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WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY
Retirees Association Oral History Project
Interview with Lee Guild

Interview Information

Interview date: March 31, 2021

Interviewer: Kathy Morris (KM), Associate VP for Student Affairs, Retired

Interviewee: Lee Guild (LG), Events Coordinator, Nutter Center (Retired)

Interview Transcript

Kathy Morris: Okay. Greetings, everyone. This is Kathy Morris, former Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, and I'm current Chair of the Historical Preservation Committee for Wright State's Retirees Association. Today is Wednesday, March 31, 2021, and I am really, really excited for this interview today, because I'm interviewing Lee Guild, the former Event Coordinator for the Nutter Center, who has a really very long history here, and this is going to be a lot of fun. We have about an hour or so for the interview.

Lee Guild: Okay, well, [we'll get going] there.

KM: Okay, so we'll—

LG: Thanks, Chris!

KM: Thanks, Chris. So, we're going to begin with some information about your background.

LG: Okay.

KM: Where you came from—

LG: Okay.

KM: And how you even found yourself at Wright State University.

LG: Okay.

KM: And part of the reason I wanted to talk with you is because you [had] a bird's eye view [for a] really, really, really, really long time, so I'm excited.

LG: Thank you.

KM: So, let's start.

LG: I graduated from Fairborn in June of '69, and I decided that I wanted to work at Wright State. I actually wanted to work at the base, but Wright State was, like, okay, I'll go there first for a little bit. So, in July of '69, I started working here. I failed my typing test, so I was very disappointed, but then they gave me another chance. Thank you. And so, then I started working, and, you know, it was very small at that time. There were four buildings, plus Hamilton Hall, plus they had just started, I think, the P.E. building.

KM: So, the University Center had been there?

LG: They call it University Center now, but we called it the P.E. building.

KM: Well, [it was] the Student Union.

LG: Yes.

KM: University Center, then the P.E. building.

LG: Then the P.E. building.

KM: Then it became the Student Union.¹

LG: Yeah, it was just in those phases.

KM: Yeah.

LG: And I started in Admissions, which was on the first floor of Allyn Hall, which was right by the Registrar's Office. And it was all on the first floor. They had windows so you could come up and talk to us, talk to the Registrar's Office. There was – [Gloria] was at a desk in the middle of the floor by the door. She was the greeter, the guest services person, and so she would answer the phone and answer questions. She would greet people. Brage Golding was the president. He lived in the house on campus, and he had a husky dog, and that husky dog would come to the door and bark. So, Gloria would let him in – and the president's office was right there, too – so then she'd let him in to go see the president. Sometimes, I let him in. I don't remember what his name is, but you'd hear this dog barking, somebody's like, "Go get the dog."

KM: So, it would run up the hill from Rockafield House, loose?

LG: Yeah, he was loose. He was loose, and he'd just come to the door. He wanted to see his dad, I guess.

¹ Kathy gestures here to indicate that University Center and the P.E. building were connected to form the Student Union at a later date.

KM: Oh, my God.

LG: And that's how it was. It was that laid back, and that – you know, everybody was for everybody, and we all had the same purpose. We were all here for the students.

KM: Tell me what your impressions were of the students you were interacting with.

LG: They were the same age as I was, which was kind of like, okay, these guys are going on and they're going to get their degrees, and here I am working. But I was a young mom and stuff, so I just decided this [was] – but it was easier to interact with them. In fact, my optician, when I first went to him one time, he said, "I know you." I was like, "You do?" He [was] like, "You were that girl in the Admissions Office we used to come and say hi to." And now he's an ophthalmologist or something, and it would just crack me up. So, there was a lot of interaction with the students. We felt like we needed to help them as much as possible. You know, back then things weren't on [a] computer. They had a piece of paper to register. Half the time, they didn't have all the stuff they needed. We used to – when it was on mass registration day, we used to all go out in the hall and help them, like, "Oh, you're in the wrong line, come here," because it's so frustrating to stand there and then get up to the window and you don't have what you need. Think about the driver's license bureau.

KM: Sure.

LG: You know, it's the same kind of thing, and these were kids, and they were like – they just needed a lot of help to get through and do stuff.

KM: So, was Admissions and Registrar and Bursar all in that middle section?

LG: The Admissions was, like, if you walk into Allyn Hall on the side where the president's offices used to be, you walk in, and you make a right, and Admissions was right here. And then right in the whole middle—

KM: That whole center.

LG: Was the Registrar's Office and the Bursar's Office.

KM: And that was still there until the '80s.

LG: Yeah.

KM: Because I remember all of that very clearly.

LG: Yeah. They had a lot of people working in there. [I] used to go help them sometimes, and they're a little grouchy. One of my bosses said, "That's okay. When you get their age, you're

going to be grouchy, too.” I was like, “Okay.” You know, I was just this young seventeen-year-old kid, and I was like, “Yes, ma’am, yes, ma’am.” And they were like, “No, do it this [way].” Like, okay. You had a [de-bolt] that kept the records, and you had to push a button, and I was terrified of it because it would go around like this, you know, and then you had to find the files and stuff. [I mean], again, we were all there for the same purpose, and I think I told you that story about – somebody in Admissions got sick. [It] was fall quarter. We didn’t have the applications all put together. You had to pay [twenty-five dollars] by check. You had to have your transcript. You had to have your SAT scores and an application. So, we had just a big mess everywhere, and so – I don’t know if [Ken Davenport] was [working with us] in Admissions then or not, but we decided that if we didn’t get this done, we wouldn’t be able to start fall quarter, because these kids [didn’t] know if they were admitted or not. [On] the first floor again, there was a big lounge that had vending machines—

KM: Was that by the Allyn Hall lounge?

LG: Mhmm.

KM: Okay. That was the lounge you were talking about, where they ended up putting in all their mailboxes eventually.

LG: Yes, exactly. Exactly. We used to go stick stuff in mailboxes.

KM: Right.

LG: You’re exactly right. And so, we just gathered up everything, everything we could find, and we just kind of put it like – checks here, transcripts here, folders here. And somebody would yell out a name and then be like, “Well, I’ve got the check,” or, “I’ve got this.” You know, we got it all together and [got] those students submitted. And that, for me – it was early on in my career here, so that, for me, was the basis of how I felt about this university. I felt like we were working together for the single purpose of taking care of the students, and it didn’t matter – years later, when we were talking about stuff, I said I kind of felt like when people started asking you in a department, “What’s your banner number?” that things started falling apart, because up until then, it didn’t matter who did what, we weren’t [charging] back for any reason for cost purposes, and it was just you just stepped up and helped.

KM: Back in the days when every person really was that individual, and we weren’t encumbered by all the wonderful, now, technology—

LG: Right.

KM: That has made so many more things easy, but yet has made it, I think, more challenging, perhaps, to really get to know who people are.

LG: I agree. I agree, because you didn't – it's easier to say something on email that's not good than it is to – we always just picked up the phone and talked to people. You know, you have a question about something, well, I'll call so-and-so, they'll know the answer to it. And everybody wanted to help. Nobody would be like, "No, I'm too busy," or—

KM: "That's not my job."

LG: "That's not my job." Exactly. I hated to say that, but that's true. You know, a lot of people now, they're like, "That's not my job. I'm not doing it. I don't get paid enough money." That kind of stuff. But back then, it was all the same thing. We had a push just to – let's help these students. I remember I had one student who was standing in line, and he just had a breakdown. He just started yelling, and he's like, "I can't do this! I can't stand it!" So, I just took him, and we took him in a room, and we talked to him. He just needed some water. You know, he just – and I think that's how a lot of the students felt [because] this was their first experience with it.

KM: Yeah, and it was a very, very different environment then.

LG: Mhmm, very different environment.

KM: So, that was the very last year of the '60s.

LG: Yeah.

KM: And what do you remember most about Wright State's environment in the early '70s? I mean, the Vietnam War was still in full swing. There were shootings at Kent State. There were all other kinds of dramas going on. What else do you remember about students at that time here?

LG: They were very – you know, we had the quad right there, so they could always get up and talk on the quad. So, I don't even think back then you had to schedule a time. They just started talking. And sometimes it was a little scary. You know, Kent State happened, and then our students were very activated by that and very loud about it, and it just was a different time. I don't think that the university was impacted by it that much. I don't even remember having – you know, in the last few years we've had the Presidential Lecture series, and we've had people come to speak to us about a variety of things, and I don't even remember having that. I don't think we were organized enough to have, let's do something for these students so they have an outlet, so that [rather] than just standing on a soapbox, they can – but there were a lot of signs, and of course, I was the same age, so it impacted me. I had the same feelings they did, but yet I was working for a university. You know, and I think a lot of times, too, people thought, well, they're – we were bureaucrats, you know. But you're here to learn. You're supposed to go to class. And there was a lot of people who didn't go to class and just kind of did whatever they wanted to do.

KM: Do you think some of that, apart from the sign of the times, was the environment at the university? Its lack of history and established student life components?

LG: I agree totally, because we didn't have that many. It was a commuter school, so the students came and then left and went on to jobs, or [homes], or whatever they needed to do. So, there was not a cohesive atmosphere that I think you get – of course, I've only ever worked here – but I think that you get a cohesive atmosphere when you go to actually live on the campus, and you go to the Greek house, or you go to whatever thing that you've joined, you know, that kind of thing, and I didn't see that with our students. Mostly they came, took their classes, and left. I think the university still has that, because it's always been a commuter school, and I mean, I think it's hard. If you look through the years of athletics, it's hard to get these students motivated and on board with certain things, because they [just have] other things they have to do.

KM: Right, well, you're talking to someone whose career was in student affairs.

LG: I know.

KM: So, yeah, I remember how challenging that was—

LG: It is.

KM: And how things have evolved over time, and certainly today's current situation has made that even more difficult, but it has been that way for everybody [and] every campus right now. Challenging for everyone.

LG: I agree. And that's why it's so important to have, like the area that you were in, student life and student involvement and just things to get them excited to be on the campus and taking – you know, getting them invigorated by it and interacting, and – because it's so important to have that basis. You need that, those skills, when you go out into the real world. It's just really important to have that foundation, and I think we're missing some of that.

KM: Well, Admissions. Critical entry point to the university. How long did you stay in the Admissions Office?

LG: I stayed in Admissions for a couple years, and then they developed University Division, which [did all] the academic advising for the incoming students, and that was – because it was – we had new advisors who were just so different and just loved the students, and so, we had a lot of interaction with them, because you had to go see them. You had to have a signature on your registration form. And then, after I did that, I went to – then they moved down back in Allyn Hall – it was really the connector – and they [still] called it University Division. But at that point, I left to go work – because I got married – and I went to go work in anesthesiology at Miami Valley Hospital for a while.

KM: So, you were a Wright State employee for anesthesiology – the School of Medicine’s component—

LG: [*Nods*] the School of Medicine.

KM: But you were off campus.

LG: I was off campus in the Valley, and worked side-by-side with Miami Valley employees.

KM: That had to be really interesting.

LG: It was very interesting, because the anesthesiologists also did all of the anesthesia for the [floor] where you gave birth.

KM: Oh, the OBGYN?

LG: For the OBGYN. I couldn’t think of the name of it, thank you, yeah. So, they were just really interesting physicians, and I had never worked for a physician before, but I did that because I got married, and they didn’t want [Ben] and me to work in the same office, basically. So, I was like, “Okay, I’ll go apply for this job.” And then you had to have, like, medical terminology and all that kind of stuff, so I learned all that real quick, but it was very interesting because you were like this little island in the middle of Miami Valley Hospital. They have their own procedures about how they do stuff.

KM: Wow.

LG: Yeah.

KM: And I’m thinking to myself, so, the Medical School had to be how young at that point?

LG: Very young.

KM: I mean, it must have been in its infancy.

LG: It was, and these people were trailblazers because they—

KM: So, you’re, like, blazing trails all over the place?

LG: Well, not me, but they – not me.

KM: But you were part of that earliest, you know, staff support.

LG: Yeah.

KM: And the School of Medicine has quite a reputation of being integrated into the hospitals – not just one, but many – around the Dayton area, and very intentionally doing that. What an interesting experience. So, every day you were driving down to the Valley.

LG: I rode the bus, because it was just – I could walk out and take the bus, so I just rode seven all the way down to the Valley and seven back. And that was interesting, too, but it was just – I was kind of overwhelmed at first with the actual physical aspect of a hospital, because there's so much going on all the time. I had my own office, and my docs had their own office, and actually, some of them were on the OBGYN floor. It got to be personal, like they would invite me to their house, you know, for dinner, so I really got to meet them. I had to do transcription, because the chair of the department was on the Morbidity and Mortality Committee. So, they discussed death every week, you know, this kind of thing, plus he was from Wales, so he had a British accent. So, when I'm listening to him – "aluminium." I was like, "What the heck is aluminium?" It's aluminum. You know, it was like – so, that for me, it was a challenge, and I liked the challenge, and it was good. And actually, I was pregnant with my second son and delivered at the Valley, and everybody who worked with me was in the delivery room with me.

KM: Were there residents that you were interacting with, too, as well as medical – just students who were doing rotations?

LG: Yeah, and they would come in, and they would, you know, want to talk to the chair and talk to these other physicians, and some of these physicians that I worked with were highly regarded. They had been in anesthesia for a long time, and just very, you know, up the gate. I had to – you know, the mail came through, and I grabbed all this stuff. So, I learned a lot, and some of it was scary.

KM: I'm sure that it was.

LG: Because anesthesia – I didn't realize this, but you know, you always worry about how good is my surgeon, but if you don't have a good anesthesiologist, you could die.

KM: That's one way of looking at it.

LG: It's like, okay, I didn't really realize, you know, how much – how important – we had CRNAs, who are not doctors, but they're registered nurses, and they were excellent, too, so it was fun.

KM: So, Wright State's Nursing program, was it – [was there] Nursing at the time?

LG: Yeah, Nursing wasn't there. These people were registered through different kinds of things.

KM: Okay, okay.

LG: Training for anesthesia.

KM: Okay.

LG: And then what I did was – because I had Josh, my second child, I wanted to work part time.

KM: Okay.

LG: So, then I ended up on campus, because—

KM: And that – do you remember what year you came back to campus?

LG: He was born in '81, so I think I came back about probably '82 or '83, and I got a part-time job in Human Resources.

KM: See, I came in '83.

LG: Okay, so you remember—

KM: In the beginning of d'83.

LG: Judy [Nyman] was in charge of H.R. That was a wild trip, too. We had a lot of people who really wanted to do the right thing, but we were doing a lot of hiring, and I know at one point when I was in there, we had a layoff, and that was probably the first layoff we'd ever had for classified staff. And it was hard.

KM: Mid-eighties.

LG: [*Nods*].

KM: Around the time of the savings and loan crisis, and there were layoffs as I remember.

LG: And the state does it differently if you're a classified employee.

KM: Correct.

LG: You have to go by—

KM: The bumping process.

LG: Yes, and it was horrible for people, just horrible. We had to post it, so everybody knew who was going to get bumped, and knew who they were bumping, and people who bumped people went into a situation in an office where, you know, people that were working there, they really didn't want that person. They wanted the person who got bumped, obviously, and it [just] was very hard for a long time to get that to calm down. People were [upset]—

KM: Sure. Well, there was still very much a feeling of family, and the place still felt fairly small at that point in time.

LG: Right, exactly.

KM: And even though the state system for classified employees mandated that things needed to be done a certain way, it didn't make it any easier for the people that had to follow the process.

LG: It was awful. And we had faculty who were like, "Nope, we're not going to do this. We don't care what the state says. We're keeping this person." You know, and it's like, you realize we have to go by state rules. [They were] like, "Nope." So, it turned into a contentious situation sometimes, and, you know, on a poor staff member, the one who was being bumped and the one who was going in, it was awkward all the way around for everybody.

KM: Yeah.

LG: It was hard.

KM: So, H.R., you ended up – you're back in Allyn Hall.

LG: Yeah, back in Allyn Hall.

KM: Everything was in Allyn Hall.

LG: Allyn Hall.

KM: I remember that clearly.

LG: Yes.

KM: I remember going up there for different things.

LG: Yes, it was always in Allyn Hall.

KM: So, you were part-time in H.R.

LG: Right.

KM: For how long?

LG: I did that for a couple of years, and I thought I was losing my mind. I was like, I don't—

KM: You need to get out of here.

LG: And so, there was a position – and this is where my life turned, kind of – in H.P.R., that was part-time typist. And that's all I wanted, because the thing in H.R., the reason I thought I was losing my [mind], is, like, my position, which was supposed to be the receptionist, turned into a position that was like, okay, you're going to review applications. You're going to test people. You're going to send people for job interviews. [It] just blossomed into more than I wanted, twenty hours a week just so I could just type something and go home and play with my kids, so—

KM: And you were taking on a much larger administrative responsibility.

LG: Exactly, and it was like – plus—

KM: Interesting that you were in H.R. doing all of that.

LG: Yeah.

KM: Not getting paid, probably, for doing all of that.

LG: No, no.

KM: They probably had you at a pay grade that was like, what? At the—

LG: Just at the bottom.

KM: [Oh] goodness.

LG: You know, because you start out a receptionist, and Judy [just liked] me, and she's like, "Yeah, and you're going to do this, and you're going to do this," and you're just like, "Okay, okay, okay, okay." So, but then it launched me to – and H.P.R. was in what I call the P.E. building.

KM: Well, it was the P.E. building.

LG: Yeah.

KM: Right.

LG: And so, that was a twenty hour a week typist position, and I did it for a long time, and then it turned into something else, and it was actually when the Nutter Center was built. H.P.R. had to move to the Nutter Center.

KM: So, you worked with [Jeff].

LG: Yeah. I worked with a lot of people, and it was an interesting – you know, we liked being in that building, but then we had to go to the Nutter Center because the state was giving money – you had to have an academic unit in the Nutter Center in order to get thirty-five million dollars for the building. So, against our – we didn't want to go. We had to go. So, we got to go up there and design our office areas on the third floor. Athletics was on one end, and we were on the other end, and so our faculty designed their labs. They designed – you know, we had classrooms on the second floor for our phys. ed. classes, what we used to call [BPE].² We had them in the gym.

KM: I remember that.

LG: Mhmm. Plus, we did total fitness lifestyle for faculty and staff.

KM: T.F.L.

LG: T.F.L., exactly.

KM: And what I remember clearly about that time – because the P.E. building became part of the Student Union, and I was the director of the Student Union.

LG: Yeah. Yeah, see?

KM: At age thirty-five, thirty-six.

LG: I know!

KM: [I mean], it was the most bizarre thing, to be involved in a construction and renovation project, without a vice president at the time.

LG: It's a lot, [I know].

KM: We were minus someone. So, we were flying by the seat of our pants, too. But what I remember so clearly is that the responsibilities for certain facilities that were H.P.R.- and Athletics-related kind of fell onto Bill Shepherd's shoulders.

LG: Right.

KM: Because he was – we were physically there. And so, we had to deal with that.

LG: [Right.]

² This is a guess based on how it sounds – maybe “Bachelor of Physical Education”?

KM: And then with the H.P.R. department and in some cases Athletic components, and I remember that was kind of bumpy for part of that.

LG: It was hard, and everybody was like, “Okay, we need to have hands on, but we’re not sure what we’re doing with this.” Like, we taught swimming classes—

KM: That’s right.

LG: So, we were in that building—

KM: That’s right. At five o’clock in the morning.

LG: Trying to teach classes, and then there were some other things, too, until we got acclimated. And actually, the segue for that is that when we moved to the Nutter Center, our class times did not coincide with the rest of the university. Classes usually are Tuesday-Thursday or Monday-Wednesday-Friday.

KM: Right.

LG: I don’t think Education does Friday classes, but okay. So, and they would run from, like, 10:15 to 11:15. You can’t get from Allyn Hall to the Nutter Center—

KM: That’s right.

LG: From your English class to your yoga class.

KM: That’s right.

LG: We had to reschedule everything, and Dr. Frederick – Steve Frederick – was the Chair, and we would throw it out on a table like a puzzle. You know, it was like, okay, what if we put this here? What if we put this here? How much time does that give them? Because students originally didn’t want to come, because they didn’t want to lose their parking place.

KM: Right.

LG: They had to drive—

KM: That’s right.

LG: And then, the shuttle ran, but it was—

KM: Did they have a shuttle that was specifically for Athletics/H.P.R., so students could get into a—

LG: Nope. We worked with them, and eventually they did [change it a bit], [you know, because] even after they took their H.P.R. class, they had to get back up here—

KM: [Sure.]

LG: To make it somewhere else.

KM: Right, it wasn't like there was an easy walk—

LG: No.

KM: To get from there to there.

LG: No. And they talked about building through the woods, and they were, you know, Zink Road, and so we didn't – nothing ever developed with that.

KM: Oh gosh, yes. The sacred woods.

LG: We finally decided – because you were talking about the [proponents] – we had one building where there's Athletics—

KM: Yeah.

LG: H.P.R., Campus Rec. So, we had all these things, so we used to meet on Thurs day afternoons. We developed this thing, it was an Excel spreadsheet, and we called it the Grid. So, the gentlemen's agreement was: H.P.R. would use the gym in the morning, Athletics in the day, and Campus Rec in the evening. So, we all put in our information, like, okay, we have Aerobics. We have this. We have this. So, like, at 1:15, then the gym turned over to Athletics for practices, because even though – you know, softball and baseball, they start practicing before the snow melts. So, they were in the gym. And then, Campus Rec would use it in the evening. But there's also one more component. The Nutter Center has events.

KM: Yes. Oh, Lee, you know, I was thinking about how many things we probably were, you know, connected to by virtue of our jobs.

LG: Yes.

KM: But you know, if we had been working on another public university campus, they would've all had their own facilities for all of those units.

LG: Exactly. Exactly. Because we look at that, years ago.

KM: Yes.

LG: Cleveland State—

KM: Yep.

LG: And other universities, they had their own student union. They had, you know—

KM: Their recreation facilities.

LG: Exactly.

KM: They had their athletic facilities, and they had their training courses or things that were specifically for curriculum-related—

LG: Absolutely.

KM: Right.

LG: And our jobs would've tied together because we would have been supporting each other in terms of—

KM: Right.

LG: Doing what's best for the students. And we used that Grid for years.

KM: I know you did.

LG: [Everybody] swore by it.

KM: I know you did. Well, the pool was the biggest challenge because – and I know people were in there at five in the morning.

LG: Yeah.

KM: We had the Raider Swim Club that was renting space.

LG: Yes, exactly. That was the other thing—

KM: That's right. There were rentals because we were all having to regenerate revenue.

LG: Right.

KM: So, there was Raider Swim, and then there were courses, and then there was Athletics using it for training and meets, and then there was this time carved out for the recreational swimmer who wanted to go and put some laps in.

LG: Yes. It was just—

KM: Yeah, and it was a pool that, by the time the Nutter Center was built, was already a [dated] pool—

LG: Right.

KM: Because nobody was building a pool that was those dimensions. They were [Olympic sized], and they—

LG: Yeah, Olympic-sized natatorium.

KM: Right. Right.

LG: And that's what – I think the university looked at that, but then the funds weren't there, and I don't think the support was there from maybe the university per se. So, yeah, [that] was hard. It was hard to do all these things in this small space, and we – I won't say it wasn't without fault, because there were [mess-ups], but there were also people fussing about it all the time, too.

KM: Oh, I know. I know.

LG: You know, students would show up and think they could use the weight room and there was a class in there. Just, people were all of the sudden – [Winter Guard] would show up in the gym, and Athletics was trying to do soccer practice, and it was just—

KM: Oh, gosh.

LG: You know, people fought all the time, and everybody would just pull out that Grid and say – and we—

KM: Do you remember who the representatives were? Who were the players that were handling that – who were the first people involved with the Grid?

LG: The Grid was Steve Frederick, who was the Chair of H.P.R., I met with him on Thursdays; John Cox—

KM: Yes. Yeah.

LG: Who was from the Nutter Center. [John Seale], who was from the Nutter Center. [Paul Newman], from Athletics. Jeff [Seagal] from Athletics. And then Campus Rec, probably—

KM: Would've been either Bill or [Eric].

LG: Yeah, I think it was Eric. Eric would come over. You know, because they had to travel to come over.

KM: Yes, they did.

LG: Nobody ever wants to travel to come over to Nutter Center [*laughing*].

KM: Well yeah. It was definitely an interesting dynamic that had to be in those meetings.

LG: Right, right.

KM: Because everybody obviously knew – “Look, this is the way it is. This campus is only going to have certain facilities –”

LG: Right.

KM: And there was enough controversy just about the Nutter Center, and we can talk about that too, but just having to deal with that –

LG: It was awkward. And we learned to trust each other and we learned to barter, and it got to be kind of fun. You know it'd be like, “I'll give you this time and space if you give me this.” You know, and a lot of times – and you're right, there was a lot of controversy about the Nutter Center. Faculty absolutely hated the Nutter Center. They felt like the resources were going to something that did not support what they do, which I understand fully. But the flip of that is the Nutter Center did bring in money, they have brought in money, even though people say “Oh no, not enough.” But they do. And they have given us recognition – international recognition.

KM: Well it was a place for commencement. It was an important place for the campus community to gather for critical university components.

LG: Commencement and graduation and things like –

KM: Its huge.

LG: Its huge.

KM: That's the finish line thing.

LG: Right.

KM: And so, commencement – and boy that alone could be controversial. And the people who had to balance and juggle all the particulars of managing, you know, how many people who had access to –

LG: Exactly.

KM: You know, the events on those days and all the activities that take place.

LG: Right.

KM: So, lets back up a little bit to the transition for you from working in the job you were in to becoming a Nutter Center employee.

LG: [*Laughs*]. So, in 99' I had a personal tragedy and my – I had thirty years in and I thought – my youngest son had graduated from high school – I thought, “Oh, I’ll just move to Arizona” [*laughs*]. I’m just like “I’ll do something – a new life” [*laughing*]. And then John Seal, who was the executive director – because I had worked with them all the time, they knew me. Heck, one time we had a [convention] dinner on the arena floor and the catering supervisor came and brought – gave me an apron and said, “C’mon you’re going to go serve.” And I [inaudible], and I was like “what?” and she says, “C’mon on, I’ll give you a glass of wine later. C’mon” [*laughing*].

KM: That’s what you call all hands-on deck [*laughing*].

LG: Yeah, [*laughing*] she’s like “We don’t have enough people! We have twelve hundred people on the floor – it’s a served meal. I need anybody that will come.” So, I was like, “okay.”

KM: Oh, my goodness.

LG: So, what happened was – John Seal said to me – cause’ I said, “I think I’m going just go do something else.” He said, “Come work at the Nutter Center, do the Berry room. It’s twenty hours a week –”

KM: Ha ha.

LG: [*Laughs*]. Little did I know. “It’s a few meetings a month you know...” I was like, “Okay, I’ll go do that.” So, they didn’t bring me on as a Wright State employee, cause’ they couldn’t do that at the time.

KM: And back at the time it was still contracted services.

LG: [*Nods*]. So, I retired and I came on as a contractor then. And basically, I just emptied my desk and went upstairs [*laughs*]. And then we started – you know and back then we didn’t have any computers to do stuff. I had a book – they always called it, you know. “don’t take Lee’s black book or she’ll get you” [*laughs*]. You know, cause’ all the events were written in it. And it was the only way of tracking it.

KM: That reminds me of the big monster board we used to have in the university center office that had all the events scheduled in, and people pulling cards and taking stuff out.

LG: Exactly. And so, we had to do it that way. And then eventually we got different things, and we got computers, and then we got a scheduling thing that worked out – you guys got one in the student Union too.

KM: Yeah.

LG: And so, we started being able to share information a lot differently. And then actually on my end of it, I just felt like – and working with catering, you know, and operations, we started talking about stuff it's like, "This rooms sitting empty we can make some money." Let's – you know, because we never did a wedding, and then catering – I was like "We can do weddings, we can do this, we can do that." So, we started advertising and I started working with people across campus saying, "You know, this room – we don't charge very much and the catering's really good and the staff are good." So, then we started booking it, and it got booked all time.

KM: Do you remember what the environment was like when the charge backs started. Not just for the external users who obviously were going to paying, you know – paying just like they were going to a hotel. But what do you remember of that process of, you know, being the true auxiliary that you are, or that you're supposed to be.

LG: Right, right.

KM: And generating revenue while at the same time accommodating priority users who are the members of the campus community.

LG: Exactly.

KM: So, how did you do that?

LG: It was a tight rope, you had to do so much diplomacy with people because they don't want to pay for anything, "Well I could have it here and not pay." So, what we did is we reduced the fee for any amount of the room – the Berry room can be broken down into three rooms, and it was fifty dollars – if you used all three, if you used one. It was fifty dollars if you had it day and night. Sometimes I would give you a discount if you had two days because we didn't need to bring in anybody to reset, you know, that kind of stuff. And even that fifty dollars got to be contentious sometimes because nobody wanted to pay and it's like, "okay sorry, but I don't make that decision." Somebody else did. But externals paid three times that, so they really did have to pay a lot more to use the room.

KM: And as this was happening, we had the growth of technology.

LG: Yes.

KM: All across campus, which was driving requests for other services for various events. And so, lets talk about the dynamic of the CATS component and the technology component in Nutter, and how you were dealing with that part of it.

LG: It was extremely difficult because we were – the expectation was there to provide service and support for internal and external events, and the external events got to be a little dicey because there was a charge back. So, anything you had in the arena – if I did a dinner for six hundred, let's say, and I needed A/V, there was a charge back for it. Well, I couldn't pay for that so that had to be a cost for the event. I had some student events that were really mad at me about it. I didn't make that rule – it was just across campus. Just the fact that you're having this all-day event, everything you want is going to be 600 dollars, plus they send a tech over and that's, you know, thirty dollars an hour. And opposed to that was the Student Union where they could use it for a lot less.

KM: *[Laughs]*.

LG: Or for free or something *[laughing]*.

KM: Well, technically.

LG: Cause' it was a student event.

KM: Well, that's what made the Student Union such a weird auxiliary. Because we built the facility to serve the needs of a growing campus that was doing all kinds of activities, whether it was a basic student life component or whether it was something for the whole campus.

LG: Right.

KM: Or whether it was something for faculty or whether it something just for staff, or if it was a rental.

LG: *[Laughs]*, I know. There's goes those rentals again.

KM: It was a big challenge of you know, you got to figure out how to generate some revenue. But it was going to be nearly impossible to be anything close to a true auxiliary, and it really wasn't, I think, what most people thought was fair for faculty, staff, or students. You know, aren't we just kind of moving money from one unit to another.

LG: Exactly.

KM: We're not generating it, we're pretty much just taking it from this department and giving it to this department.

LG: Exactly.

KM: Unless it really was a true rental.

LG: Exactly, and I always felt strongly that on the A.V end of it, that the university should have a stand-alone line that should be included in the operations budget. So that they had money – they could buy equipment, because that was always an issue – something was broken or it didn't work right – and they could pay their people to come and do these events. Because as the campus grew, we added more and more stuff at Nutter and the Student Union added more and more stuff, and then even then departments were figuring out, "Oh I can do this at the library or I could do this at Oleman Hall." You know, so then it got everywhere, and if they wanted – I mean even if you just wanted a podium and a mic, that's an A.V support.

KM: And talk about what a change in the campus environment when you have this kind of demand for activity, for gatherings, for all kinds of purposes. It was a very, very different place – kind of exciting.

LG: It was.

KM: Boy, you had the excitement of renting the big events in Nutter. So, I want to hear – I think you got some stories

LG: You want me to tell you a little bit about that?

KM: Oh yeah, because you dealt with some real interesting people.

LG: [*Laughs*]. Catering and I always said we should write a book, you know, because it's always after the fact you guys look at each other and you're like, "That should be documented" [*laughs*].

KM: Yeah [*laughing*].

LG: Because nobody would believe it. We did two galas. We did John McCain's announcement.

KM: That's right! With Sarah Palin.

LG: Yeah.

KM: Oh my gosh. We still see clips of that on television.

LG: It was so funny because my guy works with the stage hands and he call me – you know, we're running around doing all this stuff in the Berry room and he said, "I need a table, I need a table." I was like, "what do you need a table for?" He's like, "They want it on the stage. They want to put water on it." I was like, "I don't have a table Michael" and he's like "I need one" – click. [*Laughs*].

KM: Isn't that the way it goes [*laughing*]. Just figure it out.

LG: I know, I know [*laughing*]. I was like "what's operations doing?" [*Laughs*]. So, I didn't have one – this what we used to do at Nutter Center. John Seal used to say "figure it out, and do it quietly." And that's what we used to do, because a lot of time you didn't know how you were going to fix it until you were right in it. So, I took this black trashcan, I took two black tablecloths, I took it downstairs, we put it on the stage, we covered it up, we draped it all so you couldn't tell what it was – looked like a table – put the water on it for Sarah Palin and John McCain. It was on the front cover of the Dayton Daily News, because they had a picture of them on the podium, and that stupid trash can [*laughs*] – nobody knew what it was but Michael and me. So that's like a little story that's like, yeah that happened.

KM: Yeah, it uses your creativity and like you said, do it quietly and just get it done.

LG: Right, don't go running through the hall with your hair on fire and yelling about, "I can't find a stupid table." Just look around, see what you can see.

KM: So, what would you say was your best experience working in the Nutter Center, in the job as event coordinator. Which everyone thought of you as the queen of events –

LG: Thank you [*laughing*].

KM: And we a lot a lot of event kings – princes and princess over in the student union, a lot of them, but when it came to events it's like, "Eh, that's Lee."

LG: [*Laughs*] thank you. I was going to say your daughter's wedding as phenomenal.

KM: That was fun.

LG: It was really fun, and I felt very blessed that you trusted us, that she trusted us, because it's a really big leap to take somebody's vision and actually make it happen. And for us, we kind of prided ourselves that we could listen well enough, and ya'll were so organized, and it was just beautiful how she wanted the décor to be, and it just went off without a hitch. The only thing I had, is when I was doing the wine corks with the name tags, we had it in the hall and this person came through, you know, because that building is open to the public.

KM: Oh gosh yeah [*laughing*].

LG: It wasn't like we had a special room like the Berry room was, everybody – you know. And that was always a challenge for us, because we would be feeding people and people would come open up the hot boxes and it's like, "Dude. Who are you?" You know? [*Laughs*].

KM: "Oh I got to go to the athletics office" or "I got to go into here" or whatever.

LG: Yeah. Well, that person did something and hit them and they all went like dominoes [laughs].

KM: Oh my god.

LG: And I was like, "Okay. Alright, we can do this." Then I decided we weren't leaving them out over night because I just thought somebody can come in and just mess with this, you know, and then it'd be a mess. But I just think we did – it's like we did two galas, and two science Olympiads –

KM: The gala for the –

LG: The scholarship and Tom Hanks came –

KM: That was magical.

LG: It was.

KM: The Nutter Center was transformed.

LG: It was transformed. And I think for me working with – these were outside vendors to do that, we didn't do that – but our staff blended so well with the outside vendors.

KM: Yeah.

LG: Chrissy – her name is Sharon now, but she was very organized and she would just take it, you know, just one bite at a time. You know, because it was A.V, and it was food, and it was everything, and it just –

KM: Flooring. I mean they brought in all that carpeting.

LG: Yes.

KM: All that specially dyed carpeting.

LG: And then we turned the McLin room into a lounge.

KM: That's right.

LG: That for me probably was one of the most fun. It was phenomenal and at the end of the day when it was over you felt such a sense of pride. And I know we got a lot of pushback from campus about it, because of the money spent for it.

KM: It was like a hundred and fifty-three million that was raised [laughs].

LG: Exactly. And when you try to make them understand how much – and that went for scholarships – that it was really worth it. But again, you know, I think part of it always had to do with – it was Nutter Center, you know. You couldn't say anything, and if anything said Nutter Center it was like, "No." You know? That's their loss.

KM: So, what was your worst experience?

LG: The worst experience is when we had a country concert and the singer was going on stage – my friend was there – and she, it was one of the – a lot of times I would go with her to the concert, but I was working this. And whoever, I can't remember who it was – it was Travis Trent, but I'm probably wrong. I was down on the first floor with my boss and Misty Cox, whose our marketing manager –

KM: Uh-huh.

LG: And we had birthday cake and so catering was real busy so I said, "I'll just take it." So, we were taking to the rooms where the talent was.

KM: The green rooms, whatever you call it.

LG: Yeah, the green rooms or the - yeah. So, we were standing there and my friend texted me and she said, "your toilets are overflowing" and I was like "what?" She's like, "Yeah you better check it out." And right then Misty's phone went off, Jim Brown's phone went off, all our stuff – the radio came on. Everybody's like, "the toilets are backing up."

KM: Oh my goodness.

LG: The toilets stopped working, the water – everybody was using them, you know cause' they're drinking beer and stuff, you know. Some people wanted to go outside and potty you know because –

KM: Oh, my goodness.

LG: You know, and the show just kept going. And the water came all the on the top concourse down the steps – it was horrendous. And so, we finally got campus maintenance, and we got, you know, we had to shut the water off and we had to – the show just kept going on and on. They didn't stop, but people were mad.

KM: Did they shut down all the concessions and –

LG: Everything, everything had to be stopped. And so, we weren't selling beer, *[laughing]* people couldn't go to the bathroom, we weren't selling beer. It was just a nightmare *[laughing]*. And what happened was it was – we all just were like, "I can't believe that this happened." They

were doing a water project on the main campus and they had to shut the water down and we were told that we would still have water from Fairborn. That they weren't going to impact us at all. So, they weren't going to give us water from campus, we were just going to use Fairborn because they knew we had this concert coming. Somebody made a mistake and shut stuff down, and then when they realized they turned it back on. It pushed sediment into our pipes, so when you flushed, it filled up everything.

KM: That's what caused the problem.

LG: And it wouldn't flush right, yes.

KM: So, the university actually had a capability of being Fairborn's water supply.

LG: We could somehow at Nutter, if I understood it right. We could be on the Fairborn's water. I don't know if that applied to the whole campus, but we were not supposed to be shut down at all. So, somebody made a mistake, or – and then when they caught it turned into that. Because actually what happened is I think around three o'clock somebody flushed a toilet on one of the floors and it shot up water. We just thought that was a problem with that particular urinal. But apparently that was like a warning sign [*laughing*].

KM: That nobody's going –

LG: That it's going to be a terrible night [*laughing*].

KM: Oh, my goodness. So how did you get people out of the building?

LG: Well, our staff took squeegees and they just cleared it - you opened up doors and you squeegeed it out so that by the time the concert was over people were okay. But you know, people were mad because we hadn't really – I don't know if ever turned beer sales back on or anything. You know when it's a country concert and everybody's having fun and – yeah. So that probably was the worst time I ever had. I mean I can't remember – other times we've just rolled with it. But that one was kind of beyond our control.

KM: Right.

LG: You know we've had stuff where audio/visual goes down and you're just like in the middle of something and it's embarrassing but you just get it done.

KM: Technology. Things do happen.

LG: They do.

KM: Crisis happens and people have to just keep rolling.

LG: In the Berry room we had screens that wouldn't come down [*laughs*]. We had put new technology in there so you could use all three rooms with the screen, and the projector and the stuff, but – and we trained our staff. But there were times where I would be there and id get a call and its just like, “just get in the cabinet and push this button” and they're like “it's not doing it” [*laughing*], you know. And I've had times where I've had to turned around and come back. It just – I think it just kept me kind of young and busy and happy so...

KM: Right, right. So, what an experience, being in the school of medicine, the admissions office, university college and academic advising.

LG: Yeah, I worked with academia and with events.

KM: Which truly helped you to have an appreciation for what each of the stakeholder groups was dealing with.

LG: Exactly.

KM: So that probably prepared better than it ever could've done for your work in events.

LG: I think so too. And I think before we started this and I was telling you its like cause' when I started and I was seventeen and the faculty were young too.

KM: Yes.

LG: You know the ages were young and they wanted to play, so we would play together. There was no – it was very unstructured and people just – and you learned a lot from these people, they were so smart and so willing to give themselves you know. And they still – so you just kind of So you know I just kind of – I grew up in that kind of academic setting and I think that helped me a lot as I did other things because I knew people and they knew me as somebody who, “Oh yeah she's come to my house for dinner” or We'd meet down at the bar down the street and have a drink” [*laughs*]. You know, life was a lot...

KM: Less complicated.

LG: Less complicated. More fun.

KM: And I remember back when – and of course I'm going to have one of those senior moments where I can't think of the name of it. The student union had a bar in it. It had the faculty lounge.

LG: The faculty lounge.

KM: Do you remember being in that space?

LG: I do remember and I remember being in the [inaudible].

KM: Oh yeah.

LG: Yeah. And that's what I'm saying. A lot of times the faculty might have been done a little early and stuff and they'd say, "Oh come have a beer." And I hate to this, like just all about alcohol, but you know, you do it – you'd go and you'd sit and you'd talk, and the stuff that they'd say to you. I can remember sitting there talking to Elizabeth Harding –

KM: Who just recently passed away.

LG: And I am so sad about that because she was such a southern bell. I just loved to hear her talk. And she'd say this, "Uh-yeah," she'd say something like that. You know and – just listening to her stories – she had a horse farm. You know just – I guess what happened was because you they were willing faculty, who I always thought would be at this level, were willing to allow me to be in their space and know them. And I think for me, because I always felt like this was a community – a small community. I used to say everybody know your business [*laughs*] that's the way it is on this campus. And that was blessing, but it was also not always a blessing. But it was kind of a blessing, everybody knows your business, everybody knows who you are, you can pick up the phone and ask for something and somebody would help you. [Alarm rings].

KM: We've got some time left but I –

LG: Do we?

KM: Yep, yeah. I just wanted to give myself a minute. But of course, now I'm not going to figure out how to do this. Turn off. Yeah, the idea of people getting to know you for the person that you are as opposed to just being – having a title. Titles are messy.

LG: Yes.

KM: And on college campuses, they can be very polarizing.

LG: Yeah.

KM: And I think – this was just kind of my experience is that over the almost thirty-four years that I worked here.

LG: That was a good career, you seemed happy.

KM: I had a lot of opportunities, kind of like you. I never had an expectation of being here that long. But the opportunities were there. Right place, right time, and I hope a little bit of competence that went into that.

LG: Right.

KM: But I was very young when I was taking on some leadership roles, and I remember feeling very uncomfortable. Anyway – got the message.

LG: [*Laughs*].

KM: I remember feeling uncomfortable about titles, even my titles in some settings because you were kind made to feel uncomfortable. You'd almost become a target with a certain title.

LG: Exactly.

KM: Or as you said, working at the Nutter Center there were people who, even though the space was providing services for the things in their lives, it was still a sore spot. And that's unfortunate.

LG: It came on and I think it never – I think they did it wrong when they brought it on. Because they should have engaged the faculty more so that they bought into it more, so that they felt like this was something that was going to be a benefit. And it just didn't – basically it was like, our administration was like, "nope. This is what it's going to be."

KM: As I recall – well, since we're talking about the history and people's perspectives on the Nutter Center. I remember very clearly the conversation being, because students were paying thirty-five dollars –

LG: Exactly.

KM: Per – I think it was per quarter.

LG: Per quarter.

KM: Which was to pay the debt serviced on the building, that it was intended to be a space that was really going to focusing on students – is the way they presented. And of course, that's... Clearly – we became a division one school and had to have a facility where they could play, so that was a critical piece. But it was also a place where finally, we could have a commencement.

LG: Right. I remember commencement on the quad.

KM: Right. I'm sure you do [*laughing*]. And I remember the biggest events we could have before Nutter was in the main gym.

LG: Exactly.

KM: I remember doing events in there and how it was challenging because you could only put a couple thousand people in there and that just wasn't going to cut it at a certain point and time. So, I remember people getting really annoyed about Nutter, but at the same time I remember thinking, okay when this building is paid off, students are still paying that thirty-five dollars per term, or whatever. At that time, we were on quarters. But it was going somewhere.

LG: Yeah why didn't they stop that, I never understood that.

KM: Because they're never going to give money back. That's just never going to happen. But I remember a lot of people in student affairs saying, "okay, we'd like to know, budget office, where that money is going. And shouldn't it be going in support of something that involves students. Not in the classroom, but something related to their needs outside the classroom. We could never really get a straight answer for that to be honest. And part of me was also thinking, well if they're still paying it then the Nutter Center should be able to have things done in there that need to be done, so as to accommodate athletics and HPR and rec because they're still having to share all these facilities.

LG: Exactly.

KM: And it wasn't until our outdoor facilities ended up being created – expanded outdoor facilities. There still isn't nearly enough, in my opinion. But it wasn't until that that it eased up a little bit on some space.

LG: Yes. Because you know, they'd have different things in the McLin gym, and if we had a concert – that cancelled all of their events. And there was no way to get around it. There really wasn't a negotiating way to do it.

KM: Right.

LG: So, I booked things in the McLinn gym and tried to not step on them, you know. But we had certain things like the Science Olympiad. That was a diversity event.

KM: Yep.

LG: And it was like two days and it was like all McLinn was used because that's where we had to feed them. And the arena was being used for the actual celebration part of it. But it was really hard and people were resentful and I think even though they did continue to take that money, I don't think Nutter Center actually got it.

KM: I don't think they did either.

LG: I think it just went to the general budget.

KM: I don't think so either [*laughing*]. Somebody knows, Lee. Somebody knows the answer to that question.

LG: Somebody know. And I think its bad because you know there's still the resentment out there, "you guys are charging students and you should be doing more with that money." And we're on this other end of it looking at our budget saying, "we don't have it."

KM: And being forced to charge for things, you know. Yeah, that probably was – as I was leaving the University and working with my staff who were managing the Student Union and rec facilities and working in other units, it was really hard, you know –

LG: Yes.

KM: To have to deal with the fact that these assessments and charges were just making it hard to do the things we were there to do. To serve the campus community. And it's never really made a whole lot of sense to me. How can you be a true auxiliary when you don't have enough space in that auxiliary to generate the revenue that your supposed to generate.

LG: And, I agree with you with you wholeheartedly and also the only revenue you really generate is from external events.

KM: That's exactly right.

LG: Because otherwise it's just moving money from your account to my account and its just nothing. In the end it's not real money.

KM: Right. And if you want to know how much of one department is utilizing one particular service that's one thing.

LG: Right.

KM: You're tracking it. But it's not generating money.

LG: Nothing.

KM: So, I guess I always kind of felt that Wright State University was doing an amazing job of providing services to the whole campus community with very little facilities by comparison to colleagues that we had at other public universities. And I'm not just talking about Ohio State or U.C or even Miami. So many of the other universities had many, many more things that they could use to provide those services that we didn't. And I thought we did it with a lot of high-quality service.

LG: That's true. And I agree wholeheartedly, and I know that there are students who came and it was very fulfilling for them. You know, they did have events and things and stuff that they

could do. Because it's extremely important – not just the academic curriculum, but the social part of it too. That's how you build young adults. That's how you do a foundation, and they learn – just think, they take on leadership roles, they take on coordinating events. There's a lot of those skills that you can't really – they're hard to teach.

KM: We'll that is how you build community. When you become a part of something, because you're doing more than just coming up here and sitting in a classroom and waiting. And I would never want to minimize, and I'm sure you don't either – the role of any person in the job that they have. Everybody's there for a reason, or you wouldn't've have been hired.

LG: Right.

KM: You have purpose. It's trying to find a way to make all of that work as smoothly as possible. And for our students, most affordably as possible.

LG: Exactly. And I – you just, you go to other campuses and you say, "well, it's a part of the fee that they pay, you know, along with their tuition, and they can do x, y, z." And here I feel like towards the end we were asking them for so much money. I even felt that way about departments. Most of the time it was like if you rent the Berry Room – I'm probably going to get in trouble for this [*laughs*]. If you rent the Berry room then I felt like –

KM: You're retired, you won't be in trouble.

LG: Yeah, they couldn't do anything to me now. The apartment should get the rooms for free. We installed our own A.V and we wee running it ourselves we did that intentionally so we didn't have to pay this 30-dollar fee. Plus – and also help this group because they're spread thin for the entire campus. And to get in a truck and get over to Nutter Center to set up a podium mic was stupid. I mean our staff could set up a podium mic. Which is not to negate what A.V did. They did great service and do great things, it's just you have to think about time and what makes sense. But I felt like departments shouldn't have to pay, especially if they do catering, because that's where the real money comes in. If you're paying for catering as a university event, that's real money that's you're paying. That's not moving it from your budget to my budget because they are a standalone contractor on campus.

KM: That's right.

LG: So, I felt like, you know, if you spent three hundred dollars for a lunch, why can't you just get the Berry room for free? You know, we would wheel and deal it a lot of times. I know that there were times where I was in meetings and there was a conversation about, "pulling your weight, you got to charge them." And I'm like, okay [*laughs*]. It's bad.

KM: I think a lot of it is growing pains.

LG: Yeah.

KM: It was dealing really with growing pains and having to figure out along the way how to make all these things comes together. And you mentioned the A.V group, which for the longest time – talk about a bunch of guys who were running around like crazy. Back and forth from Nutter to Student Union or elsewhere on campus. It was very, very challenging for them. And a lot of extra hours. A lot of overtime.

LG: Yeah. They'd have to be there all the morning and then do all the basketball until everybody leaves the building.

KM: That's why I think we tried to make them apart of the Student Union.

LG: Yeah, we did.

KM: But we did that for a while and then it got changed again. Things are going to continuously change and evolve, but there are certain areas of the campus that need to have people right there that physically should just be there to provide the service. In my opinion, because it's happening all day and all night. So, what's the value in having some centralized function where you're just running people all over the universe. It didn't really make a lot of sense to me.

LG: It doesn't make sense. And we tried to for years to have dedicated person at the Nutter center. Again, you need a budget line item to pay staffing and stuff, and it like... I don't know.

KM: Well, isn't it great that we're retired?

LG: Yes.

KM: [*Laughs*].

LG: Yes, it is [*laughing*]. I don't have to worry about this.

KM: It used to keep me up. Thinking about some of the frustrations that I knew existed for the staff.

LG: It was hard on your staff. Vey hard on your staff, I agree. It just, you know, because it makes it contentious too. You know, because if you're doing an event and then you have something that fails, then you have to make a call and tell that person, "I need you to come now," and that person's like, "I'm right in the middle of something I can't come for a minute." It helped me develop much better skills. You know because you have to have empathy you have to have understanding. My biggest thing in the Nutter Center was the temperature in the Berry room, because we couldn't control that. And it used to just flip me out that we would have people and all of sudden it would shoot up to, you know, 98 degrees and everybody was sweating. I couldn't just go over and push a button to turn the temp down. So, you know for years I griped and griped and griped until finally they put something different in and we were

able to control it. Cause' you had to call across campus and we had evening events. So, you know it was just the guy who was on call. He'd have to get in his truck and come over [*laughs*]. It's just the kind of thing that – there has to be a better way to do this.

KM: It would be really nice to know since you and I have both been gone, what things are better.

LG: Yeah.

KM: And I'm sure that there probably are. I think again for you and to some extent my experiences too, we were there at the beginning of all of it. So, it was going to be bumpy. You're going to do some things by yourself you'd be asking, as you said earlier, for not permission but forgiveness. And it's like, "I got to deal with this now." So, we're going to try to do it the best we can.

LG: When HBR moved over to the Nutter Center, there were no chalk boards, there was no A.V. For some reason they didn't put that in a budget line. So – cause' I think they went over budget so then they had to cancel back certain things. So, I'll never forget, we needed – at the point the faculty used VHS, and so we needed a big tv on a cart with a with a VHS thing.

KM: Right.

LG: So [Andy], bless his heart, came over and is like "I don't want to give you this equipment because it's expensive," and I was like, "let's just try it okay." So, we did. We put it in a classroom, we had a big padlock and chain – it was within a day somebody stole that [*laughing*]. Somebody went in there, cut that, took it right out the door – it was on the second floor – took it out the doors and stole it. And Andy and I – we started laughing about it [*laughs*]. He's like, "Yeah Lee, "Just let me try it."” [*Laughs*].

KM: [*Laughs*]. Even with the big padlock. Yeah, I think there was somebody who actually stole a change machine out of the Rathskeller.

LG: How could you even lift that?

KM: They put a change on it and –

LG: It just –

KM: Yeah. Bill Sharp could probably tell you that story or Ron could, cause' it goes way back. But there's that stuff – those things that happened that you have to kind of scratch your head and go, "well, what will you do about that."

LG: Well, when I finally got him to calm down and listen again [*laughing*]. We finally got the equipment and dedicated a room – we found a room in the building that was just like mops and

stuff, and moved them somewhere else. Then we had to give the faculty keys to it and then they would go get their own equipment and then bring it to the classroom and then bring it back.

KM: Yes.

LG: And that's what you're talking about – cooperation. Because some people would say, “No, I came to teach I'm not moving this stuff.” But they did. They just wanted it to work. And so that's what we had to do.

KM: Total number of years at Wright State?

LG: I started in, you know, [the old], 69' and I left in 2018, so I had fifty years total. Not all as a Wright State employee because when I went to Nutter I was contract –

KM: I know, I know, but you were here.

LG: Yeah. I was here physically.

KM: I think you may have –

LG: [Laughs].

KM: For staff, you may have the most longevity.

LG: Really?

KM: Yeah.

LG: Wow.

KM: I would love to know –

LG: It would be fun.

KM: I would love to know, and if they have that record at H.R it would probably have to go through and see. But I don't anybody else who's [put] fifty years.

LG: That's a long time. And actually, I didn't even count it, you know, because when you're having fun – I was having fun.

KM: [Laughs].

LG: And I like the challenge and stuff. And so, for me – like when I worked at Nutter Center, the staff I worked with – we were friends, you know?

KM: Yeah.

LG: We would call each other up –

KM: I know.

LG: Or go in the lock-in and cry together or, you know [*laughing*]. It was like [*laughing*] – it was fun.

KM: Well, you become – with all that time you see – you meet people. You meet them through their marriages, their children's birth –

LG: Their children.

KM: Their children's graduations, their children's weddings, their children's children.

LG: Exactly.

KM: It is an extension of your own family's life.

LG: It is.

KM: And I can't imagine spending that much time and not feeling a certain amount of wonder for having had that experience.

LG: It is and it helped shape me and the people embraced me and I embraced them. It's just always going to be a part of my life. I can never not think about Wright State, you know? And I watch the news now and I watch other things happening and it makes me sad, it hurts my heart that this campus is struggling with so many things that are so awkward and hurtful to people. You talked about losing jobs and not having money to do programs and consolidating things, not replacing people who have been a big part of the university. So, it's sad, but I also think that things – things go in a circular motion, so it's a dip, but it'll come back up. You know what I'm saying?

KM: There are cycles.

LG: Cycles – that's the word I'm looking for.

KM: There are cycles and I agree with you, I think it's been hard for any of us who've left in the last five years to observe – to be on the outside of that looking in and talking to people and it's been painful. But I also know there are things that stay the same that are consistent and that have been things we can point to with joy and pride.

LG: Exactly.

KM: Look just in the last week, the Wright State's women's basketball team going to the NCAA and winning their game for the first time and making history.

LG: Yes, amazing.

KM: And props to Katrina Merriweather.

LG: Right.

KM: Good for her. And good for Bob Grant in athletics.

LG: Right. And that's what she was saying, the coach was saying that like BG and Joy Lynn, they've made this kind of environment and I don't think –

KM: They're people first, they're students second, they're athletes third. That's a mantra they've just rammed home.

LG: And they – the student athletes have achieved academic success.

KM: Yes.

LG: It's just, it's so important I think people don't take that – they get... Years ago when I started here, someone said – for the faculty end of it, they do their – they have their own niche, you know? It's their thing and it's always been their thing, and all growing up this was their thing and now their teaching their thing. And so, you have to understand that it's always going to be that. Some of them will become more involved with leadership roles or community service within the University and that kind of thing, but most of these people will stay in that lane. And I thought at the time – I was like, "okay" [*laughs*]. But it's true, it's true.

KM: And for them that's okay, but thank god for those who don't stay in that lane because it expands your horizons.

LG: It does. And you know, and then we've had people like you who did great leadership and even when we were, you know, [*laughing*] in a combustible stage when stuff just was kind of like, oh this is not working out so good – you know, because when we did the, you know – gave that money for the debates and –

KM: Yeah.

LG: And so many people were so mad.

KM: Yeah.

LG: And I understand that mad, I do. Because that was a lot of money that we never recouped, and we didn't do the debates.

KM: Right. Yeah, there is some definite pain that I think may never be assuaged and you can't erase it. I mean the issue of what happened, the things that happened, happened.

LG: Right.

KM: And I think I – my good karma thoughts are directed up this way to this campus on a daily basis to people I know that are still here.

LG: [*Laughs*]. Yeah.

KM: And are working really hard.

LG: Yes.

KM: And really care. And the people who've retired and still care.

LG: Right.

KM: And there's a lot of them. And I'm just so really happy that you were willing to come in.

LG: Thank you for asking me.

KM: And talking about your time here, because its important I think for the university to have this history of the people who were here at its very early times at its growth and development. And everyone's perspective is just – there are – obviously there are differences based on where you came from and what you were doing –

LG: Right.

KM: But there's – I'm getting a lot of common threads from the people I have talked to, even if they're people I didn't know particularly well. It's – there are things about this place that just make people want to stay.

LG: Yes.

KM: And that's a good thing.

LG: It is. And you felt like you were a part of a community. Again, it's like a small town – part of a community and people could go off and do stuff but their heart was still here. And we all before you know we're doing a common purpose.

KM: That's right. It was fortunate for us to have been able to do that.

LG: Yes.

KM: And we'll still be in touch with so many really good people.

LG: Yeah.

KM: I had a chance a couple weeks ago to take a walk through the student union with Eric Corbett.

LG: I saw that! They've done some –

KM: It looks so wonderful inside.

LG: Good.

KM: They're up there – refreshed look. There's a lot more Wright State marketing, Wright State color – just neat little stories and the visuals. The communication and the marketing department have just done some really great things. So, it made me very proud to walk back through there and I see that even though they're still dealing with lots of things are really critical there are some very very good things.

LG: That always makes you feel good I think. We haven't actually been to Nutter for basketball but I haven't really been to Nutter to be there during an event per se. But I do play with the catering ladies and interact with people.

KM: That's good.

LG: Somebody from the Nutter Center admin called me the other day and said, "I had to call and tell you this because now they're going to do three commencements." [*Laughs*], because I used to work with commencement.

KM: Yes, you did.

LG: And they would never – nope it just had to be one. You know, so now they're going go three and he said, "you'd probably be dancing around. Because it just made more sense.

KM: Well, and lucky now that you don't have to.

LG: Yes!

KM: I can come up to the Nutter Center and be a participant at an event.

LG: It's amazing how you can just do it, and people will still come up to see you or ask you something [*laughs*]. Because they don't know that you're gone.

KM: I know, I know. That's so funny.

LG: It's like, "it's okay." I can get somebody to help you.

KM: Right. You still know enough people and still have connections and as long as you have those connections that relationship with this place I'm sure will stay very strong. It's a good thing.

LG: Thank you. And yours was too. And I appreciate this, I wasn't sure what it was exactly, and this is just such a great idea.

KM: This is it.

LG: It's a great idea.

KM: Well thanks. And I want you to think about join the retiree's association.

LG: I need to. After we talked that first time I went out and looked at it I thought, 'well why haven't I done this?'

KM: It's really easy.

LG: Yeah. I need to do that.

KM: They're doing – and I probably can let Chris know, we're done.

LG: We're done.

End 20:48