

Reminiscences of George Weimer

March 12, 2009

Interviewed by Karen Perone

KP: Today is March 12, 2009 and I am Karen Perone. Today I will be interviewing George Weimer. George has a big history with Mount Union College that started long before he was even born. His father graduated from Mount in the early 1910s and George graduated in 1954. From 1961 to 1969 he was Director of Admissions for the College and he then became a bank Trust Officer for United National Bank. In retirement, George is Mount Union's and Alliance's biggest cheerleader singing the praises of both organizations. He frequently attends concerts, plays and sporting events at Mount and was the Carnation Festival's Grand Parade Marshall in 2002. He is a storyteller, a radio show host on WRMU and believes in active community service. He truly follows the words of his father – If you learn how to give, you'll always have enough. George Weimer.

GW: There's a red light.

KP: Okay. Hi, George. How are you today? Good to see you.

GW: Well, I could make it 'til noon, I guess.

KP: (Laughing)

GW: Now I heard your introduction and you were saying about being active on the college campus, but you didn't mention my most enviable activity.

KP: Well, what did I leave out?

GW: That was doing push ups with the cheerleaders at the football games and I had to stop that though on my 75th birthday because I was worried that I might have a heart attack and die there on the track and the next day in the paper it would say, "Ugliest man in town dies in the arms of eight beautiful women," and there would be cars burning and windows smashed and there's a lot of envy out there and I just didn't want to put the community through that.

KP: You wouldn't want to invoke a riot or anything.

GW: Right. (Both laughing) That's called fantasy.

KP: Oh, that's great. We started out by saying you have a long history with Mount Union College even before you were born. Do you want to talk a little bit about your Father and who he was?

GW: Yes. Well, I'll start it further than that. I'll start it with my Great-Grandfather who emigrated from Germany and so he came over here and wound up in New York City and he did an apprenticeship in some kind of a grocery, or I mean, a restaurant or other. Anyhow, he wound up with a oyster house on the New York City waterfront which was kind of a interesting area. This is where the sailors would come in and get some oysters to get sobered up before they got on their, got on their ship, and the oyster house was a pretty fancy place; it had fresh sawdust on the floors and my Great-Grandmother was a rather large woman, large German woman. My Grandfather had a goatee and a sailor had a misunderstanding with my Great-Grandfather and grabbed his goatee and was slapping him around pretty well and my Great-Ggrandmother walked up behind the sailor, stuck her little finger up his nose and pulled him over backwards. So you see, I come from good stock. (Both laughing) And the family lived over top of this oyster house so my, my Grandfather was a stair builder which was the top of the carpenter trade back at that time and told great stories about how these stair builders were the first one's into the house as soon as they got the framing up and the roof on and they were the last one's to leave because they had so much detail to do that it took the entire year and a half, or however long it was, to build the house. There were some pretty fancy houses in New York. Now my Dad living in this area had kind of an interesting situation because he would go with his wagon down to the ice house to get ice in the summer and he would hear a noise and he knew it was some of the neighborhood kids asking for something for going through their territory and so he would pick up a brick and a lid off a garbage can to defend himself. So he'd get down to the ice house and back with, without having to lose a lot of marbles and things like this that you would normally have to pay to go through an area. Now his father got tired of this and so he said, "I'm through with you losing all your marbles..." Wait, that doesn't sound good, does it?

KP: No.

GW: Well, any how that's effaceable anyway, but he got a dog, and so Bruno entered their lives and he was a great big dog cause grandpa wanted to make sure there was overkill was...Overkill, yeah, that this would be a sufficiency and so Bruno got to be very important in his life because Dad could now just walk down to the oyster house and look at these neighbor kids and kind of thumb his nose at them if he so chose to and Bruno would get him through safely. Well, Bruno realized how important he was and so Bruno got kind of finicky on his eating and he would only eat certain things and my Grandpa got a little disgusted with this and so he said, "I'm going to teach Bruno to eat potato peelings." And I asked Dad, I said, "How do you teach a dog to eat potato peelings?" He said, "Don't feed him anything else."

GW and KP: (Both laughing)

GW: Well, Bruno got to eating potato peelings and found out he loved potato peelings and so then when they were peeling potatoes and Dad would have, be peeling away here and he'd let this big long string of potato peel hanging down as he rotated the potato and the peel would keep getting longer and Bruno would be (sound of dog slurping) and slobber running down while he was waiting for this potato peeling and as soon as it would leave the knife and start dropping towards the pan and he would snap it and that's...so now that was a standard in our family—if anybody got a little uppity, well, we'd better teach him to eat potato peelings.

GW and KP: (Both laughing)

GW: So that's how Dad happened to come to Mount was his youth minister in his church was a Mount grad and he said, "Oh, George, that's the place to go to school," and he convinced the parents to send Dad out west. So...

KP: Get him out of the city.

GW: So, out west he came. Here's a picture of the Oyster House, but you'll do something with that later. But, when Dad was, was here, a what he did was he came as a prep school student and so, a, he finished his senior year in high school and played basketball because he was a pretty good basketball player and so he is what is known as a five year letterman. Now there aren't very many four year letterman is kind of pretty good, but a five year letterman is really special. Now, of course, I hope you don't count that there were only five or six members of the basketball team so a (both laughing) that made it a little easier.

KP: Well, they needed him then.

GW: Now there are some stories that dad used to like to tell and dad was kind of a story teller and on Saturday nights before church, my three brothers and I would be sitting in a row after, or before taking our bath, and Dad would cut our hair. Now Dad was maybe good at a number of things but as a barber it wasn't all that great, but we had a hair cut anyway and he would tell stories while he was cutting hair, and he had one of the clippers where you squeezed the handle, and so Dad would be telling the story and he became animated and something would happen and a hunk of hair would disappear with the roots connected to it.

KP: Ow!

GW: So you kind of liked it if dad was telling stories like that when you were sitting waiting, but not when you were in the chair. But one of the stories that he told was how McMaster was coming to Mount as the President that he was a

young man and a Mount grad, a fairly recent graduate, and the students were coming down to pick him up at the railroad station which, of course, is over two miles from the campus. Well, the students had enough money to rent the carriage but they didn't have enough money to rent the horses and so (both laughing) they got a big long rope, tied it to the carriage and they were pulling the carriage down to the railroad station. But Dad said the really fun part of it was they thought there should be a band, well, of course, Mount didn't have a band at that time, so they went around to the neighborhood and they would borrow a drum here, cymbals there, or maybe a trumpet some place else, and get a uniform from The Knights of Columbus or a Mason and have a big plume and all that stuff and so he said it was a pretty wild looking bunch going down to the railroad station. Now the picture that I have is just of a number of college students who were pulling that rope, but I wish that it had a picture of that bunch that was leading it with the plumes and the drums and all this sort of thing. I thought that could have been fun. But of course, whoever the photographer was had more sense than to take that picture. Now Dad lived in a fraternity house, he lived in the Sigma Nu house, and it was on the south east corner of State and Union and his room mate for all five years was Joe Scott. Now Joe Scott was there for five years because he had a number of illnesses and so it took him longer to graduate. But Joe and Dad were very good friends and a number of stories that Dad told about Joe; one of them was that he and Joe would go down the hospital where Mrs. Fiegenschuh, Fiegenschuh Jeweler, that family, a was the head nurse and she would ask Joe and my Dad to a, a, carry a patient from the first floor to the second because that's where the operating room was.

KP: Now this was when the hospital was in the...

GW: The hospital was...

KP: ...in the big house?

GW: Yes, the house, a facing a...

KP: The Whitacre House wasn't it?

GW: The what?

KP: The Whitacre House.

GW: Oh, I don't know that.

KP: I think that's what it was.

GW: It was on College and I think a...

KP: Arch?

GW: Whatever the next street over is?

KP: Arch?

GW: Yes, probably Arch. And, anyway, I think I would have had to have something pretty serious to think of two college kids lugging me up the stairs for surgery and then of course, afterwards probably lugging you back down again. It looked like maybe surgery was not the best solution to whatever, appendicitis, or whatever the problem might have been. Now, the fraternity also had a lot of fun things and this picture is Dad and Joe Scott and a couple other guys, probably Abe Kitzmiller, who was later a professor at the college, Dr. Kitzmiller, and well, Joe Scott was a professor at the college too, he was head of the Biology Department. But anyhow, they're dressed up in drag ready for some wild party, but I chose this picture because it also shows a house just north of the Sigma Nu house on Union Avenue where my Mother was a roomer, and so of course, this closeness developed into a situation where a, a, they would spend time at the boarding house run by Mrs. Hoover. Now Mrs. Hoover, my dad thought was just a wonderful lady and did—produced wonderful meals and she would put a new tablecloth on and my Dad would spread it out to get, and she'd say, "No, no George, no, see this crease down here, I want that crease in there." So she would put the crease back in there and she says, "When you have a new tablecloth, you want everybody to know it's a fresh one that's just been ironed." So I imagine at that time of hand washing and washboards that tablecloths didn't get changed every other day. So a, this is the picture of the Hoovers and dad never mentioned Mr. Hoover, but I don't know whether Mrs. Hoover was widowed and that's how she supported herself and her family, a fairly large family, but Guy Hoover was prominent in Alliance, I think in educational circles, so she produced a pretty nice family that did nice things for the community of Alliance. So, a...

KP: Actually, our house is located in the Guy Hoover woods.

GW: Oh, is it?

KP: It was part of his property...

GW: Oh, yeh.

KP: And used to have the woods between Bonnieview and Parkway.

GW: Uh huh. Well, a, what they would do is the Sigma Nus mostly ate at Hoover Boarding area, boarding house, and the house that my mother was rooming in a lot of them ate over there too and so then after dinner was completed, they would gather around the piano and sing hymns. Now this might seem a little strange for college students to be gathered around the piano singing

hymns, but this was something that was a music that was very popular at that time and also was easily played on the piano, so I think that was a factor also. But the two of them spent quite a bit of time together and decided that a, a, this might be the thing to do, which they did eight years after Dad graduated. So it was something that....

KP: He was a little slow.

GW: ...that I would say that they were pretty sure that this was what they wanted to do. But how are we coming on time?

KP: Very good.

GW: Oh, very, good, all right, I'll back track then. Joe Scott lived on a farm in the southern part of the state. I don't know how far south probably not too far, but anyhow, Dad, of course, living in New York City, when there would be a holiday would go home with Joe Scott and Joe Scott's father and mother were very thrifty and they ran this farm to really produce enough money to keep Joe in college and living the way Joe liked to live. Dad said that Joe was a pretty spiffy dresser and he would have these spiffy suits and all this little...very latest. But Dad said he just loved, Dad loved, this farm life and he said, "You know, this is the place to raise a family," because it was so contrary to what Dad had had in New York City. When he came to Mount and a, was playing softball early in his time at Mount, one of the students when they were going into bat dropped their glove in the outfield and Dad said, "Hey, whoa, hey, you dropped your glove." And he said, "Oh, that's all right." Now in New York City when Dad would be going from outfield up to bat, he would put his belt through the glove, not through the strap over the back because if some kid grabbed that some kid could pull it off because that button would let the glove escape. You put it through the web on the glove so that the student, the person trying to steal your glove, would have a much more difficult time. Well, this is somewhat of the background that Dad had in New York that he thought this farm life would be such a way to raise a family and so he spent a lot of time on the Scott farm and a, a, just stories that he would tell about the farming there and the experiences with Joe Scott. How much time do we have?

KP: 43 minutes.

GW: How much?

KP: 43.

GW: 43!

KP: Yeh.

GW: Oh my gosh. Well, one of the stories that he told was the Scotts went away, and for the evening and said, "George, if you'd do the chores, we'd appreciate it, but don't try to milk that cow because Mrs. Scott is the only person that can milk it, and so Dad thought, I can milk it, so he went out to milk the cow after he got the other chores done and sure enough she splattered him up against the wall. So he thought, how does Mrs. Scott do his? So he went into the house, got Mrs. Scott's bonnet and a, her apron and her whatever that little kind of light jacket that they used to wear, and went back out with the bonnet pulled down over his head, went up to the cow and milked it and so when they came home, they said why we have to go milk the cow and Dad said, "Oh no, it's all been taken care of." So he was pretty proud of that. Another time, a, he and Joe were instructed to go out and hoe the corn. So the corn was a pretty good size field and took quite a bit of hoeing, and a, so Joe said, "Oh, George," he said, "Why should we not enjoy ourselves a little bit." He says, "We can hoe this corn in a very short period of time." So he said, "Oh, here let's sit under this tree and play mumbly peg. So mumbly peg you have the, the knife and you open it up certain ways and then you try to throw it and stick certain blades in the ground and then you get so many points for that. Well, Dad said they were just having a great time and so they would hoe the corn a little bit, go back over in the shade and play some more mumbly peg and then go hoe corn again. Well, Joe's father said, "Say Joe, how are you coming with the corn hoeing?" And Joe says, "Oh, fine." He says, "We're in good shape, yeh, we're doing real well." And he says, "Well then George why don't you come with me this afternoon and Joe you can finish up the hoeing." Well, Dad said, when he looked over he said you could just a cloud of dust where Joe was trying to make up for all the time that they'd played mumbly peg and still get the corn hoed. So, some interesting stories that I just wish I could remember more of them; ones that Dad used to tell.

KP: And was Joe Scott's farm near here?

GW: A, yeh, fairly close, I would say.

KP: He lived in the Alliance area?

GW: I don't know just where it is though. I would say probably 25-30 miles from the campus or maybe a little further than that.

KP: Okay.

GW: But Joe's daughter is a, a resident of Copeland Oaks with us. That a, she, her mother, Joe's wife worked in the library at the college for years and years. After Joe died, I would go over to the library to see Mrs. Scott and she was a very good friend of my Mother's that she was in school at the same time my Mother was. Now Pat Weaver is another person if we have 45 minutes to kill I might as well tell stories that have no connection to anything.

KP: Well, remember we want to talk about you too, so.

GW: What?

KP: We want to talk about you too.

GW: Oh well, then I'll keep talking. Well, anyhow Pat Weaver and my Mother were in school at Mount together. Well, she was a student at Ohio Wesleyan, but she was here in summer school and my Mother and Pat Weaver were both probably I would say examples that they could out talk me. I mean, that just gives you some kind of an idea of what kind of talkers they were. Well, anyhow, Mom was calling for the Republican Party to see whether people had voted or not and Pat Weaver's name was on the list and the-this was all mimeographed out as to what you're supposed to say. "Have you voted? If you haven't voted, we'll come and provide a car to pick you up. If you have voted, thank you...and appreciate your cooperation." So there were about three or four lines that Mother was supposed to say. Well, she called Pat and by the time they finished they found out they were classmates at Mount Union 50 some years before.

KP: Oh, gees.

GW: Now, how that came out of that simple conversation that was supposed to be, "Have you voted, and if you have, thank you." How that developed into the two finding out they were classmates, I'll never know, but it was interesting. Now, where do we go from here?

KP: Um...

GW: Oh, here, wait a minute, wait a minute.

KP: Where were you born?

GW: I came to a...

KP: Where were you born?

GW: I was born in Mansfield, Ohio.

KP: Okay.

GW: But in high school...

KP: How did you end up in Montana?

GW: Well, in high school we lived in Montana for awhile and when I was coming back to college, I had been dating a girl whose father was a taxidermist and a

very good naturalist, a lot of hunting—all this sort of thing, and so as I was getting ready to leave, he said, “Say George,” he said, “What’s your experience with rattlesnakes?” I said I haven’t had any. He said, “You’ve lived out here this many years and you’ve never seen a rattlesnake?” I said, “No, that’s right.” He says, “Well, Saturday morning we’ll go hunting for rattlesnakes.” Well, I was dating his daughter so I had to act like this was a good idea although I was totally petrified and a, a, because when you’re newer—newcomer in the west like that rattlesnake story seem to be the thing that people tried to scare the ‘begibbers’ out of you with and I was pretty easily ‘begibbered’ and so he said, “Where do you want to go hunting?” And I said, “How about Harvet’s Hill,” because I had hunted ground hog and things like that out there and crawled all over that hill and had never seen a rattlesnake. Well, when we got out there he says, “Now take this stick and make a noise with it,” and he says, “When you make the noise, the rattlesnake doesn’t know where the noise is coming from, so it will coil and get ready to strike to defend itself,” which I thought sounded like you know, not the best idea in the world. But here again, I was dating his daughter so I had to look like I was enjoying this. Well, in less than half an hour, we had three rattlesnakes caught and so he said, “Well, I’ll, I’ll tan one and you’ll have the rattlesnake skin,” which I have hanging in my basement, and every time Shirley did a spring or fall house cleaning, I knew my rattlesnake skin would be in the garbage can and I’d have to go hunting for it and so this garbage can has had a lot of experience with rattlesnakes and I used to take it a lot when I used to go telling stories around the grade schools and I would take my rattlesnake skin to impress people so a... Now this is, this is in the act. There’s the rattlesnake skin—the rattlesnake in its skin. A, hanging on a stick that I used to catch it. You notice this handsome young man there, that’s a picture of me several years ago. Well, I came to Mount, met a gal that a, a Neil Schrader—there was a lot of close relationship with your faculty, and one night I stopped over at the Schrader house. They lived just three houses, a, east on College Street and I stopped and was talking to him and his wife said, “What about the dance Friday night—who are you taking?” I said, “I’m not going to the dance.” She says, “You’re not going to the dance? Why don’t you go to the dance?” And I said, “Oh, I don’t have a date.” And she said, “Who is that farm girl that you were telling about, Neil, that little blond girl that you thought would be a good prospect for George?” And, he said, “Oh, Shirley Barrick.” And I said, “Oh well, I don’t think I want to go to the dance.” Anyway, so I had this excellent advice when I was just starting my junior year, but we never really met to have an evening together until my best friend in college, Bill Spiker, had a date with a girl that said, “How’d it be if I bring my friend and you bring your friend?” So I had a blind date with—turned out to be Shirley Barrick. Well, after the movie, we went back to the house. So here we are, you know I thought I will go upstairs and tell the house mother that we have girls in the house which was a normal thing to do and Bill would stay downstairs with the two girls, but no does Bill do that? He brings the girls up to the house mother’s room and says, “George, introduce the girls.” And I said, “No, Bill, you introduce the girls.” And he said, “Oh, George, you introduce the girls.” So we did that back and forth for about ten or twelve times and finally I said, “Well, this is Shirley

Barrick and I don't know your name." That was his date which he should have introduced. He should have introduced her and saved me all the embarrassment. So, the next day the house mother—we're eating breakfast—and she says, "Oh George, last night when you were introducing the girls..." I said, "Yes." She said, "I could have kicked you." And so this was a 60 year old great, nice, you know, nice lady talking about kicking me which I thought was not really a good example to set, you know, in a fraternity, for a house mother to do. Well, anyhow, as it turned out, no wait a minute, Bill was with Shirley. I was with the other girl. I had this all messed up. Well, anyhow, a, five or six months later Shirley called and asked me to go to the house—to the hayride—and Bill had counted on going to the hayride with Shirley, but she called and asked me, and so the great thing about this is that Bill became—well one night I had been talking to Bill and found out that he had sold his interest in a mining operation where he was just on the verge of bankruptcy—'til this thing came along and saved him and he sold his interest for 6.8 million dollars.

KP: Wow.

GW: So, I had the poor judgment to tell Shirley about this and so this was where she thought did I dial the wrong guy for that, for that hayride—well, we won't take that any further. Anyway, I'm the one that wound up with Shirley and every once in awhile we have a get together and Bill puts his arm around Shirley and says, "This is the gal that turned me down for George Weimer." And so Shirley can always say, "Well, I turned down a 6.8 million dollar boyfriend for the, for the real thing." How's that sound?

KP: That sounds pretty good and you are a lucky man to have her.

GW: Oh yeh, yeh. My Dad always said, "Marry up." And so I did.

KP: You have two daughters?

GW: Two daughters, yep. A, one, the oldest daughter is working in research at Merck in New Jersey. The younger daughter is working in Cincinnati in the, those schools that have, oh, kind of high I.Q. kids. There is one over in Canton.

KP: Montessori.

GW: Montessori, yeh, she's kind of a public relations, I don't know what—at least she has a job of some sort anyway.

KP: That's good. So, um, when you were in Mount—at Mount Union, were you an athlete like your father?

GW: Well, maybe this takes a little more explanation. I went back to see my old high school coach after 20 some years and I said, "Hi, coach. My name is

George Weimer.” And he said, “You don’t need to tell me your name, George. I’d never forget you.” How was that? He said, “You’re the worst quarterback I ever coached.”

KP and GW: (Laughing)

GW: Now that gives you some indication of my athletic ability.

KP: So that’s why you joined the cheerleaders with the pushups?

GW: Right. I was pretty much maxed out there. That was the extent of my athletic ability.

KP: What was your major in college?

GW: A, business.

KP: Okay.

GW: And I had a minor in accounting, which I always felt was a little bit like Castor Oil. Have you ever had Castor Oil?

KP: No, but I’ve heard about it.

GW: You’ve heard about it. Well, my Dad always thought if it was internal and Castor Oil didn’t fix it, and if it was external and Slone’s Liniment didn’t fix it, you were a goner. So, he went to a hospital at 89 and was there for six nights and that’s all the time he had spent in a hospital—was six days before he died and a, what were we talking about? What?

KP: Minor in accounting.

GW: A minor in accounting was like Castor Oil. It wasn’t, it was—it wasn’t very good going down, but after it got down, it probably did good things for you so I had...

KP: It helped you with your career.

GW: Yeh, it, it probably opened up banking for me which, of course, as soon as I got there, I did everything I could to get out of doing anything with numbers and I was quite successful with that.

KP: Were you in a fraternity in college?

GW: Yes, I was Sigma Nu also.

KP: Okay, any good stories you want to tell about Sigma Nu?

GW: What?

KP: Any good stories?

GW: Yes, and a...

KP: That you can share.

KP and GW: Both Laughing.

GW: Well, Bill Spiker, the guy that sold out for 6.8 million, and I were the best of friends and we had some—there are people that have suggested that maybe I was not as academically oriented as I should have been in college which, of course, is hard for me to imagine, but a, a, Bill and I did have a good time. College was, I thought, supposed to be a friendly place and a fun place and we worked at making it both of those categories as much as possible, but Shirley and I graduated with over a three point average so I don't think that's too bad.

KP: That's pretty good.

GW: Of course, Shirley had the 3.9 and I had something over 2.1, but if it's our mortgage, why can't it be our point average. One of the things that we did, that Bill and I did, you know the thing is to be able to have experiences that can be a factor in your life while you're in college. There's suppose to happen in the classroom but in my situation they so often happened outside the classroom. Bill and I were, were working on a dance in the gymnasium and looked up at the rafters and all those metal rafters looked so ugly and we said, "Wouldn't it be great to cover 'em?" And so then we kind of gyrated a little bit in our mind the possibility of having cheese cloth to cover the—to hide that. So we went down to Amish country and found a Alpine Alpa cheese place where they have—see the cheese cloth that they put on cheese like that is very thin so we bought a couple of rolls of it and we found out that that covered practically none of the gym. So, we kept buying more and more cheese cloth until we finally—we had this a, a steel cable that we ran from one end of the gym to the other, and so we would put the cheese cloth over where there were some stairs going up that we would slide at the full length of the gym, and then we kept doing this until we had the whole gym covered. Well, a, needless to say, people were impressed, that was very impressive. So then the next year we thought well how would it be, you know because at the edge, see there was a stadium kind of seating of concrete and with the gym floor down, or course, below it, and we thought wouldn't it be great to hide this concrete (laughing). And so we went down to Cadiz where Bill was a—his hometown, and we found a Scio Pottery had quite a supply of, of cardboard and so I happen to have a station wagon and I don't remember how many trips it took, but we got enough cardboard to line the whole gym so that you

just had one row of seats along the edge and then this cardboard went up to the, a, to the a, to the a, cheese cloth—very attractive, and we painted scenes on there which, of course, were really works of art, but there were—some of the guys in the fraternity that thought this was a poor use of funds, which of course, we couldn't imagine, but, so we started loaning—renting it out to other organizations on the campus and then when we really saw how bad a shape it was getting in after some others were using it and not as careful as we were, why we sold it and got our funds back, of course, the next time we went up why the cable broke and it all wound up in the dumpster (laughing). So we felt like we had made the sales decision at just the right moment.

KP: So you were decorating the campus even before you started buying sculptures and things like that.

GW: Oh my, yes, and, and important stuff for a dance.

KP: (Laughing) That's great. Um, after you graduated, you became Director of Admissions at Mount.

GW: No, No.

KP: Do you want to talk about that a minute?

GW: I became a fighting machine.

KP: A fighting machine?

GW: I was a trained killer; went off to Korea.

KP: That's scary.

GW: Yes. Now Shirley's always quick to add, "But you didn't get over there until the fighting stopped." But the thing is the army of occupation is really a very difficult situation because there's some guy that always has something going with the Mommasun that's selling cigarettes and other off limits stuff. And so you never knew when this argument could boil over, engulf the unit that you were in, with all the locals helping and joining in with Mommasun. So it was a rather difficult time in my life, and so then I came back and Shirley and I were married and then I worked four years at Alliance Manufacturing as Employment Manager and that was a very interesting experience.

KP: What did you do there? I mean how were you?...

GW: I did the hiring.

KP: ...The hiring.

GW: And it was at the time when Alliance Manufacturing was going very strong, a, there were peak periods when they had over 2,000 employees. But, of course, I left there and Alliance Manufacturing now has about 200 employees, so I feel a little guilty when I drive by there—that I let you know...

KP: Let them down (Both laughing).

GW: I left and...

KP: I don't think you're the cause of it.

GW: You don't—I shouldn't feel totally responsible?

KP: No. I don't think so.

GW: Well, they produce subfractional horsepower shaded pole induction motors so those are something that you get a lot of need for—there's a lot of call for them.

KP: Okay. So, back to Mount—then you went back to Mount.

GW: Then back to Mount Union for eight years and...

KP: What do you find was, um, some of the things that you did while you were Director of Admissions that you enjoyed and things that you didn't enjoy?

GW: Oh, Carl Bracy—Carl Bracy was just the most wonderful guy to work for, and I would come up with some ideas that were a little bit different and he would say, "Well, George..." I would say, "Well, do you think I should do this?" And he says, "You're the professional. This is your field." So he said, "If you think it is good, go ahead and do it. Let's see if it flies," and he said, "But keep me informed so I can protect you." And I thought, 'protect you—what are you talking about?' Well, of course, Carl Bracy worked for the Trustees and if some wild thing was going on, it was nice for him to say, "Well, I knew about that and this is going to work out all right." And I tried every year to have something going that was a little bit different and one of those was the founding of a consortium. There were five colleges that worked together to recruit students and were very similar—had the same, a, a, quarter period, the same financial—or the requirements for cost were about the same and so we were working this up as a little a, university and so we would have students come on campus to do things together. The drama department, we had the other four colleges each brought a station wagon full of kids. We had a, the dress rehearsal. They came for dinner, had the dress rehearsal. They were, of course, communicating with all these students. Then after the dress rehearsal, they discussed it. Then the ones that, that wanted to stay overnight had a sleeping bag and slept in the, in the Rodman

Theater and the others that were close enough like Hiram, they went home. Now the thing is this consortium has continued and is still going to this day, but has been expanded and its used for other things—I don't know what, but I was—we were going to have a common application where a student would have these a—the application would have five colleges and he would just check the one he wanted. It was \$10.00 the first application; five for each one after that. So a student could apply at five colleges, pay \$10.00 for the first application, and 20 for the other four. So \$30.00, he would have his application in with four colleges, and so whichever college got the first application had an extra \$5.00 to make photocopies of all of the information that was gathered from the high school, the, the high school transcript, the recommendations, all of that, and would mail it to all of the other four colleges or however many were checked off. So this was one that I had worked on quite extensively but Dr. Bracy wasn't there anymore and a, a the new administration didn't have the feeling that Dr. Bracy has—give it a whack, let's see if it flies. And he was just a great guy to work for. I just loved Carl Bracy.

KP: Well, that's good.

GW: Just a great one.

KP: So, um, did you actually do recruiting then...

GW: Yes.

KP: Did you have to travel around a lot?

GW: Yes, I did some traveling; and going to high schools and had a staff that visited and then we set up a procedure where we hired Mount Union students to travel in the fall. Now we would get the students who were the superior students that we felt would be good at this job and I would approach them saying, "Hey, how would you like a summer job where you worked in the fall?" And they'd say, "What do you mean?" And I'd say, "Well, you want to get your Master's Degree? How about starting your Master's Degree in January and go to summer and you can work, you know, September, October, November and December so you have four months to work instead of three so you have a third more pay and we had students who were really, we thought more vital, and ready to burn the rubber to go out and visit some of these places and tell about the glories of Mount Union College.

KP: Well, that's good. After you did the admissions work you worked at United Bank?

GW: Yes, twenty five years.

KP: Twenty five years there.

GW: So twenty five years at the United Bank. I've been retired fifteen; that means forty years since I've been in admissions.

KP: Wow!

GW: Whoa. Yeh.

KP: But you're still touting Mount Union.

GW: Well...

KP: And still recruiting even though you don't really realize that.

GW: Well and it's kind of—I've sold a lot of charitable remainder trusts which a, because of my background at the Bank and all of that it kind of just ties in and I've really thought Mount Union College was an important thing in my life—it was an important factor in our family and if Dad hadn't gone to Mount Union College, I don't know what would have happened, you know, and he had a chance to go to Goodyear. One of his fraternity brothers, Charlie Cannon, was the director of something of other—one of the big wheels. There are a number of Sigma Nu graduates that were working at Goodyear and Charlie Cannon said to my Dad, "You know, we think you'd have a great personality to work in personnel and we would like you to come over to Goodyear and set up our personnel department." And dad said, "Well, thank you, Charlie." He said that, "I really feel honored," but he said, "I, I left New York City because I didn't like the city. Why should I go to Akron and raise my family in a city?"—which at that time didn't have suburbs. I mean you were, you were in the city. And he said, "I left that. I wanted to work on the farm." So here was Dad with a college education when a very small percentage of men had a college education and then he went to a farm where I don't know what the percentage was, but it would probably would be a decimal point and quite a few zeros before there was a, a percentage of, of farmers...

KP: Just like Green Acres? (Laughing)

GW: Well, and you know Dad gave that up for us kids.

KP: Uh, huh.

GW: Charlie Cannon would come back to the Sigma Nu parties and I would ride with Dad in our old Model A and here would come Charlie Cannon in his big limo with you know, big, you know, fancy car and I thought "Oh, gosh Charlie Cannon would have been, you know, we'd have been coming in a big car like that." But, of course, it took quite a few years before I appreciated the fact that what Dad had given up for us kids to have a, a, the kind of, of growth opportunity that he didn't have in New York City.

KP: Uh, huh. I'd like to talk a little bit about your walking stick collection. I'm getting out, see if I can get this for you.

GW: Oh yeh, okay. Well, this—these are—I have a couple dozen of these and these are Dad's fault because Dad used to say if you can't hide something accent it and so when I (both laughing)...

KP: That's why you have those.

GW: Yeh, so all our lives when our daughters were buying houses or when we were buying houses and trying to fix them up, we'd have something that was a big pilaster with bricks and concrete block here, we'd say, "How can we hide that—we can't hide it, well we'll accent it?" We'd put—mount a telephone pole on it so it'd look like a telephone stand and a, a, when I started having this wobble problem, which was about fifteen years ago, it wasn't too long until it looked like I was going to have a cane. Well, a cane just makes you look old you know, and you flop around with that cane and my problem isn't Vertigo, it's a total non-balance with my legs and so a, I'm out of balance 360 degrees, so it can be any direction that I'm liable to flop.

KP: Oh dear.

GW: So I, I found a walking stick that was for mountaineering and it happened to be 52 inches long and I got to really liking that thing and so I found out that I could buy a broom stick out at Lowe's for a couple bucks and put a, a crutch tip on it and then proceed to decorate it as a whatever happened to show up that would be inappropriate, and so I have probably twenty of these that are probably inappropriate for almost any occasion so...

KP: (Laughing) What, what are some of the—what do some of them look like? There's one that you, that I like...

GW: Oh, at Christmas there's the one with a, a bells and the mistletoe and the ribbons and the, let's see there's a...

KP: You have...

GW: There's one that I use...

KP: The Mount one...

GW: ...When I'm giving my talks at the school that has just a plain stick with a wolf skin up at the top—well, actually it's a rabbit skin, but who can tell the difference between wolf and rabbit...?

KP: (Laughing)

GW: ...particularly when you're a ways off. That also was a way of keeping my hand from freezing to the stick, and I have one that has a, a—Lou Phelps painted up a nice sign for me that said, "This space for rent." (Both laughing) Like a little billboard and so people could give me—put there card on there for a dollar and they'd pay the dollar to their charity of their choice and I would have there card on there or their publication. I used to do that at campaign time was when I really—during the elections was when I really was besieged by a, a people wanting to put their material on there. Let's see, I have one with a, a kind of a cage on top that I got out of a Lowe's in there a, drapery section. Just a big attractive cage like that and I found a way of screwing it on to the top and then I used wire, telephone wire, to wrap around and (laughing) I tell people that I do my interviewing—I can interview with four or five feet a way where I stick it into my ear so I can hear them when they're shouting at me.

KP: You're also involved in quite a few community groups; Kiwanis being a big part of it.

GW: Kiwanis. I used to be in a lot of stuff. I was—I used to be in a lot of stuff, but I have felt that you're either in something or you're out of it and so as I was really getting more and more out of it, I thought it was best that I—well, I used to be on the Board here at the library.

KP: Right.

GW: I was on the Board of an awful lot of stuff. I was on the Board down there at Copeland Oaks before I moved in and (laughing) and of course, there was a lot of...Well so much of that. But at any rate, we have been so blessed that Shirley and I think that Alliance is such a great area that our children went to school here and felt they had a great education. They had a single high school where there were students of all economic income. There were students of different races and all of this that I think prepared them for the world. Where some people say, "Oh we want our—we don't want our kids going to that high school where there's all this blah, blah, blah, blah." So they send them to some school where all the kids are pretty much like their kids so maybe they get decent academic preparation, but they miss such an important part of life that when our kids went off to college and went off to the work force and all that, the adjustments had been made way back when they were teenagers and we felt that they got as good a preparation as, as, they both did well in college, they both have done well in life, that this was a great place for Shirley and I because we have been involved in so many things—of course, Shirley is still involved with everything—likes to read, she loves to read. She does so much with our daughters that they are both reading nuts, just like Shirley is and the granddaughters don't know any better either. They're...when Emily was, I think,

about 12 years old, she called up Shirley and said, "Gram, what have you been reading lately?"

KP: (Laughing)

GW: Now why would a 12 year old not say, "Hey, when are you making cookies and gonna send us some more cookies?" But instead says, "Gram, what have you been reading lately?" I mean, that just shows how nutso that Shirley is on this education stuff.

KP: That's great.

GW: Well, of course, she taught for quite a few years and tutored over seventeen years.

KP: Well, we've got less than ten minutes left so is there a final story that you want to leave us with?

GW: Well, final sounds so like it's the end, you know...

KP: Well, okay, um, something to let us go forward. How's that?

GW: To what?

KP: I don't know.

GW: (Laughing)

KP: (Laughing) The next interview.

GW: Well, yeh, okay. Well, I'm sure your next interview you're going to have someone who's not only brilliant and a, a humorous and educational, but you'll have someone that can do all those things and also make a fine presentation. My voice has started to go. I don't know what's wrong with it, but like I've said many times the only things that run on me anymore is my nose and my mouth so...(both laughing), and if any time we don't take advantage of the opportunity to give something to others, we are short-suiting ourselves. My Dad always said, "A person's net worth is known by what the person gives rather than what the person has." Now my parents weren't blessed with a lot of cash, but they had time to give that so many people came to the farm to ask Dad for advice and a lot of was about farming, but a lot of was just the practical things in life and Mom and Dad again had more education than probably all the neighbors put together and the neighbors could recognize this and come for assistance which really impressed me as a kid and as they got more money Dad, well, here's kind of a crazy one. Dad was in his probably mid-seventies or so and he said, "Hey, Bud are you going to have a nice funeral for me?" And I said, well, what do you say,

“Oh, yeh, yeh Dad, I’m going to have a nice funeral.” Are their going to be—a big funeral... “Yeh, it will be a big funeral, Dad.” “Am I going to have a black walnut coffin?” “Oh yeh dad it will be a black walnut coffin.” He loved to work with black walnut wood. “You going to have flowers?” “Yeh, yeh” “Across the top?” “Yeh” “On each end?” “Yeh, yeh, Dad, I’m going to have a lot...” And so he kept building this funeral up bigger and bigger and bigger and he said, “What are you going to do with those flowers, they’ll just get thrown away. The casket will get put in the ground and bur...” “No, no, I’ll get a cover to put over the casket, Dad and a...” But he said, “It’s just going to rot away.” And he said and he kept going on with this and he said, “Now you know Bill Berry, that kid that we worked with, mom and I, a, his dad was in the prison.” They had him, he got in with some rough kids and they had him work on the farm and Mom would cook some big meals and they encouraged him to go to Mount and helped him get through Mount and so Dad said, “Why don’t we take that money, have me cremated.” Which he had priced out at \$400 and take all that money for this big stuff that you were going to do and put it in the Bill Berry scholarship fund?” I said, “Well, yeh,” but I said, “What do we do with the ashes? Do we have a cemetery plot?” And he said, “Well, what would that cost?” and so, “Are you going to have a marker?” “Yeh.” “How big is a marker?” Well, he kept getting the marker bigger and he says, “That’s more to put into that scholarship fund.” He says, “Take my ashes and put them around that apple tree that never had an apple that we could eat. We always, as soon as the apples were ripe, we’d take them and give them to the pigs. He says, “Maybe there’s something in my ashes that would make that...” I said, “But Dad, but what are we going to do when Memorial Day—How are we going to put flowers on your grave?” “Oh yes,” he said, “Bob’s in Montana, Dave’s in New York, Walt’s in California. When you, they send a check to the florist to put flowers on my grave and the florist is going to be tempted to say, “They’ll never see it. Why don’t I put this check in my pocket?” Dad said, “I don’t think it’s right to tempt people like that.” So he said, “Why not whenever you feel like putting flowers on my grave, you right a check to the Boy Scouts? And whenever you feel like putting a big bouquet of flowers on my grave, write a bigger check to the Boy Scouts.” So now when Dick Jones calls me and says, “Hey, George, it’s time to put flowers on your Dad’s grave.” So I know it’s time to write a check for the Boy Scouts. (Laughing)

KP: (Laughing) Oh, that’s a great story. Well, thank you so much, George, for being with us today and sharing all of your life experiences. It’s been fun.

GW: Oh, well, thank you.