna use this." So, I would say that aside from one standout individual, generally we had good things..... I mean, I tried to do a little bit more, like when, for instance, when Terry Wignot came on board and started taking over the Biochemistry, well, we had overlap in our areas, and my personal area.....

CB: Mmm-hmm.

LT:because in Molecular Genetics there's a lot about Chemistry and she was a hardcore biochemist. So we started to interact. And I think it was a very cordial, friendly relationship. In fact, Terry is now my next-door neighbor at my house. It was so funny because, not this past Christmas but the Christmas before, that house had been on the market for a couple of years. The family that had owned it, they wound up divorcing. And then she tried to keep the house going and she was working for the County government and not making enough money to keep it going so she had to sell it. So, I knew that she had vacated the house and then, just before Christmas, a moving van shows up and they're unloading things and so on. But I didn't know, I didn't see people, I only saw the movers. So, it was three, four, days before Christmas and I just wrote out a Christmas card....."To my new neighbor," and I just said welcome to the neighborhood, I wrote a couple of quick little lines and I signed my name. And I walked over and I just stuck it in the mailbox since we don't have...we have curbside mailboxes. Bardy Farms. So I stuck that in, not knowing who it was, stuck the card in the mailbox. So, I guess it

was two days later, maybe it was Christmas Eve, and I went to collect my mail and there's another, without a stamp, another card in there. And it's Terry Wignot! And she said, "You live next door?"

(Laughter)

LT: So, I said "Yeah!" And as it turns out, we are neighbors. So I get to see her now and then. Although barely, I mean we're like ships that cross in the night. But Terry wound up helping to melt some of the iceberg stuff that might have happened between Chemistry and Biology. Not that it totally disappeared. It got better after that person left.

CB: I would hazard the general observation that I think this is what the world is waiting for in women leadership.

LT: Mmm-hmm.

MR: Hmm!

CB: That, I think that its coming, I think it's probably going to come in a big way in November. I can, I would go through some situations at Wilkes where the women faculty members brought a new---and English is one Humanities example--- after a period of some really overt sexism that was ugly. And our supporting at leadership positions changed the whole chemistry of that department.

LT: Cool.

CB: I just think that's coming.

LT: Mmm-hmm.

CB: Tim, what---you've been a silent partner on this---what topics do you want to raise with Les?

TG: Well, there was one thing I just wanted to say, kind of with regard to his legacy, and, of course, it didn't really happen, but when the new medical school was being formed and they wanted to develop a research program, I began talking with the then president and I can't remember his name right now....

LT: Shaneman (sp?)? Is that the guy who was....

TG: No.

LT: I don't know who that was.

TG: Yeah. Les, you might know. But, anyway, well maybe we'll think of it while I'm talking, but anyway, he only lasted, I think, about a year and a half because he had a vision for the

medical school that was different.....

LT: OK, OK.

TG:then the people that were really responsible for it's founding. But, he in his plan really saw Wilkes as the institution with the greatest strengths in the sciences. And that exceeded that of the University of Scranton. I thought that was kind of interesting. At one point, when we were talking about the new building, what we were really talking about was, in essence, a joint research facility that would include our faculty and the faculty from the Med School, and a lot of the research would be centered on the Wilkes campus.

LT: Hmm!

TG: That, of course, never came to fruition.

LT: Right.

TG: But I thought it was.... You know, I was really pleased that he was that interested in developing a relationship with us, and then the fact, pending (?) us, we did some very early thinking on what would such a building look like. And it would have been larger than Stark is now. It would have significantly augmented it. We were going to renovate a lot but, in the end, we simply were able to do the current size building.

LT: Mmm-hmm.

TG: And not do the whole thing.

LT: Right.

TG: But I think the real testimony to the strengths that we continue to have in that area is just clear to people from the outside, that this is the faculty that is able to do great teaching but also really sound research that makes them good partners.

LT: I, I.....Maybe I can chime in just a little bit as a tangent to some of this, and it really relates about the research side. And I don't want to sound too immodest about this but....or, let me sound a little more modest....

TG: I'm not asking you to do that! (Laughs)

LT: Right! One of things, when I became chairman that I spoke to our department faculty was, I wanted everybody to do some kind of research. Didn't have to be very intense but I wanted them to do research that could involve students. And, at that point in time, only about half of the people had something going on. To be honest, the only person---not the only person---but the first person that I had to terminate was an individual who just refused to do research. And it was ultimately.....while he was very good in the classroom he just did not like research, did not want to do it. And ultimately, even after a couple of warning shots that I gave him during

annual reviews, which happened not overnight, I mean, those happened for a couple of years, he still, when I confronted him directly about it, he said, "No, I can't do that." And at that point I said, "We're not going to renew your contract." So, it was sad on my part to have to do that. But there were only two other people that I actually had to terminate in times..... By the way, they were all in that same discipline. But those individuals were, one was just clearly incompetent and the other one was just flakey. And, fortunately, they were both very probationary people so it was easy. They were not close to tenure.

TG: Yeah.

LT: In any case, I do think that having that perspective of asking the faculty to be focused on some kind of research project, I wasn't saying you need to go out and do grantsmanship. I wasn't forcing them to have to spend all of that time and energy to do that. But I said, "Find some kind of topic that could bring students into the picture, motivate them, give them an insight into the workings of hard science and help to hone their problem-solving skills so they could be creative along the way. And if papers come, fine. If they don't come, that's OK, too." But I think that helped to foster the perception of the department, that perhaps, as you just said Tim, the president from the medical school became aware of that. And thank God everybody chimed in and has done quite well and there is solid grants activity. There's publication activity. Way more students doing things now, and I have to give Mike Steele a lot of credit because....

TG: Right, right.

LT:when he stepped in after I stepped down he continued that trend and enhanced it, and has taken it to the next level.

TG: Yep.

LT: Yeah.

TG: Yeah, we were all.....got, oh, that's embarrassing. We got a major science grant....

LT: Well, there was the Howard Hughes....was it the Howard Hughes?

TG: The Hughes grant, yeah.

LT: Yeah.

TG: And I think we, actually, had a shot at a second one and didn't make it for some reason.

LT: Mmm-hmm.

TG: But it was a good (inaudible). All that shows you huge strength..... And, by the way Les, you're doing that---the emphasis on research---was really prescient. Because most schools now that have any kind of science program are emphasizing, or trying to emphasize, undergraduate research.

LT: Yeah.

TG: You know, an opportunity that attracts good students.

LT: Yep. Absolutely.

TG: And that's generally kept us in good stead. Yeah, the other thing, Les, is that---and my colleagues will have to correct me if I'm wrong---but, one topic that has not been raised explicitly, is, I think we had the feeling that Wilkes is kind of a unique place. Not only because of the context in which it operates, in the sense of being effected by that, but also in its desire to help and influence it. And, you know, over the years, Wilkes, I think, had done a lot of really good field work in a variety of settings that have helped the region, improved its lot. I'm interested in your thoughts, and what you saw not only in the Biology Department but across the way. And the agreed, sort of....with that premise. Am I right on the premise, Chris and Mike?

CB: Yes, I'd like to hear what....Les' perspective on that.

LT: I know one of the first programs that surfaced in my awareness that was outside of the sciences, that I thought really had a lot going for it and does to this day, was when Bonnie Bedford started the writing laboratory, the writing, the masters degree in Creative Writing.

TG: Oh yeah, yeah.

LT: And I was first surprised that that actually happened. I got to know Bonnie pretty well. And she was Dean for awhile, so interacted with her on simple things, you know, budgetary things and that sort of stuff. But, I was very pleased to see that side of life, something that was not science, that, not only was attracting interesting students, but they were bringing in hot shot speakers as writers, authors, as speakers, who were motivating some of those kids. And I know a couple of people from the community that I've run into, who have gone through that program, who loved it, absolutely loved it. Now, I know Bonnie has remarried, I don't even know her new name....

JR: Culver?

LT: Culver, is that it?

TG: Culver. Yes, mmm-hmm.

LT: OK. But I knew her as Bonnie Bedford always, and we always had fun times talking about the fact that she played organ, she was an organist. So, and pipe organ is one of my favorite instruments. So, we always used to talk about that sort of....when we weren't talking business. We would talk about food or pipe organs (laughs). So, along the way, I really was pleased to see that she took the.....the initiative to push that program. And obviously, other colleagues were with her on this. But that was one of the places that stood out for me. Within the sciences I, again, have to go back to Umid's role in really spurring along the Pharmacy

program. So, I was on one those early steering committees. Umid asked me to serve on it and I was thrilled. And, by the way, I had the highest regard for Umid in so many ways. I remember just one anecdotal story. At one point he needed to be at a conference in Europe and he said, "I'm going to be away for ten days. I want you to be acting Dean." And I said, "Really?" So he said, "Yeah, I want you to be acting Dean." And I said, "OK, if you insist." So, thank God he had really good secretaries because all I really wound up doing was signing some papers. And, along the way, it went smoothly. There were no glitches, it went easily. And when he came back he took the reigns again and he called me late in the afternoon, it was probably five o'clock one day, and he'd been back a couple of days. And he said, "Can you come into my office?" And he was over in Sturdevant.

JR: Yeah.

LT: Sturdevant, that's opposite the YMCA there?

CB: Yeah.

TG: Yeah.

LT: Is that Sturdevant? OK, so that's where his office was. And so I come in and one secretary was just leaving. And at that point he closed the door to his office and on the floor in his office he had this giant, what looked like a hassock but it was a Honeywell air filter system. And so he turns this thing on. It sounded like a jet engine was now in the room as this big fan system is, you know, filtering the air. And then he reaches under his desk and he takes out a cigar humidor. And he opens it up and he says, "Pick something!" 'Cuz he, we both smoked cigars then. I don't anymore, but at that time I did. So, I'm looking and there's exotica in this humidor. And I said, "What do you got here?" And he said, "Well, I just come back from Europe. These are all cubans!" So, I never smoked a cuban cigar before. So, he says, "Pick one." So, a label that I knew the name of, Coheeba, which is a pretty, Fidel Castro's favorite cigar. So, I took this Coheeba and we both sat back and lit those stogies up, let this Honeywell jet engine crank away....

(Laughter)

LT:it didn't do much, by the way.

(Laughter)

LT: But we had a wonderful time. And then he recounted his European experience and we talked....we were both into single malt Scotches so both talked about some recent Scotches we've.... But I had a wonderful time just chatting with him about that stuff. Anyhow, that's a tangent. So, I remember when the idea of the Pharmacy School....

TG: Les?

LT: Yes?

TG: Can I just ask you one thing?

LT: Sure!

TG: Did you just talk about single malt scotches, or....

LT: Well, there in his office we only talked about it.

(Laughter)

LT: But we found other ways to.... In fact, I can remember, this goes back to something else. So, at one of the Grace Kimball banquets, this was probably the fifth year or so we were doing them, I was always having those meals at the Sabre Room, which some of you.... I don't think the Sabre Room existed when you were him, Tim. But, on Butler Street.

TG: Actually, it did. It did.

LT: OK. Well, it was the....

TG: It was the business spot. (?) Yeah.

LT: Yeah, it did, it was one of the top restaurants in those days. So, we used to have our banquet there. And I remember one day Umid say....we were going to have the banquet that time, at dinner time, and Umid called me and he said, "Um, what are you doing just before the thing starts?" It was....5:30. And I said, "Not much." He said, "Let's meet at the Sabre Room. I'll be at the bar. Just join me at the bar." So, OK, I get there, and it's like five o'clock. And no one was due until 5:30 for the start of the dinner. The talk was at eight o'clock. And, so, Tommy, the bartender who was the manager as well, grand old guy, I don't even know what's happened to Tommy since then, but Bobby Jabers was not there that night, he owned the place. In any case, Umid says to Tommy, "What do you got for single malts?" And Tommy said, "Well, I got this, this and this." And then he points way up high on the back bar and he said, "And there's that Macallan's up there." This was the 25 year old Macallan's single malt. And I knew of Macallan's, I had been drinking the 12 year old because I could afford the 12 year old. There was a twelve, a fifteen, an eighteen. But I had never had the twenty five. Umid says, "Get that bottle." So, Tommy has a little footstool and brings down that bottle and he says to Umid.... Now, this is....we're talking the 1990s. And Tommy leans in close to Umid and he says, "This is fifty bucks a shot, you know." And Umid says, "We only want two. One for him, one for me."

(Laughter)

LT: So, he treated me to my first really exotic single malt scotch. But, otherwise, we did have several....

CB: And?

LT: Yeah?

CB: How did it taste?

LT: It was outstanding! It was outstanding. One of the benchmarks, you know.

CB: OK.

FM: Worth every penny.

LT: Well, you know, especially on his credit card.

(Laughter)

LT: So, Umid basically piloted the start up of the Pharmacy program. And he was so sharp in the way he saw it that I was thrilled to be a, sort of a witness along the way. And I know that in the search committees for the Dean and, actually Bernie Graham became the first Dean and, also, Art Kibbe was the Chairman of Pharmaceutical Sciences. Art actually wound up, and how to say this, I wound up mentoring Art when he was a new faculty member 'cuz he wanted.... Actually, he came to me at one point, he was brand new, he'd come from industry, was a really sharp guy, and he said, "I've been asking some people who I could talk to to get some ideas and clues on how this place runs and they all said go see Les Turoczi." So, I was honored when I heard that.

CB: That's great.

LT: So we developed that relationship. But, along the way, I would have to say that, aside from the Writing Program, the Pharmacy, the start up of the Pharmacy program in those early years, really depended on Umid's vision of things. And then, slowly, the reigns were taken over by Bernie Graham and his crew. But, clearly, it's been a big success. I mean, a significant success.

CB: i told this before but not in your hearing or Tim's hearing and I think it's relevant. I was president elect, still in Illinois, and I was going to, I think, an ACE workshop for new presidents in Washington. And I decided, I guess Jerry Hardigan called and said, it just happens we've got three Physics faculty who are not going to be here next year. One is taking a leave, and another, I think, was on an alcohol issue....I forget the third. And he said I need to decide whether to replace them. And I knew about as little about science as you feared.

(LT Laughs)

CB: But I thought, what I knew about, what I'd learned, at that point, about the endowment and about the deficits. The thought of replacing three physicists struck me as improbable. So I decided to come back to Springfield via Wilkes-Barre, rearranged my flight, and asked Jerry to convene a meeting with Physics, Chemistry and Engineering. And Umid was there. And

Walter Placek was there. And Fred....

JR: Bellas.

CB: I think Fred Bellas was there.

LT: OK.

CB: I'm not sure why we would have had both of them there, but.... In any event, Umid made the point---Brian Redmond was there, Environmental---

LT: Oh, OK.

TG: Mmm-hmm.

CB:that we really should combine Environmental Science and Engineering and Physics into one department. And that we should do the hires that would support Environmental Engineering and Engineering. And Jerry did not have a strong opinion on this. I sensed that he and Umid were not the most simpatico colleagues.

LT: Mmm-hmm. Yeah.

CB: And I made my first decision as president elect, and I took Umid's advice. And that began the Dean organizational structure....

LT: Ah-ha!

CB:that ultimately you all, as Department Chairs, implemented. Because my sense was, and, Mike, this goes back to a point we made over and over, that in the absence of a strong administrative structure, that really interacted with the faculty, the Department Chairs were the kings, or the parents. And so, I constituted, as soon as I got here, a strategic planning committee made up of the Department Chairs.

LT: Mmm-hmm.

CB: And it was out of that crew that, among other things, we recommended going into a three, kind of, divisions.

LT: Right.

CB: I'm trying not to use that word 'cuz that was the word you used but we were into, kind of, three Deanships.

LT: Mmm-hmm.

CB: And it came from the Department Chairs' recommendation. And, the other thing that,

combined with that, was that, it was a way of getting us off the AEP censure, which not only involved the firing of faculty that had seven years experience but who did not yet have tenure, in the post-flood situation, we also were censured.....

FM: Poor instructors.

CB: Right. We were also censured because the Trustee's policy on renewable tenure. And, so my, I had just come from a brand new university which had adopted a five year review process as opposed to tenure.

LT: Mmm.

CB: And I really believed in it.

LT: Mmm-hmm.

CB: And built in was, faculty evaluating themselves in terms of the mission of the institution. And on their committee would be not only someone from their own discipline but someone from another discipline, 'cuz the interdisciplinary thing I just deeply believed in. And I thought its potential at Wilkes was tremendous. So, we ended up with a five year review process. I don't know whatever happened to it, but it included the new strategic plan that faculty bought into, its the new mission. So, part of what you had to do in your five year review was to relate how you proposed to support the mission of the institution over the next five years. What you needed as support from the institution to do that. And those people who did not feel they wanted to go through that kind of initial accountability could retire in a beneficial way. And so we got---I don't know how many, Jim---but we got a goodly number of people who did not want to have an evaluation.

JR: Yeah.

CB: But the evaluation was targeted on mission.

LT: Mmm-hmm.

CB: So, by the end of my first year, and I didn't get inaugurated until the end of my first year, I was able to announce a Pew, half a million dollar Pew faculty development grant.

LT: Oh. Mmm-hmm.

CB: Which then begun funding what the first five year review people were saying.

LT: Ah!

CB: "I need this support. I need a semester off."

LT: Mmm-hmm.

CB: "I need this kind of equipment. I need...." You know, whatever. And that, in terms of what you're describing, is accompanied by my presidency as a newcomer.

LT: Mmm-hmm.

CB: Was that, I got all of you thinking about each other....

LT: Mmm-hmm. (LT continues to agree with the next comments)

CB: On how to be clustered, how to get people mission focused, in terms of their own professional development. And the evaluation process, which the whole country was asking for. The faculty. And I remember standing up at a faculty meeting and saying, "I need you to support this for me to get the Trustee's to back off at tenure two," which meant Max Rosen.

LT: Right.

CB: And so, that first year, and by the end of that first year, we had the retreat up at Keystone. Where we, before classes started, where, the whole faculty was there to kind of talk about where is Wilkes going. And I think that was the place where I was able to help turn us outward. But, also, integrate us across our lines. It all goes back to Najib.

LT: Yeah.

CB: That first meeting.

LT: Yep!

CB: And he was, he was bright enough to know how to play me.

LT: Mmm-hmm.

(TG Laughs)

CB: And I was bright enough to realize that his instincts were really powerful about this institution.

LT: Yeah. Mmm-hmm.

CB: The other guy that, a very different area but, a guy that I trusted, with a lot of people very upset that I did, was John Chwalek. I found John Chwalek absolutely brilliant. In terms of his sense of this place, in terms of teacher, teacher training, placing teachers in school districts around the country. So Umid and John Chwalek were the people that I bought into.

LT: Hmm. Hmm.

CB: Right away (snaps fingers). And I won't tell you the people I bought out of....

(Laughter)

CB:but they were just as crucial.

LT: Sure.

CB: Well. Les, what else would you like to ask us or contribute? And the same with you, Tim, since you can't see the whites of our eyes.

(Laughter)

LT: Well, I think, to sum up my take on things I would first of all have to say my entire career at Wilkes went charmingly. I must say. Even though there were a couple of rough spots along the way, I'm, my memory is weak enough that I can forget those. And I can think of the high points much more easily. And it was always about people. So, the strength of character of people, the diversity of people, the civility of most of the people that I encountered.... Just one quick story. I remember, when I was still, as a new faculty member, Chuck, for whatever reason, took me under his wing and wanted me to meet more people. So, in addition to George Ralston and Jane Lampe and some of those others that were in the higher ups, he wanted me to also meet Millie Gittins, for instance, at the bookstore. And that was a wonderful time. But I can remember the time he brought me over to the Business office. And Charlie Abate was running things. But, Alice Rader was, who really ran the place.

JR: Sure. (Laughs) She did....

LT: And so he introduces me to Alice....

CB: (Jokes) He kept throwing things at you so you'd retire.

(Laughter)

LT: So I remember shaking hands with her and she said, "Well, welcome Dr. Turoczi." And I said, "Oh, please, call me Les." And she said, "No, no! You're Dr. Turoczi. You worked hard to earn that. You're Dr. Turoczi." So, and forcefully! She said this more than.... I thought, wow, that's pretty new.

CB: She said very little that was not forceful.

LT: That's true. But I loved working with Alice, she always did things....

(Laughter continues)

JR: She was a good person.

LT: And then, at the counter that you always.... Mollie Binski? Remember her?

JR: Oh, yeah!

LT: Mollie treated me like her long lost son. I mean, every time I was up there, whether I was just bringing in some petty cash to drop off, or needed to get stamps for the Department or something, Mollie treated me with a sweetness you could just not capture. But those are two small examples, but the broad range of....

CB: Mmm-hmm.

LT: I mean, Sophia Bohinski, who ran the caf, um, the Commons, you know, the snack bar. Sophie was a gem. And then once she knew I was in science and I realized her son was in, he was a PHd biochemist, that bonded us even further. But there were so many wonderful little stories like that, aside from academic colleagues, that just made.... You know, John Reese. You know, I never expected to become a buddy of John Reese. And, here, you know, when I realized this guy is a top notch wrestling coach as well as everything else he did. But I just keep coming back to the sincerity, the naturalness of the people. That worked. It worked for me. I'm thrilled.

CB: One of the people that you bring to mind was Eddie.

LT: Oh! Eddie was great.

CB: Eddie moved us in. I mean, literally, our first day as a family Eddie was moving stuff in and he took me under his wing and I just assumed this was an authoritative voice on how to live in Wilkes-Barre.

(Laughter)

LT: I have an Eddie story.

CB: We were close, close almost 'til his death.

LT: Yeah. Well, I can't remember his polish last name.... but he was on the Maintenance crew.

JR: Yeah.

FM: Yeah, I was thinking of...(inaudible)

JR: He was a legend.

CB: In the mailroom at the very end.

LT: Yeah, and the mailroom for awhile.

CB: Oh Tim, what was his name? Ed, Eddie....

MR: They named the mailroom after him.

CB: Pardon me?

MR: They named the mailroom after him.

CB: Yes! His name is on the mailroom.

LT: Oh! One of the things to....

TG: I can't remember right now.

LT: OK.

JR: I can't remember, either.

LT: I can't, either. But, one of the things that the Biology Club wanted to do was little fundraising stuff every now and then. So, they all knew I was into food and such and they came to me and they said, "What we can we do as a fund... You know, bakesales are sort of cliché." And I said, "Well, you know, I have a really good chili recipe. Maybe we can make a big cauldron of chili and take it down to the lobby area of Stark and, at lunchtime, sell the stuff." And they said, "Yeah, yeah, yeah!" And I said, "Let me make a few phone calls...."

CB: (Joking) This is after Chuck?

LT: Yes, this is after. So, I contacted Sophie over at, when it was still in Conyngham, the snack bar was in Conyngham then. And I said, "Your industrial kitchen there, is it, what's happening after 6, 7 o'clock at night?" And Sophie said, "Not much, not much. Once in a while a burger but that's about it." And I said, "What's the chance of me taking it over for a night because I want to do this fundraising and we need to be able to have big, industrial burners to make two cauldrons of chili that we're going to use." And she said, "Sure, sure, sure! We can do that." So, one of things I start, I recruited students. So I had about a half dozen of our Bio majors who chopped onions and did everything else that we needed. It was a complicated recipe. And one cauldron was normal chili and the other cauldron was blazingly hot, spicy chili.

(TG Laughs)

LT: So we cook it that night, stick it in the industrial walk in refrigerator there overnight. Next morning start to reheat it and then at lunch we would have it in the, it was a very successful event. And, always, Eddie would show up with two of his buddies and they wanted chili. So the other two guys always wanted the weak stuff. Eddie wanted the spicy stuff. So one of the things, and we weren't charging a lot of money for it, but I said, "No charge for you guys." And Eddie said, "I'm sorry! I'm paying for this!" He refused my willingness to give it to him and he

paid for it. And this happened year after year after year. But the funny part was I would watch Eddie sit with his little cohort at one of the adjacent tables and all of a sudden, after a few spoonfuls of this stuff, beads of sweat would start to form on his forehead....

(FM Laughs)

LT:and I teased him about that. And he said, "Well, that's the best part."

(General Laughter)

LT: So, for years Eddie came and did that. And he was a gem.

CB: Some of the best years on campus.

MR: Eddie Elgonitis?

TG: Elgonitis.

CB: Elgonitis. Elgonitis.

LT: Yeah.

FM: I didn't cook chili for that but I was the watermelon eating champion....

LT: Oh!

FM: and the, what was it, cherry pie eating champion of the Biology Club when they had their fundraisers.

LT: Oh, cool.

FM: I beat out every student.

LT: Wonderful.

FM: I kept telling them it was my italian nose that could plough a trough that I could suck up.

(Laughter)

JR: At softball games between Biology and....

(Overlapping voices. Inaudible)

FM:the cherry pie eating champion.

LT: But I just come back to people. I mean, there was a wonderful array of interesting, smart,

humble, clever, service oriented, friendly people.

CB: Well, since one of the themes we all talk about every time that we have one of these sessions is the special relationship between Wilkes and the local community....

LT: Mmm-hmm.

CB:I think we at least have to give some insight into your relationship with A. J. Sordoni.

LT: Ah! I'm glad you brought that up. So, it was interesting because I certainly knew about the Sordoni empire. I was aware of who that was, what was all about on that. But I didn't know any of them at all until Susan Sordoni decided to come back to....

CB: Pre-med.

LT:to do Pre-Med. So, I remember your secretary called me one day and said, "Can you come by Dr. Brieseth's office?" And I said, "Sure." And it was you and Susan and Tina. I never met her before, I didn't know. And just a beautifully dressed, you know....

FM: Lovely.

LT: Lovely! That's the word, just a charming person. So I hear the story, that she's, you know, her, she raised her kids and she already had a Chemistry degree from College Misericordia but now wanted to go to medical school but wasn't sure if she still had the smarts to be able to do it. And this was, like, the second week of the Fall semester. And, one of the things, she had done a little homework and she knew that I was teaching Cell and Molecular Biology that semester, a sophomore course. And she thought this would be a way for her to find out whether she really could cut the mustard. And, so, the request was, would I let her sit in on that class and do everything that was supposed to happen, take the exams, even though she wasn't doing a transcript, she would take the exams and do all of the obligations, the labs and everything else. And, of course, I said sure, yes, absolutely. And I said, "Please come to my office as soon as you can. I'll have a textbook ready for you. I'll tell you what you've missed this first week. We can look at the notes, and anytime you want to come back after a weeks of classes, you know, like help keep you up to speed." And she was grateful for that. Fine. Well it turned out that, first of all, she was always stunningly dressed. So this was a class of 85 students.

(FM Laughs)

LT: And it was in that space, room, down in the basement of Stark. Room 1, it was like Star Trek down there.

JR: Oh, yeah. (Laughs)

LT: And whenever she would come in, 'cuz most of the kids would already be seated, Susan would come in dressed impeccably and a striking figure, and take a seat, and, of course, they

were all buzzing, "Who is that?", you know....

(FM Laughs)

LT: So, OK. The semester is going along, she takes the first exam, aces it, so there was no problem. She was right on target in terms of fulfilling the requirements. And we talked in between and I found out that she was comfortable with mastering the material and doing well. So, it was the last lecture before Thanksgiving break. And I see Susan come in. And she's carrying one of those woven, straw-handled like picnic baskets with a....checkered napkin over the top of it, which she carried in with her, but put next to her seat as she sat down. So, I do the lecture. It's over. And she comes up with the basket and she says, "I have something for you." Cuz I had talked about going back to Jersey City to have Thanksgiving with my parents. And she said, "I baked this apple pie, this double crusted apple pie, that I think you can share with your parents after your Thanksgiving dinner, and let me know how it is." And so she lifts back the thing and there's this gorgeous, giant, beautiful.... I mean it was a, when you looked up in the Encyclopedia Britannica the best apple pie in the world, that was the picture. So, I was very grateful. And, of course, I did take it with me to Jersey City and we loved it. We finished it up, and with a beautiful pyrex pie dish, which I brought back. I filled it with chocolates when I returned it to her. My mom always said you never give back something empty.

(Laughter)

LT: So I put some John Stopay peanut butter chiffon chocolates in it and, which she liked. So, right after that, she said, "You know, it's interesting, because you use a lot of food analogies in you class." Which I do, and did! I would always talk about making comparisons with, you know, whatever it was---the primordial beginnings of the planet and having to do with, you know, marshmallow fluff and so on.

(Laughter)

LT: So I would talk about it, and she said, "You need to meet my husband Andy, 'cuz he's way into food and I have a feeling you would have something in common."

FM: Ah.

LT: And so I said, "Well, I'd love to do that." Couple of nights later I'm talking to my best friend, Joe Rillo, the guy up in Maine, you remember....

JR: Oh, yeah....

LT: So, and Joe was a Wilkes graduate, he actually started in music. He's a jazz musician, and successful up in Maine. But he didn't stay as a Music major, he actually wound up being a Psychology major. But, as it turns out, now I lost my train of thought....

FM: Andy was into music....

LT: So, Andy was into food and music and, oh, I'm talking to Joe on the phone, and he's in Maine, and all of a sudden an operator comes on the line and she said, "Excuse me, Dr. Turoczi, I'm the Commonwealth telephone operator...."

(Laughter)

FM: They owned the company!

LT: They owned the company....

JR: Yes.

(Laughter)

LT:I wonder if you would be able to take a phone call from Mr. Andrew Sordoni?" And I said, "Absolutely." And I said, "Joe, I'll call you later."

(FM Laughs)

LT: So, all of a sudden Andy comes on. Andy says, "Well, my wife Susan has been raving about you and she's, I know she's doing real well in the course and I don't want to influence that...."

(FM Laughs)

LT:but, I think we have a lot in common between food and the music and fun stuff, and so on, and we're going to be going to Brutico's on Friday night to eat, would you be our guest?" So, Brutico's was a very famous restaurant in Old Forge which I'd always heard about but never been to, I couldn't afford it. So, I didn't say this, by the way, earlier, when I came to Wilkes to start my job in '72 my starting salary was ten thousand dollars a year. When I was at Rutgers, finishing up as a graduate student, I was making twelve thousand dollars a year, tax free.

(Laughter)

LT: So, I took a severe cut in pay to come to Wilkes.

CB: To come to the flood zone.

LT: Exactly. In any case....

TG: Should have started with that, Les.

(Laughter)

LT: I should have!

(Laughter)

CB: But, interestingly, that was not the thing most on your mind.

LT: Absolutely not the thing!

CB: That's right.

LT: Indeed.

TG: Yeah.

LT: So, eventually, we met. We met at the restaurant. Of course, we met outside and as we walked in it was as if the Pope had arrived.

FM: Yeah.

LT: "Cuz, any, every table Andy passed, someone stood up to shake his hand. I think they would have kissed the ring if he had one on. But, it was neat to see that. I had not witnessed anything like that before. And then we got treated by Dee, who was the owner of Brutico's, Dee Brutico, we got treated like royalty. So we had a wonderful meal together. Then, after that, I started doing more things. Andy started inviting me to lunch sessions with two of his cronies, uh, Freddie...uh, oh geez, now I'm not going to remember their names. Anyhow, they're both dead, the other two guys. But the foursome, we would go as a foursome to different places to eat lunch together, all of us large people. So, the very first thing we would always do when we walked into a restaurant was inspect the chairs.

(Laughter)

LT: We wanted to be sure that nobody was winding up on their, on the floor on their butt, you know. So, it never did happen but we always inspected the chairs. And I remember one time we went to this new chinese buffet that was up by the Mall. Its now a gentleman's club up there, hit with the tornado recently. So, it was a chinese, a giant chinese buffet. And when the four of us walked in and the manager was at the podium to seat people, a chinese gentleman, he looked at us and he blanched.

(Laughter continues)

LT: He absolutely went white.

FM: "There goes my profit for the day!"

LT: Exactly! "This ain't no fun." He said, " They're going to wipe me out!"

(Laughter)

LT: It was OK. We didn't really do that much damage. But we then met probably every two weeks for lunch events like this and, eventually, then Andy started inviting me to these jazz programs that he brought on board. And then he, you know, said, come to my office over here in Forty Fort and showed me some of his art collection and things like that. So, we became fast and good friends. And, fortunately, Susan by the way, then, after that one course, that beginning course, then registered the next semester for my Genetics course, she actually registered for it. And that was a class of 20. It was half male, half female. Susan was just the perfect role model for the women in that class. She.... I don't, uh, taught? I don't know what to say. She influenced these young women.

FM: She had an air of authority.

LT: They matured. They became....

CB: She had a lot of experience, too, raising daughters.

LT: Yeah, exactly! She was a perfect mentor for those kids and just, so I was thrilled when she went to medical school, of course. And now she's doing great things in the community. But....

CB: My contribution to all that, in addition to encouraging her to do this, because we talked about this before, was to use presidential authority to give her parking.

LT: Ah!

CB: A parking spot, there were parking spots.

LT: Oh, cool!

CB: And she could always have a place on campus.

LT: Oh, that's neat. I didn't know that. That's great. So, we see each other every now and then. Andy just had this big exhibit at the, our art gallery.

JR: The Warhol, yeah.

LT: No, no, afterward. It was his own illustrated....

CB: His posters.

JR: Yeah.

CB: Which is great. There was a great catalog for it.

LT: So, I was there for the opening and I actually went to the last lecture which Andy gave himself about the collection. He did a superb job, he's such a good speaker.

CB: Yeah.

LT: And he just ran the show beautifully. So I got to see Susan at the initial opening reception. But I see them every now and then socially sometimes, you know. They were very helpful to me along the way to expose me to finer things in life that I would not have otherwise known. Of course, Andy would always go to the Friar's Club meetings in New York City and come back with a wealth of the filthiest, funniest jokes you could ever hear.

(Laughter)

LT: And there were great jokes! Absolutely top notch.

CB: Our first year, he and Susan took Jane and me to the Pennsylvania Society dinner.

LT: Oh!

CB: Which we then went to almost every year. But, at lunch we went to the Friar's Club.

LT: Oh.

CB: And met Mike Tyson. And Henny Youngman....

LT: Oh, jeez!

CB:was walking around, as was George Burns....

LT: Oh, my!

CB:and just making comments as we went around. And Red Buttons....

LT: Oh, my!

CB:was going to be the featured guy that night.

LT: Oh, wow.

CB: So we had....

LT: Did they roast Red Buttons?

CB: For a new kid president this was, kind of, quality time.

LT: I got to meet Henny Youngman one time at the Carnegie Deli in Manhattan. I loved to eat at the Carnegie Deli. And I miss it now that its closed. But, one time I'm leaving it and then all of a sudden, at the front table, who's sitting there by himself but Henny Youngman. And he was

kibitzing with some other people. So I saw him and I thought, "Well, he'll probably shake my hand." So I went over and I shook his hand and I said, "Mr. Youngman, I'm so grateful for all of the one liners that you've given me over the years."

(Laughter)

LT: And he chuckled and he said, "You're most welcome, young man." This was 20-something years ago. So, that's the only time I met him. But that was cool.

CB: I'm going to ask everyone here to make any final comments, but one thing I'd like you to reflect on, not just now but later, what other members of the faculty of your generation should we have a session for this with?

LT: Oh! That's a good question. I'll need to think about that.

CB: And let Jim Rodechko know.

LT: Sure, I could do that. Certainly. Yeah. And some of them ain't around any longer!

CB: I know. That's right. There's fewer and fewer.

FM: (Inaudible)...much when you were reflecting on community impact of the Fine Arts Fiesta, and the music and arts at the college.

LT: Well, I was very much in attendance at a lot of productions, the theater productions which I was bowled over by in the early days. Those theater productions were top notch!

FM: Used to be in Irem Temple.

LT: Well, I saw them at Dart.

JR: Yeah.

LT: These were the Wilkes productions.

CB: Wilkes productions, right.

LT: In fact, I was actually in---Mike, I mentioned Michael (?) earlier who was on the Piano Faculty. They were doing The Wizard of Oz and Mike was recruiting people and he said, "You know, they still don't have everybody they need." And he said, "You'd be perfect for the captain of the guard."

(Some Laughter)

LT: And I said, "Really!"

(Laughter)

LT: And he said, "Yeah, yeah, yeah! You'd be perfect for it."

(Laughter Continues)

LT: "Come to a rehearsal." They had just started rehearsing.

(JR Laughs)

LT: What an energetic, happy crew these kids were. And they had it down pat, they really did. So, I became the captain of the guard.

(Laughter)

LT: So, it was funny, because when it came time for costumes, and I had the monkeys, the flying monkeys behind me, was part of the.... We were the "oreo-we-o" crowd that came down from the steps. So, I said, "What's my custom?" And they said, "Well, first of all, all you guys are gonna get the helmets from Wyoming Valley West marching band," which were these, you know, tall, feathered things. And I said, "Well, what's the rest?" And they said, "Oh, we're going to get you a choir robe." "Oh, a choir robe will be fine."

TG: It will be fine!

LT: Whose choir robe do they get? But, and some of you this may ring a bell. Clifford Balshaw.

(Laughter)

LT: He was the organist and the Choir Director at St. Stephens Episcopal Church. Very distinguished, British-type gentleman. And, we were the same size. So they did get me his robe which, I would say, I think he never laundered.

(General Laughter)

LT: You knew it was Clifford's! But it worked! And so we did that routine and I did that one, you know.... But I went to lots of those events. I didn't do a lot....I only went to the Irem Temple a couple times for the Philharmonic, but didn't spend a lot of time at the Irem Temple. But I certainly would wander the Fine Arts Fiesta....

FM: You were all right, those may have been in the 50s, when I was here.... (?)

CB: Until the Darte Center was....

JR: Right.

CB: Once the Dart Center was here, then....

FM: Yeah.

CB:then everything moved over after that.

FM: That's right.

LT: Yeah. But I remember, just getting back to Andy, Andy was sponsoring all of those top notch, world class jazz artists....

CB: Jazz, the jazz, yeah.

LT:that would come in. And those were awesome. And very well attended!

CB: That's where he and I created our bond, which continues.

LT: Ah, cool. And I remember several times Andy would have a little after-thing, a little after-meal, or something like that. And frequently I would get invited to those, as well. I remember the one he held at Katana one time. I don't even know what that bill was like for all of these hungry jazz musicians and friends eating mountains of sushi. So, (laughs) in any case, Andy was happy to do it....

CB: Yeah.

LT: And I was thrilled to be in the crowd.

JR: Yeah.

CB: Let me ask, final observations, Jim?

JR: Some of your.... On a personal note, some of your former grads have been my physicians!

LT: Oh, yeah! Me too!

JR: Ellis, John H. Ellis.

LT: Cardiologist.

JR: Niezgoda.

LT: Yeah. Oh, yeah!

JR: And one, probably after you, Michelle Lemke?

LT: No. Doesn't ring a bell.

JR: She would have graduated in the last 10 years.

LT: Oh, yeah, that was....

JR: She's a surgeon out at Mayo Clinic.

LT: Did she go to Wyoming Seminary?

JR: I don't know.

LT: Sort of rings a....is she from Kingston?

JR: I'm not sure. She went to the college, the medical college up in Scranton.

LT: In Scranton, OK.

JR: Out of Wilkes.

LT: I'm not sure about her because I'm remembering....

JR: She was the one who diagnosed my aneurysm, and....

LT: Oh, jeez! Neat.

JR: But she's a surgeon out at Mayo Clinic.

CB: In Rochester.

JR: Yeah.

LT: Two of my physicians are Wilkes - Hahnemann graduates. Stan Lubitz who's my GP. And Michael Roof (Root?), who is my cardiologist. They were both students.

FM: My.... I could go on and on, and so on, about the evolution of the Education Department programs and Joe Bellucci, and so on, but I'm intrigued by our general acceptance of the quality of the Biology Department and saying to myself, you know, "Why?" But it's one of the few academic areas where you have a transition to professional schools and where you can measure your output against other competitors. You're admitted to medical school, you become a doctor. You know, we've got businessmen who are worth hundreds of millions of dollars and successful graduates. But somehow or other we never would say, "Whoa, we had a great Business Department with George Eliot, Welton Farrar and Sam Rosenberg." Because you don't have that equation, (emphatically) that measured output of professional training. And why should the Chemistry Department be jealous of the Biology Department, you know, because we had a great Chemistry Department!

LT: Yeah.

FM: And that Department probably did a more significant cleanup job after the flood of anybody!

LT: Is that right?

FM: Oh my God, you know, if they had to act with Environmental EPA breathing down their necks now....

LT: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. Right.

FM: But imagine, cleaning up the entire inventory with no labels....

LT: Wow.

TG: Ah.

FM:on bottles of chemicals.

LT: I remember when Owen Fout was involved with that poisoning problem, the Curley thing.

JR: Oh yeah....(inaudible)

CB: That was one of my major traumas of my presidency.

LT: Yeah, mmm-hmm.

CB: Think about it all the time.

LT: Yeah.

FM: But in thinking.....

JR: She's out of prison now.

LT: Yeah! She just got out, just recently, yeah.

FM: But in thinking of the perception of Biology Department, it's one of the few academic areas where we have a measurable output.

CB: That's a very interesting point.

FM: Yeah, and its not often fair to the other departments.

CB: You know, we....

FM: You mean to tell me that English Literature and Bob Heaman's....or History, Rodechko's departments, were any less successful....

CB: I was just going to say, from a (?) point of view, having been part of several faculties, the two most difficult faculties, in terms of internal machinations, are English and Chemistry.

LT: Hmm.

CB: And they're some of the most interesting and remarkable individuals.

FM: Yeah.

CB: But as cohesive units, they are not.

LT: Mmm-hmm.

CB: And Williams, Williams, which is a fine place....

LT: Yeah.

CB:the English faculty were riven with rivalries, and so, too, the Chemistry Department.

LT: Interesting.

CB: I've never know that of the Biology Department, the five or six that I've known.

LT: Yeah. Mmm-hmm.

CB: And I think, so I think you're on to something very interesting there. And as you get Biology and Chemistry to do more and more work together, I think that may not be true of departments twenty years from now.

LT: Mmm-hmm.

CB: 'Cuz, first of all, they're all going to be inter-departments.

FM: You told us when you first started and what you were teaching. I came here in 1955, straight out of graduate school, and my teaching load.... Now I graduated the University of Pennsylvania Molecular Biology, but it was a Botany Department, I can't tell an elm tree from an oak tree.

(LT Laughs)

FM: But I taught Comparative Anatomy, Embryology, Histology, Genetics, Physiology, fall and summer.

LT: Wow!

FM: And my salary was \$4,000 dollars a year.

LT: Whew! Wow.

FM: For ten months, so I had to get something in the summer and I got NSF grants, fortunately.

LT: So you didn't have to mow lawns or anything.

(General Laughter)

FM: But! I've live my life with thinking two things. There are very few students that I knew who I didn't think were smarter than me.

LT: Hmm.

FM: And the other thing is, everybody learns in a different way.

LT: Sure.

TG: Mmm-hmm.

FM: And then I think, if you think you're the paragon of, you know, or feel it's on you(?) , your living with an illusion.

LT: That's right!

FM: Because you learn as you go so many things in your career it's far more reflective of living a life than I ever would have assumed.

LT: Ah.

FM: I've enjoyed today so much! (Inaudible)....to know you.

LT: Ah, thank you!

CB: It's been, it's been delightful.

TG: Yeah.

LT: It's been a treat for me. I love to reminisce, in a way, of some of these things.

FM: And what I'm going to do is take credit now for hiring you!

LT: There you go!

(Laughter)

FM: Chuck Reif, rest in peace!

LT: That's right. I should mention one interesting thing. I've been watching a commercial on television for a few weeks, from the Cancer Center of America, which is in Phila....well, the main one's in Philadelphia.

TG: Yeah.

LT: And one of their physicians comes on and talks, wearing a bow tie, and his name is always under it. And he speaks well, about telling what they do. And his name is Stephen Standerford. And I'm thinking, wait a minute, I taught a Stephen Standerford, long time ago, in the '80s. And I'm thinking, is it that... 'cuz, from looking at him now as a 60 year old, uh, you know. So, finally, I googled his name. And I found out his credentials. Well, sure enough, Wilkes College.

FM: Yeah.

LT: He actually went, he was a Trenton boy from Trenton, New Jersey. So he went to medical school in New Jersey. New Jersey School...., which is now Rutgers Medical School. And, he's done other wonderful things in between. And now he's a hot shot oncologist in Philadelphia.

FM: (softly) Hmm.

LT: So, I got on my computer last week, last Friday actually, and I wrote a little letter. I mean, I saw his address from the google thing and I wrote a little letter to sort of say, "I remember you. I've been seeing you on television. You never wore a bow tie when you were a little....."

(General Laughter)

LT: You always wore a bow tie. (Laughs) But I just sort of did a little, "Hello, how are you," kind of thing. Just to say hello and let him know that I remembered him.

FM: Yeah.

LT: So I haven't had a response yet.

CB: Let us know when he responds.

LT: Yeah, I'd be curious. But, yeah, yeah.

TG: Yeah, on that second response you want to mention Development Office probably.

LT: Yeah, exactly.

(General Laughter)

LT: Well, I did suggest to him if he wants to get a tour of the place, cuz it's changed radically for awhile, but.... So, who knows, maybe he'll do that. But....

TG: That'll be, that'll be.... Hey, one thing I wanted to, if I could just get one little thing in. I, when I was mentioning the programs that I saw particular promise when I was there, I forgot to mention Bonnie's program.

LT: Mmm-hmm.

TG: It has been enormously successful.

JR: Who?

CB: Bonnie

LT: Bonnie, the writing, the Creative Writing....

JR: Oh, oh, oh!

TG: The writers!

CB: Creative Writing.

TG: And, I think it had a significant influence on some other programs....

LT: Yeah.

TG: In terms of how they (?) a full idea of what a massive program, or even an undergraduate program....

LT: Sure!

TG:could be.

LT: Yep.

TG: And it was, you know, for a while, really and truly a national model. And still is! But it was really....

CB: One of it's graduates got, what, the Booker Prize?

LT: Yeah. I think so, yep.

TG: Yeah.

LT: Yeah, yep.

TG: That summer, the summer and winter sessions that they had on campus were really interesting to attend and be a part of. Because it was such a rich environment. And those of us who know people who have gone through it, they really did have a very fine experience.

LT: Mmm-hmm.

TG: And part of it was meeting the faculties that they were able to attract, and part of it was meeting other writers who were in the same position.

FM: Why are you referring to it in the past? Or, are you?

TG: Well, because....

FM: I missed something in between.

JR: It's still there.

FM: Did she come and go?

TG: No, no....

LT: No, it exists. It's still there.

FM: Oh, it still exists....

LT: And there's an Arizona component, isn't there something out west?

JR: There's a Mesa....

TG: No, that was another different thing, which....

LT: Oh, that's different? OK.

TG: Yeah, we actually made a proposal and it was accepted to start up a branch campus and that, unfortunately, has been closed down.

LT: Oh. OK. Alright. OK, yeah.

CB: Other final comments. Well, thank you, Les. This has been....

LT: You're most welcome.

TG: Yeah, enjoyed it.

CB:delightful, and informative! And I think some great anecdotes have been recorded.

LT: Well, I hope I didn't ramble on too much.

JR: Nope.

TG: No, no!

CB: It was wonderful. And it was you.

LT: Well.

CB: And that's what's valuable for us.

JR: Yeah.

LT: Mmm-hmm.

CB: But think about some other faculty members....

LT: I will!

CB:that would enjoy it, and also reflect a part of the institution we should capture.

LT: Sure. Excellent. I'll work on that.

CB: OK?

LT: Yeah. Excellent.

CB: And thank you, Mollie, again, for presiding with us.

Mollie: Thank you.

CB: Are we off now? I want to say something after we're off. Do you....

End of Recording.