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Rich Johnson interview, Wright State University Employee

Lewis Shupe

Wright State University - Main Campus

Rich Johnson

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WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY
Retiree Association Oral History Project

Interview date: May 3, 2012

Interviewer: Lewis Shupe
Professor Emeritus, Department of Communication

Interviewee: Rich Johnson

Lewis Shupe: This is Lew Shupe, Professor Emeritus from the Department of Communication at Wright State University. Today is May 3, 2012 and I have the pleasure of interviewing Mr. Rich Johnson, a recent retiree and a long time WSU staff member in the Human Resources Pro-Department as part of our Retiree Association Oral History Project. Rich, thank you so much for joining us today. To get started, tell us just a bit about when you first came here and how you came about to be here.

Rich Johnson: Well, I came to Wright State in 1971. I had not even heard of the place when I was at a convention of the National Association of Student Personal Administrators in 1971, looking for a job and two gentlemen who were employees of Wright State at that time, Dr. Bruce Lyon who was the Dean of Students and Dr. O...¹ Pollock was the Vice President of Student Affairs invited me in for an interview one afternoon. As I said I'd never heard of Wright State but they impressed me enough with what they were talking about. But I asked them if they were going to fill a position they were looking for which was in Housing at that point in time.

Chris Wydman²: What were their names again?

RJ: Bruce Lyon and Ed Pollock.

CW: Ed Pollock?

LS: Yeah.

RJ: Two weeks after the convention that I had gone to I was invited to an interview over in Munsee Indiana over at Ball State, as one of the other places I had, I had looked at. And because I noted that Ball State was only about a hundred miles from Wright State, I called Dr. Lyon back and asked him if he was still interested in talking with me further he and a candi- he was and so to kill two birds with one stone I interviewed with the folks at Ball State on one afternoon and the next day I was invited to Wright State.

LS: Now where were you living at that time?

¹ I could not understand the first name of Dr. Pollock, his name was verified later.

² Chris Wydman was also present at this interview.

RJ: I was in a Master's program at Michigan State.

LS: Oh.

RJ: And that was the reason I was, my first professional position in in the student services area that I wanted to be in. So to kill two birds with one stone I, did go to, to Munsee and spent the day there and learned a little bit about Ball State and then drove to Wright State in the after- later on in that afternoon, where I came on campus and was very impressed by the large number of, of big brick buildings on campus and lots of parking lots, parking lots everywhere.

LS: Well, how many buildings were there, approximately?

RJ: Oh, I'm going to say there were six or eight, big buildings at that point in time, plus of course the farm houses which were still in the area.

LS: Well, did, where did your interview take place, in which building?

RJ: Several buildings out there, in fact. When I, when I, I came that that first evening, I was invited to spend the night in the Student Union up there they had a guest suite right next to the office of Elizabeth Dixon, who was later one of my supervisors. And...I didn't know what was going on campus that much so I, I spent the evening talking with students, students in the residence halls, students in varying places, trying to learn a little bit about the campus so I will be knowledgeable the next day when I went, went in to meet with Bruce and others.

LS: So, your, your first night on campus, you stayed in?

RJ: The Student Union.

LS: The Student Union.

RJ: The Student Union that's right

LS: Well, that's a good way to get a feel of, you know, where you're going to be working.

RJ: That's right, or if I was, if I wanted to work there in that situation.

LS: Did you want to, do you think?

RJ: I think I did. But that that first night, no one told me what was, what the plan was for the next morning out there and I'd had a long drive down from Michigan State to Munsee and then over here. In fact that next morning I slept, I over slept. And I missed my first interview.

LS: You, would you interview with, with whom?

RJ: I was with Dean Lyon as I remember at that point in time.

LS: Oh, was it?

RJ: And he, told me that I shouldn't at that point in time. The number of interviews that I had during that day were several and they were often shortened by a significant event that was going on campus that that weekend. Wright State had a, a music festival which they called "Wrightstock" which happened that first weekend and almost all the people I had to deal with tha- in interviews that day were involved with "Wrightstock" also. They had significant responsibilities like, make sure there were plenty of beer kegs there, and the important number of port-a-potties that had to be around so that things could happen.

LS: Was that the first "Wrightstock"?

RJ: That was the first "Wrightstock" to my knowledge out there and it was over in the, the area around of what was called Achilles Hill at that point in time.

LS: That was called what?

RJ: Achilles Hill.

LS: Oh, yeah that's that little picnic area.

RJ: Yes, yes. But there were more than picnics that happened out there.

LS: Oh, we'll get back to Achilles Hill.

RJ: Yes. When I left the campus that afternoon, I wasn't sure that they were interested in me because they hadn't spent a whole lot of time with me because of the other responsibilities they had that day and I had come in late and I wasn't the most, impressive candidate that that they might have reached. But about a month later Bruce called me and said we want you to join us on August first and I did.

LS: Oh, that's great. You mentioned that you spent the first night and there were students that you talked to. What were some of the conversations with the students?

RJ: Well, I walked into the residence hall which was right next door to the Student Union, and one of the reasons that I wanted to talk with students was to flavor their campus. And Wright State again was a very new university in 1971, residence hall had only been open for, for one year and there were some, some real problems there at that point in time. There were people from, from downtown Dayton and other places that used to come out and cause problems for our students who lived in the residence hall because there were only about 250-300 of 'em on campus at the point in time. And even though many of them were, were dedicated students, not everyone who came to the building was that same situation.

LS: Of the 250, you're saying that was the number of students in the dorm?

RJ: In the dorm at that point in time, that's correct. That was all it was. In fact, there was such activities that caused problems out that there was a nickname for the building where I came of "Ruggerri's Druggery."

LS: Do you know where that came from?

RJ: Well, the gentleman who was my predecessor was a man named Ruggerri so it's named after, after him because there were some problems...with drugs being used on campus at that point in time.

LS: Oh my gosh. So, but the students, did they give you-

RJ: The students gave me a good flavor for the institution that night. I remember speaking to one of the young ladies that I, later hired to be a resident assistant on campus. And she spent, she was, during the hour I spent with her, she was in her residence hall room there cutting into a fetal pig, but she kept trying to make me feel comfortable but if I took the job there that there were people who that would enjoy having my leadership and that they were looking for some real positive things at Wright State at that point.

LS: So she was using her room as a lab?

RJ: She was using her room as a lab at that point in time yes.

LS: Oh my God. Who was president there, here at that time?

RJ: When I came to Wright State the president was, was un-

LS: Was it the first-

RJ: The first president Reg Golding. He lived on campus in the house down here and had a couple of large dogs which he walked over to campus with as I do remember early on in my, tenure here we had an orientation, for some of the students living in the residence hall, mostly disabled students and Reg and his wife and the two dogs came in to watch, watch over us to make sure we were doing things right. He told me later that he was impressed by me and that I had the job for at least one year.

LS: The, you mentioned the house here, are you speaking of Rockafeld House?

RJ: I'm speaking of Rockafeld House yes.

LS: Was that here at that time?

RJ: Yes, there was still, there was a place for him early on, this was again four or five years after he had joined the university.

LS: Now who else, with whom did you work?

RJ: Well, my immediate, the folks that I reported to immediately were Ken Davenport the Associate Dean of Students who was here for a long time both in Student Services and Admissions, Bruce Lyon the Dean of Students and Ed Pollock his boss there. I also had, was joined about the same time by Joann Worcestershire, who was someone you personally know I know Lew, a good friend of mine and two or three other folks who were my age, about mid-twenties Steve Simon, Patty Marks, Butch Newland, so I had a number of folks who all joined the university at about the same time and brought good talents to the university.

LS: Where was your office?

RJ: My office was in the residence hall, in the men's wing there. There were two wings of the building and I was in the men's wing at a, at a room back in the far corner there, a bigger room than most of the rest of them were out there but still nothing major out there and my office was in the front of that building.

LS: The, did you enjoy the job in the dorm?

RJ: The job in the, in the dorm was a challenging one of course because you were on duty seven days a week twenty-four hours a day. We had as I said some discipline problems that led, that led us to make the building a bit more structured than it had been in that first year. One of the things that we did was to set up a, sign-in procedure for those non-resident guests who came to join us and caused us some problems. During the day that sign-in procedure was handled by some of our own students who lived there and checked students, residents in and made them responsible for their guests.

LS: Well the, this was the first year that they used the sign-up procedure?

RJ: Yes it was. It was in that first year that we set it up for that purpose. We also had had a need of course at night to take care of guests coming in and making sure they were appropriately signed in and we took on responsibility through our Public Safety Department at that point in time of having a, one of our cops set out in front and make certain that someone was signed in. The system didn't work perfectly however because, our residents sometimes pulled tricks on the cops out in front and in fact one night I got two calls within thirty minutes from the, from the police officer who was out in front because when he would pick up the phone to call a resident to say that a new guest was there within that point was a...an amount of shaving cream which was on the phone which he would put in his ear. Our kids didn't always like the policemen who were there but we did, make the system work and created a more academic environment for if you were a student there.

LS: So you worked also so closely with security here?

RJ: We worked with security, we worked I worked in the Student Union because that first year my responsibility was also to spend some time with the Student Union staff and, and uh, the students who were on their programming board to do things that led to such things as-

LS: Who was the person in security with whom you worked? Do you remember? Was it Carl Simms?

RJ: Carl Simms was one of the folks at that point in time yes. Some of the individuals who were in the um, resident or in the public safety department are were, as I say were, were retired military folks. They had a different view than some of the people on the Student Services side of the cr-

LS: What was your official position title when you were hired?

RJ: My first position was Director of Residents and Associate...Director of Residents and...let me look here I wrote it down...

LS: Oh, that's okay.

RJ: And Program Director of the University Center.

LS: Oh so you were in pro-in records right at the beginning?

RJ: Well no that was Program Director was working with the students on activities for the campus.

LS: Now what was some, let me at least one of the most interesting experiences you had as the dorm person.

RJ: Well there are a variety of things out there. One of them that I remember most significantly was at the time I hired one of my most significant staff members Becky Summer. Becky came to us in November of 1973 and was hired by me on a Friday afternoon and told her to report the next Monday morning. Well, the next Monday morning was followed a bad night for me in the residence hall with some other activities going on that night, couple of firearms that were pulled, I didn't get a whole lot of sleep. So I slept in that morning when Becky came to the office, she waited for me to arrive and sat at her desk there until she was, one of our students came to ask her a question, that student was a, one of our disabled students a lady had some difficulties with growth, she was only about thirty inches high, Little Mary we called her. And she came into Becky's office that morning and asked some question for her. She remained there beside Becky's desk waiting for Becky to respond, Becky was able to do so apparently. But few minutes later another one of our disabled students, a young man named George, came into the office, he was a blind student, and used to having his uh, his seeing-eye dog with him, which he didn't have that day. But he came and asked Becky a question and stood at her desk there and heard the breathing of some person or some animal going on in the room. He didn't know what it was, he was used to having the dog with him, so he pushes his hand out beside him there and found Little Mary, put his hand on her head and said "Nice doggy, nice doggy."

LS: Did...What did Little Mary say?

RJ: Little Mary wasn't really pleased with George at that point in time. But they did become friends at a later point. But Becky, Becky was a little surprised by that activity and another one that happened about a half an hour later in the terms of the fact that I indicated my office was in the men's side of the residence hall out there, it was not uncommon for some of our residents to come to the office with concerns in various forms of dress or undress. A little later that morning while Becky was sitting at the desk, one of these young gentlemen came forward with a towel wrapped around his middle, came to Becky's office put his foot up on her desk and says "Got a cigarette?" Becky lived through that first day and lived through another fifteen years in the residence hall. But there were stories that she could tell you of that same time.

LS: Well, you know you get us into the area of the disabled student on campus.

RJ: Yes.

LS: Wright State was really instrumental in providing housings.

RJ: It was, there were more than 30 written disabled students on campus at that point in time when I first joined that first year couple of years. And we did a variety of things for them. Again the campus was out here in the middle of nowhere and there were, was no transportation public transportation available for those students who lived in the residence hall. So on Saturday and Sunday afternoon we borrowed the handicap van from the Disability Services Department and took those students to varying malls and things so they had access to shopping in that situation. They also did a variety of other activities on campus here and we were directly involved with them because Disabilities Services Department was actually located immediately next to my office, in that same building.

LS: So they were up there in the building?

RJ: Yes, yes and the people that ran the Disability Services, Steve Simon and Pat Marks, were good friends of mine and provided excellent service to the students over the years.

LS: I think you told me one time about a story, a group of people who were housed in the dorm.

RJ: I did tell you that, Lew. That's a story that has an interesting ring to me. In that first year we were looking at, filling the building as much as we could with students because you had to pay the bills. And so one the things that the university had done was to contract with the folks of the Lebanon Correctional Institution to bring some "furloees" we called them to campus to spend some time in the residence hall for several quarters right before they were graduating or leaving their prison locations.

LS: This was initiated by the university?

RJ: I believe the university, I can't say who initiated it but there were, the intent was to give them a education at the time they were leaving the, their incarceration, at the same time to make some money for the university and using the space we had available to us.

LS: Okay. How did you feel about that?

RJ: Well it was something new to me clearly because we weren't expecting that. But when I met the folks from the correctional institution out there, they appeared to be a good fit there for at least a couple of years, we were to try it. The first, "furloee" came to campus was a young man that I'll call Joe who came in that first day with his, his uh, parole officer and we talked about the varying things we had to do make this program work. When the parole officer left, Joe and I sat there, and talk again what we needed to do personally to make it work out there and he pointed out to me that part of the responsibilities of the that the correctional institution had done to make certain that he was going to be successful out there was when they put him in the situation they gave him a new set of cloths and a check for a hundred dollars. That was supposed to be enough to get on with his life in that situation. But he says "I don't have any way to cash the check. Is there any place on campus to cash a check?" And I thought and there was not so I indicated to him that there wasn't such place on campus but I would be happy to take him to a local bank so he could take that responsibility on for himself. That next day Joe and I met and we got in my car and we drove down to First National Bank down at Woodman and Airway at that time which was the bank that I was involved with. And we walked into the front door of the bank, Joe surprised me at that point in time when, in a rather loud voice, he said "You know this is the first bank I've been in since the one that I robbed that caused my incarceration." I'm not certain how that bank folks felt but they cashed his check and the program for "furloees" did become a success for at least a couple of years.

LS: Did that frighten you at all having this population?

RJ: I don't know that it frightened me. It was just something different I wasn't used to. My time at Michigan State and Iowa State where I was an undergraduate and graduate student, I didn't have that group to work with. I didn't have the large number of disabled students to work with, this was a truly different place to work but it was also an exciting place to work at that time.

LS: Good. Well, how were the parolees accepted, by the other students?

RJ: The other students on, in the residence hall had no problem with this. They were very accepting. The people who came to live in Hamilton Hall as it was later called...were often much more open, receptive and even the staff was on campus. They were willing to make things work, for those folks, and we did I think a fairly good job in that early period.

LS: You mentioned it wasn't named Hamilton Hall at that time, right?

RJ: When I came it was simply named Residence Hall.

LS: Residence Hall?

RJ: And about ten years later as a part of a process to recognize some things on campus, the building was named Hamilton Hall after a, an underground river in the area is what I understood.

I was gone from the university at the time that it was, it happened. But I believe that it was named after an underground river.

LS: So it was ten years after you arrived it was Hamilton?

RJ: Yes.

CW: Is that the point that it became an honors dormitory?

RJ: It did not become an honors dorm at that point in time. It was, that was somewhat later also because again we're talking almost forty years ago now.

LS: Just, before we leave the felons of the, the parolees, how long were they there?

RJ: Oh, probably a year, year in a half.

LS: Oh they were?

RJ: And at that point in time, I was gone because I'd finished my tenure here and they decided that I was too expensive and it went to a grad assistant out there. And Ken Davinpart who was the Associate Dean as I say of students at that point in time was responsible for it. And we had made, we as the university had made some decisions that this probably wasn't the place we wanted to be for the long term. But it met our needs and the needs of the Lebanon Correction Institution for the period of time.

LS: So, so you left the university, did you leave the university?

RJ: I left the university in 1973 and went out in the real world. I spent about five years in the real world selling insurance and investments for a major investment firm in the area and then I returned to the university in May of 1978.

LS: And you returned to what position?

RJ: I returned to an entirely different position at that point in time. I actually was on campus one day to visit a couple of my friends who were still working here when I found out there was a position open in the Human Resources Department, which was called Personnel Administration at that point in time. It was a position which had some responsibilities for, insurance and also, the kind of benefits which the employees get here at Wright State. And I applied for that position, interviewed with several individuals including Mrs. Judith Niemen who was the Director of Personnel at that point in time. And she decided that I was the only one that she knew of the candidates who had insurance background because I was selling insurance and doing these investment things at that point in time and some university experience also because I had been at the university for those two years in 1971 through 1973. So she hired me and I came to the university in May of '78 and stayed until December 31 of 2009.

LS: Okay, so you were now that in records?

RJ: I was now in Human Resources.

LS: Human Resources, okay.

RJ: Again most of the work was work with benefits. But that initial time out there I did some things out with, such things as workers compensation, property and casualty insurance, and almost anything you could think of at that point in time which didn't fall any place else because the university did not want to hire large numbers of employees in areas that weren't going to be fully filled at a later point. So my early years out there were, as I say, with three or four hats in Human Resources.

LS: Okay, tell us about those two or three hats, would you?

RJ: Oh, as I say, my responsibility was for benefits, was the most significant responsibility, I had probably 1500 to 2000 students or employees who lived, who were working at the university at that point in time who needed health insurance, life insurance, retirements benefits and a variety of things. So my responsibility was to make certain the university provided those kinds of benefits for its employees. In addition to that I dealt with things which protected the university in Property and Casualty Insurance, including when the university's med school started up buying medical malpractice coverage for the physicians and the med school. And I also dealt with student insurance, students who wanted health insurance because they didn't have it through their parents or their parents and employer out there. Also look through the university for the something in that second year or so when I came back to the university I was added the responsibility for student insurance as well as for athletic insurance. I bought the coverages for our athletes and our cheerleaders. In fact I had to watch over our cheerleaders to make sure they weren't more than three levels high with their activities out there because we ended up with some students who fell and hurt themselves in that situation. So, my responsibility was for all those areas on the student side as well as the staff side.

LS: So you really did wear many hats.

RJ: I did have a lot of hats. It kept my head covered so I still have a little hair left.

LS: Now, who was your boss? Was Judy Neiman your boss?

RJ: Judy Neiman was my boss in those first four or five years. And then when she took a different position with the university working in the area of union negotiations and things, I spent about six months as an interim director of that operation myself and then several other folks were hired after that point in time.

LS: And then where was your office at this time?

RJ: My office was at that time in Allyn Hall on the second floor, where I could look out at the mote outside there which was always a beautiful sight on, in the quad area there. And I was in the second floor of Allyn Hall for most of the time I was at the university after that point until we moved to another location and that was at that time I retired and that was in um...

LS: Did you have much trouble formulating and organizing all these jobs, the records?

RJ: I would say no but others would say differently I think. My office was noted for being one of those where there were lots of boxes, in fact more boxes than there were space. It was often full and I have been criticized but also laughed at by a number of our staff members in saying I could always find something but they couldn't understand it, how it could happen because of the amount of stuff I had in my office.

LS: You were known by almost everyone at Wright State. Everyone knew you, right?

RJ: The fact that I came back in 1978 and remained until 200... or in 1999 there, 2009 there I'm sorry, meant that I had a chance to work with a variety of folks out there and I feel very fortunate that many of them still remember me today and when I'm on campus I still get a variety of folks who wave at me, give me a call and say that they appreciated the services we were able to provide over those twenty plus years.

LS: Well, you were known for being very helpful.

RJ: I've always tried to be.

CW: And you sure went out with a bang. 2009 there was a lot of that going on.

RJ: There were lots going on at that point in time, yes.

LS: Whom did you move to the other location with records? Do you remember?

RJ: Oh, we moved into University Hall, must have been about five or six years before I retired at that point in time, was the time we moved into University Hall. We were housed just down the hall from the president and the provost, who watched over us always to make sure we were doing the right thing.

LS: That president being?

RJ: Dr. Golding at that point in time.

LS: Oh, Dr. Golding?

RJ: Goldenberg I should say, Goldenberg.

LS: Oh, Goldenberg.

RJ: Dr. Goldenberg is the...

LS: You know there was...

RJ: There was a Golding...

LS: There was Golding, Goldenberg.

RJ: Fred White, a variety of folks that I had the pleasure of working with over the years.

LS: Do you ever have any real crisis in your job?

RJ: Oh, there were several things which certainly caused us to think there was a crisis out there. We had a couple of students who died during the period that I was in the residence hall. One who just fell over one day in the residence hall, another group of students who died in a place where they shouldn't have been in one of the classroom buildings up in an area where they shouldn't have been but, those kinds of things were often judies crises but we were able to handle them.

LS: Is there... One of the students, is reputed to have died in the library. Is there any truth to that?

RJ: There...I do remember who died from falling from the fourth floor down to the first floor of the stairwell there. That was a very unfortunate situation and caused us some difficulties for that period of time, yes.

LS: The...When I asked you earlier about a crisis, were there, what could have been one of your most frustrating jobs, also was a sense of humor, you know? You've always had a sense of humor.

RJ: We had to have a sense of humor. There was just a variety of things we dealt with. The situation with the "furloee" clearly is one that I hadn't planned for in any situation, in that situation. Even in Human Resources over the years there have been people who've come to me with a variety of questions, concerns that they thought that only I could answer. Probably weren't always correct but we tried to provide that kind of service out there with a smile and the ability to handle their needs as it looked at their own family situations, their potential retirements and a variety of other things like that.

LS: The um...Who was the last president with whom you worked before you retired?

RJ: Well, our current president, Dr. Hopkins was the last president with whom I worked.

LS: Uh, so you've seen Dr. Kagress?

RJ: I worked with Dr. Kagress. I worked with Fred White when he was the interim president at that time. Back when I joined the university back in 1971, Fred White was greeting every employee personally. And I had the chance to spend about 20 minutes with Fred White in that very first couple of months that I was here. A very knowledgeable individual and one from whom university should be very grateful for all that he's done for us over the years. But then I worked with Dr. Kagress, and Dr. Goldenberg, and recently with Dr. Hopkins.

LS: Was it difficult getting the medical school up and running and secure?

RJ: There certainly were a variety of things that were involved there but they were mostly done by other folks besides those in Human Resources. My responsibility was most significantly just buying that initial medical malpractice coverage to make certain that if there were problems that arose from the kinds of work they were doing in the med school they were appropriately covered by professional liability coverage.

LS: The, over the years what do you think have been some of the biggest changes for Wright State?

RJ: Clearly that fact that we have a significantly greater student population that lives on campus or immediately adjacent to campus right now has created a major difference for the university than it was when I came in '71. In '71 as I say there were less than 300 students that lived on campus out there. I fact I still remember that first day I was in the office, I got a call from a local developer who was looking at buying some land across the street. And his question to me was how many students did we have on-campus at that time? And when I told him it was less than 300 students he was not pleased because he figured he couldn't put in the particular building he was going to put in or whatever it was at that point in time. But now with all those things which are across from the university and the mall and those areas we have a significantly different kind of campus environment, I believe. I was very fortunate over the years to be able to work with the Athletic Department and student athletes. We've gone a long way since I saw my first basketball game over in the gym at Stemmins High School back in 1971 to the Nutter Center today and the variety of activities that go there.

LS: Well, you're skipping the gym which is now the bookstore.

RJ: I cannot skip to the gym which is now the bookstore. Clearly I was also there for the first game back in 1972 or '73 I guess it was, where we played at that point in time there were just chairs on the floor because there were no bleachers. So, after the first few games out there, Mike Cuzach, Director of Athletics, was able to come up with a mechanism to fund bleachers and that specific location for basketball was a very good place to play with about 2700 or 2800 folks who came and supported athletics at that point in time.

LS: And that was always filled.

RJ: It was always filled I think a great degree because the coach we had at that point in time, Ralph Underhill, Jim Brown and his staff out there brought in some quality players. We have students who are still involved with the university. I saw one of them the other night at the baseball game here, Bob Grodey, he was one of our stars back in the '70s out there who went on and became a star in both baseball and basketball at the national level. We were able to bring a variety of activities to campus that changed the view which the folks in the Dayton area had of Wright State University. It wasn't just a small college sitting out in the middle of nowhere, it was a major university and is that today.

LS: Well, from what I remember, that gym if you call it a gym is now the bookstore...

RJ: The bookstore, yes.

LS: ... was one of the real focal points on campus.

RJ: It was very much so. The other teams that came to play us, in fact, did not like to play us there because the number of people who were, had season tickets there and were there every week, for every game, the group of students who were known as the Raider Rowdys out there made it a difficult job to play in that particular location because it was always strongly supportive of the Wright State teams. And we went through some very strong periods out there till we won the National Championship Division 2 in 1973. I was fortunate enough to be present in fact for that game, and the people on campus supported that team. Even President Kagress who was there at that point in time with a picture that is still shown around here, who is jumping around the floor afterwards with a wig on, a green wig.

LS: Well, so you were, you saw the transition from a commuter to a live on campus?

RJ: Much more a live on campus, yes. As I said, my prior experiences had been in residential colleges, Iowa State University and Michigan State University, this was a much different place for me to come to, but it grew to be my home, a lot of good friends, a lot of good folks and a lot of activities which I still enjoy.

LS: Can, do you have maybe one of the happiest times on campus, that you can remember?

RJ: Well I would say one of the happiest times, I'm, not related to campus was certainly that year in '73 when we won the National Championship.

CW: Was it '73 or '83?

RJ: '83 I should say, '83. It was the same year as my...

LS: Oh, that's right.

CW: You said '73.

RJ: I said '73. It is '83 because it was the year in which I got married and my wife and I rode with Corty Wise who is now a retired business prof out here but is still the announcer for men's basketball. He and his wife had just gotten married in the same month before we did and he drove us to a National Championships in a little Corver. We went up and spent the weekend with them and we were able to support the team winning that way. There is still a picture over in the Nutter Center on the wall there which shows my wife and I standing in the front row with our mouths open and cheering at that point in time. I've always enjoyed that. There are a variety of other activities that I've enjoyed on campus here including many of the theater kinds of programs that I've enjoyed seeing. But I am a sports officianato and I do enjoy seeing a lot of things that happen there.

LS: Now you're still very active even though you're retired on campus?

RJ: I still try to do whatever I can. I have had season tickets for basketball since probably 1979 or '80 or something like that, so I still go to basketball games and support the teams, bring a number of my friends and my grandchildren with me in fact who enjoy being present at a lot of these activities. I'm still involved with as you know the WSU Retirees Association working with them and a state organization called The Ohio Council of Higher Education Retirees which represents all the state universities as it relates to planning for the future and making certain that our retirees receive the quality benefits they deserve to have.

LS: Well is there anything that we've missed that you would like to share that you think is really significant in you and Wright State?

RJ: Oh, I don't know about me, but about Wright State there is certainly a variety of good people here that I've worked with over the years and I would say that the university is the place it is right now because of those good folks. People like yourself and others folks who work in the Retirees Association right now, a number of students who have gone onto greater things. We've been fortunate with the quality of people that have been here as staff, students and retirees.

LS: And you know what's interesting, you knew all of their records, didn't you?

RJ: I knew more than I know now yes.

LS: You know, you could write a book.

RJ: I'll write things every now and then to try to remember them because I'm getting to the point where I forget more.

LS: Oh huh, and, so you're keeping a journal in a sense?

RJ: I still keep some things down yes. I save a lot of pictures and enjoy doing that yes.

LS: Okay, well we'll have to tap into that. (Addresses Chris) Do you have any other questions?

CW: No, that's all.

LS: Rich this is really a pleasure to talk with you. You mentioned Becky Summers and I knew Becky and she was such a delight.

RJ: Becky was an important part of the housing office for more than 15 years and in fact I hired her a second time when I went into Human Resources because she was a quality employee and provided a lot of service to our staff and our students.

LS: Okay, just in summary then, what would, if you could describe Wright State when you came here with one word what would it be?

RJ: Growing.

LS: If you could describe Wright State at this point in time, what would it be?

RJ: Quality.

LS: Quality. Well that's nice. Rich it's been such a pleasure to interview you and I'm sure that we will have other things that you'll want to add.

CW: Okay.

LS: But it's a pleasure having you interviewed today.

RJ: Thank you.