

UFHC 33

Interviewee: Dr. Gerold L. Schiebler

Interviewer: Samuel Proctor

Date: February 27, 1998

P: I am doing an interview this afternoon with Dr. Gerold L. Schiebler. I am at his home in Gainesville at 2115 N.W. 15th Avenue. This is part of the oral history project of the University of Florida J. Hillis Miller Health Center. Gerry, what is your full name?

S: Gerold Ludwig Schiebler.

P: When were you born?

S: I was born June 20, 1928, at home in Hamburg, Pennsylvania, which is seventy miles northwest of Philadelphia on the Schuylkill River in the Pennsylvania German country.

P: Let me ask you a little bit about your family background. Who was your father?

S: My father was **Alvin Robert** Schiebler. He was an immigrant who came to this country in 1920 from eastern Germany, the town of Zittau in Saxony. He came over with the Kattermann family who [lived] in Piscataway, New Jersey. He [arrived] with two dollars and a little wagon with a goose-down feather bed, which the agents at customs pummeled because they thought it might have been contraband. Since he could not speak English, it was difficult to get a job. The only job he could get was at R. H. Macy's in the packing department in the basement.

P: What brought him over here in the first place?

S: He said that Germany was in chaos. [Those were] the days of the Weimar Republic [1919-1933]. [A man would take] a wheelbarrow full of money to buy a loaf of bread one day, and two wheelbarrows the next day. [My father] decided to go to a different world. Both his parents had died and he was a young teacher. He got in contact with the Kattermann family and [the family became] his patrons.

P: How old was he when he came over?

S: He was born in 1902, therefore he was about eighteen years old.

P: Still a teen-ager. He came to New Jersey and then went from there to Pennsylvania?

- S: The Kattermann family owned a silk mill in Hamburg, Pennsylvania. The Kattermanns knew him well because they brought him over here. When they opened up that silk mill, they offered him the job as office manager in a small town of 3,000 in Hamburg, and he accepted their offer to go there.
- P: But he first worked for Macy's. And he left [Macy's] when the Kattermanns offered him the job.
- S: Yes. He had been a frequent guest at their home. He learned English arduously and eventually very well. On the weekends, he drove taxi cabs to perfect his English. He put in a lot of hours. My mother came over separately. She responded to an advertisement in a German newspaper.
- P: What was her name?
- S: Charlotte.
- P: What was her family name?
- S: Schmoele.
- P: Where was she living?
- S: She was born in the town of Thuringia. She answered an ad in the paper [which called for] somebody to be the maid or cook and clean-up lady for a wealthy family--another branch of the Kattermann family--in the United States. Fifty-five German girls applied. They interviewed them all. [My mother] was selected as one of the final ten. The final ten were asked to go to the Kattermanns' home in Germany and make a meal. Then the Kattermanns selected her [among] all the [other] contestants as the best cook. She came over on a contract of five dollars a month. She had Wednesday afternoons off and Sunday morning to go to mass. That was the only time she had off. The rest of the time she was on call. She got up early in the morning and worked until late at night.
- P: She went directly to Hamburg, Pennsylvania?
- S: No. She went directly to Piscataway, New Jersey. It was a different branch of the same family. [My parents] met each other when my father was a guest at the Kattermann home and my mother was a servant girl serving them dinner. That was how they met. My mother was six years older than my father. She was born in 1896. I was always intrigued as a child that I was the only [student] in the class whose mother was older than his father. They met at the Kattermanns' [house], and they developed their relationship. Then they decided to get married. They went to the courthouse. She was Catholic and he was Lutheran, and they

could not quite agree on religion. The line to the courthouse was three blocks long. They said this must be the most marrying country in the world. They finally got to the justice of the peace in the courthouse and got married. They had gone there that day with the full intention of signing all the documents and [they] did. They found out later that [the date] was February 14. My father decided to take advantage of the opportunity and romanticized to all [his] children that [their parents] were married on Valentine's Day. He gave all the glamour [to] this romantic notion. My parents went back to Germany after thirty-seven years in this country, because they never quite felt comfortable [here]. I found out that my mother would tell me more [stories] if I spoke to her in German rather than English. As you know English, for me, is an acquired language. My first language is German. I said to her, there is no Valentine's Day in Germany. How did you get married on Valentine's Day? She said, Gerold, your father is such a romantic; he thought he would capitalize on the opportunity. We went down there on that day because I had Wednesday afternoon off. It just so happened that it was Valentine's Day. We did not know that it was Valentine's Day. My parents were naturalized citizens in 1924 or 1925. They were married on February 14, 1925. My brother was born on December 15, 1925.

P: Your brother is older than you?

S: Yes. Klaus **Gundolf** Schiebler. He is [buried] in Arlington National Cemetery. He was killed in the Battle of Shuri, [on] Okinawa, on May 14, 1945. Even though my parents were naturalized [citizens] for twenty-five years, and even though they did not belong to German activist groups, the FBI was at our house forty-eight hours after Pearl Harbor [on December 7, 1941], because we had been reported by somebody as being unreliable. The FBI visited us four times during World War II. The [second] time was because somebody had reported us for having a cash of arms. We had no guns. There have been no guns in our family even to this day. The [third] report was for having a secret wireless recorder, and that we were transmitting messages to Germany. It was absolute hokum. We only had a little radio. The [fourth reason for a visit] was that we had a Nazi Swastika flag over the fireplace. We had no fireplace. We did not have a flag. Here was a community that was 98 percent German-American Protestant, yet we were the latest immigrants. I think some people proved themselves to be good Americans by reporting the latest wave of Germans to come [into their community]. We could never find out who told [the FBI], but we were investigated. My brother went into the service. He had been at Lehigh University in Allentown, Pennsylvania, in the engineering program. In fact, it was the **ASTP** program, and he was number two in his class of engineering. In 1943, [the U.S. Army] needed more infantrymen, and the [army] drafted these kids out of college. So, [my brother] wound up in the infantry. He was a private, first-class. His division was headed to Europe. In the army, if you were a first-generation German, you had the choice of not going to Germany and you could go to the

Pacific [instead]. My parents asked him not to go to Germany to shoot at his cousins, so he got assigned to the Pacific [Theater of Operations] with the Seventy-Seventh Division--the Statue of Liberty Division. They went through [the Sakishima-gunto], a small [group of islands with Japanese airstrips] off the [southwest] coast of Okinawa, and then they went to Okinawa. One day a Japanese sniper shot him in the back and severed his spinal chord. [My brother] became a paraplegic and lived for only twenty-four hours after that. Since my parents had asked him to go to the Far East and then he was killed, they spent the rest of their lives flagellating themselves that they [had] made that decision. His original division was sent to the Ardennes Forest [in Belgium]; it was decimated and wiped out by two-thirds. [But] that was not a rational argument for [my parents]. When they went back [to Germany], they originally went to Austria, and then finally settled in the town of Baden-Baden in the Black Forest, which is one of the garden spots of the world. They both died in Baden-Baden.

P: So, they relinquished their [American] citizenship?

S: No, they always kept their citizenship.

P: Are they buried abroad?

S: They are buried right here in Gainesville.

P: You brought them back?

S: No, they insisted on coming back.

P: Did you have family in Germany during the 1930s and 1940s when the Nazis were in power?

S: Yes. I was born here, and my parents took me over there in 1936 and 1937. I spent about a year in Germany and completely lost my command of English. Even though I was only eight years old, we were taught never to speak [English] outside the house, which we did not. We were shifted from relative to relative. My parents went to see the Olympic Games in 1936 [in Berlin]. The second reason they went was under the laws of Hitler's Germany, you could not take any possessions or any of your estate outside of Germany, so you had to go back and spend it in Germany. [When] my father went back to work, my mother traveled and my sister and I were shuttled to various relatives throughout Germany. I think I learned very rapidly that [Hitler's] Germany was an armed camp. Two of my most vivid memories were [of] my uncle Richard **Kunze** who just spent four years in a concentration camp. He was a non-Jewish German, and I found out that there were a lot of people in concentration camps besides Jews. My father called the non-Jewish Germans who went to concentration

camps the forgotten people. I remember taking long walks with Richard Kunze, [hearing of] the terror of the concentration camps, and [learning] very rapidly not to express your opinion in any kind of open forum because somebody might report you. Even to this day, [those trips to Germany have] left very vivid memories with me. After my parents went back to Baden-Baden, [my wife] Audrey and I [visited] them until my father died. We visited them about every two years to spend some time in that city--one of the really beautiful spots in the world. Of course, [Baden-Baden] was the [site of] summer homes of the kings of Europe. They [had all been meeting] in Baden-Baden since the 1840s. That was how hemophilia spread through all the crowned families of Europe. My parents died there, but both are buried right here in Gainesville.

P: You mentioned a sister. She is your other sibling?

S: My sister is living. She just left here. Lenore is a retired nurse. She was a student nurse at Massachusetts General Hospital when I was an intern resident. After she finished her nurse's training, she spent seventeen years in Manhattan as a public education nurse for the board of education in black and Spanish Harlem. She was the only white nurse and was invited back repeatedly by those two communities to work in their schools. She had complete protection immunity when she was there. After many years there, my sister went to Maine because one of her sons went to Maine; she became a head nurse at the Switzer Home for Disturbed Children of Saco, Maine. She spent many years [in Saco] and retired from that position as the head nurse of the Switzer Home for Children. Her one son is a police detective captain in Providence, Rhode Island, and her other son is one of the marine patrol officers in Maine. His station is in the town of Ellsworth, Maine, near Bar Harbor.

P: So, there were three children in the family?

S: Yes. My brother was two and one half years older than I was but three years ahead in school, and my sister was fourteen months younger than I was. My father was always delighted to tell people that my sister Lenore was born on Black Thursday, October 24, 1929, [which was the first day of real panic that resulted in the stock market crash].

P: He liked to attach himself to holidays and events, did he not?

S: He was very well-educated and had a tremendous command of the language. After his retirement, he spent a lot of time writing letters in English for German businesses because Germans liked to give the appearance that they had a tremendous command of English. They would write their letters in German. He would print them in perfect English and they would sign it. People in America would say, gosh, that guy really writes English well. [Lenore] is now retired and

she lives in the town of Reading, Pennsylvania, which is in the same county where I was born. It is the county seat of Berks County.

P: What kind of a city was Hamburg when you were growing up?

S: Hamburg was, from my point of view--in retrospect, an ideal place to grow up. We were an extraordinarily homogeneous community. We were one and one half miles from the Appalachian Trail. One of our projects in the Boy Scouts was to keep fifty miles of the trail clear, twenty-five miles on either side of Hamburg toward Harrisburg and Allentown. It was a community that was self-policing because everybody knew everybody else. It was a community where you spoke three languages. You spoke English in school, a dialect in the streets and German at home. It was very easy to mix those up. Everybody [in Hamburg] spoke and still speaks with a very distinct and fluctuant accent. If anybody called you up at night and [asked], Gerry, do you know who this is? I would say, yes. It is **Billy Sleidel** from **Enhartsville**. [He would ask], how did you know? I would [answer], Billy, nobody else talks that way. It was a community that you felt very safe in. I never had a key to the house because the door was never locked. [The town] had a policeman who worked one-half day a week for five days. The school system was absolutely sensational. It was run by a very strict disciplinarian, John Nathan Land. John Land had the school system under his control absolutely. We bused in people from the outlying rural communities, but everybody in town walked to school. There were two cars in the parking lot, [Land's] and somebody else's. No student had a car. Most of the teachers did not have cars. The education was sensational. I think that my high school Latin class may have been the smartest class I was ever in. I got a ninety-three in Latin. It was the second lowest mark in the class of eight [students]. All eight of those kids went to college and all of them graduated *cum laude* or [higher]. John Nathan Land was a graduate of Franklin & Marshall College. He said to me, you are going to Franklin & Marshall College. I said, yes, sir. I went to Franklin & Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, because Mr. Land told me to go there. Then he told me as I was leaving, you are going to take a year of Greek. I said, I do not need Greek. Why [should I take Greek]? He said, because my son-in-law, Dr. Donald Prakken, is teaching Greek and I think [F&M] is abolishing the whole Greek department because there are so few students; he needs students in there to build up the census. I took a year of Greek because John Land said I should.

P: You were following orders.

S: I followed orders. It was a town in which I felt very comfortable. It was a town in which I had a phenomenal education. My parents' proudest moments were when my brother, who was a mathematical genius and had an I.Q. of 167, was taking engineering at Lehigh University. In Berks County, [there was] a yearly

competition in various school subjects like mathematics, history, and geography.

So [the administrators] put every seventh, eighth and ninth grader in one competition and every tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grader in another competition.

One of my parents' proudest moments was when my brother won the mathematics prize in the county competition. He beat every tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grader as a tenth grader, and I won the geography prize. I beat every seventh, eighth, and ninth grader. We were the only members of the same family to be awarded these county-wide prizes. My brother, of course, said that mathematics took real thinking. Geography was just a matter of memorization. He was not impressed by my winning the geography prize. My parents were very proud. If I had to think about Hamburg, I would pick the same place, the same people. In the small towns, it is easy for them to absorb _____

individuals. I could tell you, in retrospect, that we had a whole bunch of people with serious mental disorders, but they were absorbed into the community. We knew that they were different, but there was no need to institutionalize them. I knew that it was important to have a good education because my father, being a former teacher, had three rules. He got the kids together at the beginning of every year and [stated these] three rules. One, the teacher is always right--even when he is wrong. Two, do not bring your problems home. Solve them yourself.

I am not going to be an intermediary for your private teachers. Three, if you have a conduct mark, there is no allowance. It was twenty-five cents a month--at that time, a princely sum. He was very rigid about that. Each year at the end of each school term, we had a big party in our backyard with wine and cookies and sandwiches, and my father gave a flowery speech thanking all the teachers for the wonderful work they had done educating his children. We kept telling him [that] some of them are lousy. You are thanking the wrong people. He said, Gerold, in this world, you are going to find very good, fantastic, fair, poor, terrible, lousy people. Learn to live with them and learn to deal with them because you are going to meet them no matter what you do or where you go. He had a phenomenal amount of intrinsic wisdom. When I went through college and medical school, I said to him, I ought to get a real paying job. I was working in a Boy Scout camp near Plymouth, Massachusetts. I earned five dollars the whole summer. That was my total pay. He said, Gerold, money is not a value. Spend your years in the woods because you are never going to be able to do that [again]. In the rest of your professional career, you will never again have the opportunity. From age fifteen until I graduated from medical school, I spent every summer as a counselor at a Boy Scout camp. I did nature. I did the waterfront swimming. I did explorer grouping. I just stayed in the woods. The first year I went there was after my brother [had been] killed. I went there to [do some] thinking. They gave me a job as head dishwasher. It was the only job available and the only job nobody else wanted. I worked my way up over a decade to assistant camp director. I had a wonderful ten years of idyllic time in the Boy Scout movement in New England.

P: What did your father do?

S: He was the office manager for Kattermann. When [Kattermann] went out of business because silk was replaced, [my father] went to another business in town called Burkey Underwear. He was the office manager at Burkey Underwear until he retired.

P: So you lived a comfortable life with your father's income?

S: We lived a comfortable life in the sense that we emphasized eating very well at all times. My mother was a phenomenal cook. The only time I can remember there was a problem was during the Depression when we had elderberry soup three days in a row. I knew that [the times] were tough on the budget. [My parents] saved in other ways. We never had a car growing up. We walked or took the bus. I got my first car when I came to Gainesville. I was thirty-two years old. It was the first car I ever had in my life. You learn to adapt. There was never enough money to buy a car or [money] for [other] frills. There was always enough money for good food, a bottle of beer for [my father] at lunch and a bottle in the evening and a half a bottle for my mother. There was always enough money to spend some time in the summer at **Lake Lugano**. My mother would go there with my father and me. That was their favorite place to go sometime in the summer.

P: Did you work in high school?

S: I worked in high school. I carried papers. I took my brother's paper route. My brother had it and I took it over. I carried papers for Mr. **Piff** Hess for the wonderful sum of one dollar for six days, a quarter for Sundays. I got fired when I led the newsboys to ask for \$1.25 a week rather than a dollar. I got hired back three days later because he could not find anybody else to work at one dollar a week. It was my first experience with semi-unionization. My father allowed no comic books in our house. He thought they were not educational. He allowed no newspaper that had comics in it. Therefore, we only read *The New York Times*. We became very good at reading *The New York Times* and so in order to read the funnies, we went to Mr. Hess's news bin an hour early before our paper route and read funny books. On the way home from church on Sundays, we would stop at a neighbor's [house] and read funny papers because [funny papers] were not allowed at our house. [My father] thought that the comics were not good because one, they were not educational; two, they were not funny; and three, they had too many misspelled slang words. He thought that we would get confused as we developed our bilingualism and dialect. He did not want us to get confused with the lousy language in the comics.

P: What kind of a social life did a young boy like you have growing up in Hamburg?

S: The social life was pretty much spent with the kids in the neighborhood in the summertime before camp. My parents had the **der Badstiergang**, which means the walk every Sunday. We walked fifteen to twenty miles and that was part of the culture. You just walked. Everybody accepted that until we got smart enough to get invited by our friends [to do other activities] so that we had an acceptable way to get out of the fifteen- to twenty-mile walk. You will find that when you have very little money and no car, your social life is circumscribed. Prior to my working at a camp, [we] three children spent some time with one of my mother's friends in New England. We called her Aunt **Tante Lisel** who had married a man from a small town called North Carver, which is seven miles southwest of Plymouth. We spent some time there in the summer. Except for the senior party, I do not remember any party where liquor was [served]. There were obviously no drugs at that time. Like many [other] rural areas, there was a great deal of smoking. My brother wanted to introduce me to smoking at age eleven. He gave me a corn silk cigar which is dried corn silk and newspaper. I vomited the whole day and told my mother that I had an upset stomach. It cured me of smoking, thank goodness. We played a lot of games at home. My father and brother were chess fanatics and I dabbled at it. We played a great number of card games, particularly pinochle. My father loved pinochle. We played a lot of Monopoly. The whole family played Monopoly. I did a lot of Ping-Pong playing with my good friends. I was heavily involved in the Boy Scout movement.

P: What were your strengths in school?

S: My strength in school was that I was pretty good in everything. My brother had preceded me, and everybody thought that since he was smart, his brother and sister were smart. That was not quite true, but at least if we showed up, they said, there are those Schiebler kids. I was very fortunate to follow him because he was such a brilliant student. I covered all [the subjects] very well except that when I got to college, I found out that I needed remedial mathematics and algebra, but I was way ahead in English. I was way ahead on languages. My father spent many hours with my brother and me drilling us in languages. He would give us a phrase in French and we would have to give it in German and English since he was trilingual. He spent a lot of time with us, far more time than I spent with my children. He emphasized that the only way ahead for immigrant children was education. For instance, take the Sunday *New York Times* crossword puzzle. My brother, my father and I would work on that and we would usually finish it by Thursday. We had different strengths. My father's [strengths] were music, literature, poetry, and [other topics of] general knowledge. My brother was a whiz [at] physics, mathematics, algebra, and theoretical [topics]. I did history, geography, and current events. We would finish it by Thursday pretty regularly. The three of us would work on it during that time.

P: When did you graduate from high school?

S: 1946.

P: You graduated [high in your class]?

S: Valedictorian. I had the second highest average.

P: Were you already beginning in high school to think about the science areas and medicine?

S: In the eleventh grade, I began to think about engineering or medicine. My family physician, Dr. Oliver Cope, was a fantastic role model for me. In those days, the family physician was practically a part of the whole Schiebler family. He was a personal friend and, in retrospect, I now know that he did not have much to give us in his bag, but he gave himself. I grew up with great reverence for the physicians in our community, [who were, in hindsight,] a very competent group of individuals, as far as knowledge at that time or being part of the community. I think that I was rapidly [heading] toward science, as opposed to [any other field]. My parents gave me eight years of violin lessons, but when I got to medical school, I had not played the violin in a long time.

P: Did you grow up in a religious household?

S: My mother being Catholic and my father being Lutheran, it was pretty much an a-religious household. Religion was not emphasized except [my parents] thought that it was important for us to go to church. We went to the church nearest to our house. It happened to be a Lutheran church. My family has been ravaged by divorce. My marriage is the only viable marriage in my family in this century. In those days, of course, you did not get divorced, just long separations. The answer to that is, no. My father was never really in tune with what he felt was the _____ of the Catholic hierarchy. My mother was brought up by the nuns and was one of eight Catholic families in town. To show how homogeneous Hamburg was, there were eight Catholic families and one-half of one Jewish family. That was it.

P: Everybody else was Lutheran?

S: Everybody else was Lutheran, co-reformed, or Methodist. Our family goes back 400 years. We have a family tree [on which] you can follow my name down from 1597.

P: Where is Franklin & Marshall?

S: Franklin & Marshall College is about fifty miles south of Hamburg. It is on the Philadelphia-Harrisburg Pike. It is in the southeastern section of Pennsylvania

right in the middle of Amish country, about sixty miles [west of] Philadelphia.

P: A liberal arts school?

S: Very much a liberal arts school.

P: Four years or was there a graduate program?

S: Four years and across the street was a seminary, the Evangelical Reform Seminary. It was an all-boys school. It was heavily affiliated with the Evangelical Reform Church.

P: Franklin & Marshall was a private school?

S: It is. It is the thirteenth oldest college in the United States.

P: How did you pay for school?

S: We paid for school in the following way. First of all, I had won a scholarship in competition through the state so that I had a full scholarship to Franklin & Marshall College. My parents then paid for my other expenses. When I got to medical school, I had a partial scholarship, which covered about a quarter of my tuition; [the tuition] was \$800 a year at Harvard. For the rest of it, they sent me the money from my brother's death benefits. When [a family member] died during World War II, [the federal government] gave [the] family \$10,000 over seventeen years. That was the death benefit for getting killed in the war. [My parents] dedicated that whole fund to my education. What I could not get from my brother's death benefit or from my scholarship, I just borrowed. Harvard let you borrow money for 1.5 percent interest. You did not have to pay it back for five years. When I left medical school, I owed \$9,000.

P: What kind of a program did you get into at Franklin & Marshall? Was it already science with medicine as your destination?

S: Yes.

P: So, you committed yourself.

S: [F&M had] a very fine pre-medical school with a superb reputation and record of getting its graduates into medical school.

P: How large was the school?

S: It was the largest class ever, because in 1946 when I went there, we had all the

veterans coming back. It was 1,300 at that time. It was an unusual amalgam because we had a large cadre of returning veterans. They had not studied in five or six years and all these high school kids [were] coming in there. Since we had no car, a friend of the family drove us to Franklin & Marshall. One family friend said, you ought to join the glee club. I asked, why? He said, it will be your anchor. So I joined the glee club and became a mediocre baritone. I said, this will be my chance. I will get to know the head of the glee club. Five days after I got there, the glee club director was caught in a flagrante delicto with his secretary and got fired, so my psychological anchor went out the window. Another big shock was the phenomenal dichotomy between these new high school kids and the returning veterans. They were two entirely different cadres of people. Neither of them understood the other. I will never forget [when] my parents dropped me off at the dormitory and left. We lived way at the top. The returning veterans got newly furnished [accommodations], two to a nice suite. The kids from the high school got the top floors, three to a room. It was appropriate.

P: And no air conditioning.

S: No air conditioning. There was a knock on the door. I thought it was my parents. I opened the door and these two big football players said, do you know the rules around here, kid? I said, no. They said freshmen have to clean up the football players' rooms. For the first part of that semester, I became the slave to these huge, big football players until the first history test. They said, Gerry, we are flunking history. Can you help us? I said, we have to have a little deal here. You guys have to become my protectors and not have me as your slave cleaning up your room. They said, OK. So, I looked at the material that was covered. This professor was a great essay question [asker]. I made up twenty essay questions. I gave them the answers. I spent three days [with these guys] and they had [the answers] down cold. They did not know anything else, but they knew these twenty questions. So, the big test came along, and they had previously gotten "D's" and "F's." One got a ninety-three and one got a ninety-four because of the ten questions, nine of them were ones they were drilled on. They never believed that I had not had the test in advance. That test allowed me to become a living citizen among Franklin & Marshall folks and not a victim of my football friends.

P: Is this Benjamin Franklin & John Marshall?

S: It is.

P: Were you just spending all your time in the library looking at books and doing research?

S: I became very active in the Delta Sigma Phi fraternity, the epsilon chapter. I was president of the fraternity my senior year. I ran cross-country all four years. I got my letter in cross-country. I maintained myself, which makes it very difficult to take an asides course, because you have to go to the laboratory late in the afternoon. By the time you put in your cross-country miles, ate supper, and went to bed, you were tired. It was the only sport that I even had the chance at making the team. It was not a great spectator's sport. I think the only person who came out there was my roommate who carried me home [because] I was exhausted.

P: Were you a party boy?

S: No. A party boy had to have money and a car.

P: You lacked both.

S: I lacked both. In the fraternity, I do not think they did that. It was not a natural proclivity and alcohol was not a great magnet for me because [when I was] growing up, we always had alcohol. We always had beer and wine. [Alcohol] was part of our family. I cannot remember not having access to alcohol, therefore, when I went to college, it was not a great magnet for me. When [the frat brothers] discussed it in the fraternity house, I thought, does not everybody drink? I never saw my parents inebriated. They drank beer and wine, but no hard liquor was in our house. They had rum because rum was put in the tea to cure a sore throat.

P: You started as a freshman in 1946 and graduated in 1950.

S: Yes.

P: You graduated with honors?

S: *Magna cum laude.*

P: So, your point average was high.

S: It was.

P: And you applied immediately to Harvard?

S: I applied to a whole series of medical schools, including Harvard. I applied to Harvard because nobody else had gotten in from Franklin & Marshall. I said, why not give it a try. I had a 3.85 grade point average at that time. I went up there because I spent all my summers in New England, so New England was

very comfortable for me. I think I got in because the Pennsylvania state quota was eight. Harvard medical school had quotas by states. Montana's quota was one. Pennsylvania's was eight. Each state had a quota based on its population. I became one of the eight Pennsylvania boys to go to Harvard medical school. There were 155 in the class.

P: How long were you in medical school?

S: Four years.

P: So, you graduated in 1954 from Harvard?

S: Yes.

P: Talk about your life in Boston on the Harvard campus.

S: Harvard is unique in a sense [because there is] a dormitory for the medical students. Almost no medical school in the country has that. Harvard is also unique because it is not geographically part of the university. The university is in Cambridge. The medical school was with the Boston _____ Hospital, _____ Brigham Hospital, Beth Israel Hospital, and Children's Hospital along Wood Avenue and Roxberry. You did not have the feeling that you were on a university campus. You had the feeling that you were in a building in the middle of a bunch of hospitals far away from the rest of the university. The only time I went to the university was when I had to sign papers to get my loan. I got to Harvard in 1950. I had a fantastic time at Harvard. It was a very good place. It had a brilliant set of students. A lot of the pre-eminent physicians in the country today were people who I knew from medical school. I think that it is a network that is all over the country and just being a Harvard graduate gives you an entree that is very valuable.

P: Now, were you already thinking about pediatrics and cardiology [or were those two fields] that came up?

S: I was thinking of every [medical field]. I think I applied to every conceivable [field] because I was not sure what to do. I went down to the University of Pennsylvania to be interviewed for a rotating internship. I applied to surgery, medicine, and pediatrics, which shows you that I was not sure what to do. Then the two chairmen down at Massachusetts General, Dr. Walter Bauer and the professor of pediatrics, Dr. Alan Butler, offered me [an opportunity] that was never done before: do half my training in medicine and half in pediatrics, which is now very common. It is now called [a] mixed pediatric medicine internship.

S: I spent two years at Mass. General, half in pediatrics and half in internal

medicine. I had a phenomenal education with some of the world's great physicians. I still think that it is the best hospital in the world. My sister was there as a student nurse. Audrey was assistant head nurse on the GYN floor. All three of us were there simultaneously. The first day I got there, Dr. Butler called us in and said, Gerry, we have a new policy now at Mass. General. We are going to pay you, because prior to that you got room and board. I said, that is wonderful and [asked] what is it? He said, \$25 a month. As I was leaving, he [asked], Gerry, are you married? I said, yes. He said, oh, different pay scale, \$28 a month. I said to Audrey, \$3 a month [more]. What saved us, of course, was that [there was] a very benign attitude as far as your meals were concerned. Your wife went ahead of you for a glass of milk and a salad and you came by with two roast beefs, two potatoes, two vegetables, two desserts, and, of course, my tray was free. Since she was a staff nurse, she had to pay. They were very willing to overlook the disparity in the size of the trays. The problem was the hours that you worked. You worked thirty-six hours out of every forty-eight. As an intern, you were responsible for forty patients. You either had to work Monday, Wednesday and the weekend or Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. It meant that one day every two weeks, you were a human being. You worked all day Thursday and Thursday night, all day Friday and Friday night, and Saturday until noon when you got home--[and then] you slept. Then [on] Sunday you were a normal human being. The hours were incredibly long, but we survived.

P: As an intern, what did you do? What were your responsibilities?

S: I was the primary person to see the patient first and establish a preliminary diagnosis and a plan of action, which I then reviewed with my resident.

P: You were working with children?

S: I was working half-time with children and half-time with adults.

P: Did this work turn you on to pediatrics?

S: Yes. I think the other [aspect] that turned me on was that [the staff] assigned me to the equivalent of the intensive care unit on the adult section. Everybody there was very sick, had multiple diseases, and was over sixty-five. I said, I do not want to spend my time on the past. I want to spend my time on the future. I became more interested in children because I spent so much time taking care of individuals our age who had multiple diseases. I was not quite sure what I was doing for the future. Kids attracted me more plus I felt what I was doing would really influence their future lives.

P: You began to work in pediatric cardiology?

S: Not yet. As I was going through the end of my second year, Audrey and I were starving because we had Mark, and there was no way for Audrey to work. We were in need of money, so I applied to places all over the country and went to Minnesota for the simple reason that it paid the most--\$800 a month. That was a princely sum compared to what Mass. General was paying. I went to Minnesota, and I took my third year of pediatrics at Minnesota. My chief resident was Don Eitzman [Donald Eitzman, UF professor of pediatrics, 1958-1968]. That was how I first met Don Eitzman.

P: You were senior resident at Minnesota?

S: I was senior resident. In my first rotation, Eitzman assigned me to the cardiac catheterization laboratory about which I knew nothing. I had always been taught that all knowledge was on the east side of the Charles River. After that it was intellectually a barren land. I got to Minnesota and I found out that was not so. They were ahead of Harvard and the Mass. General system in many areas. One of [these ways] was in open-heart surgery, which was developed at the University of Minnesota. I was catapulted by my assignment to the cardiac catheterization laboratory. It was phenomenally exciting at that time because Minnesota was the premier place in the world for it. The environment was electric. I was so mesmerized by what [the medical staff] was doing cardiac-wise. They were five years ahead of the Harvard system at that time. [The program] became so attractive that I decided to take a fellowship in pediatric cardiology at the University of Minnesota.

P: This was where pediatric cardiology started?

S: Right. I spent a year as a fellow in pediatric cardiology, and at that time when you wrote a paper, you did your own typing. There was no secretary to do your typing. I wrote some papers [then], some of which are still very valid because they were clinical observations. In that same time frame, I got to know Dr. Robert A. Good, who is now a senior professor at All Children's Hospital in St. Petersburg, [Florida]. [He is] one of the world's greatest scientists. He did a lot of the work on transplantation. He was a very magnetic person who after a year said, Gerry, you are not ready to go out and do pediatric cardiology in an academic institution. I had just come back from the University of Tennessee at Memphis, and they offered me a job for \$10,000 a year. I thought that was a princely sum. My academic mentor, Dr. Bob Good, said, you are not ready. You have not been in an intellectual environment. You have just been working on patients. He got the great **Earl Wood**, who was a professor of physiology at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, [Minnesota], to take me for a year, [but the Mayo Clinic] could not take me until January. I spent six months in a physiology laboratory working on heart and lung machine preparations under the direction of **Dr. John A. Johnson** in physiology. At that time, my running mates in pediatric

cardiology laboratory later became the pre-eminent heart transplant surgeons of the world. I was running mate to both Christiaan Barnard [Christiaan N. Barnard, South African surgeon who performed first human heart transplant in 1967, b. 1922] and Norman Shumway [Norman E. Shumway, American surgeon who performed first heart transplant in the United States in 1968, b. 1923]. They were the senior residents on the cardiac service. I was a senior resident in the pediatric cardiology service. It was an electric time. After those six months in John Johnson's laboratory working on heart perfusion, I went to the Mayo Clinic and spent a year and a half at the laboratory with Dr. Wood in the cardiac catheterization laboratory, which was a phenomenal experience. I was sent there by the university to learn Dr. Wood's techniques, and then [I] came back to the University of Minnesota to do the same [procedures]. In that time, I had been asked to interview at Gainesville, Florida.

P: Before you get to that, tell me who the two doctors were, Adams and Anderson.

S: They were my pediatric cardiology mentors in the clinical service. Dr. Paul Adams and Dr. Ray Anderson were the senior staff people in pediatric cardiology.

P: And you worked under them?

S: I did.

P: They were your mentors?

S: Yes, when I was at the University of Minnesota. [They were] both fabulous human beings.

P: It was when you were at Minnesota that you were offered the position in Gainesville?

S: When I was in Minnesota, I was first offered a position at Tennessee and then I was offered the position in Gainesville. I came down first in 1958. [Florida] offered me the position as head of pediatric cardiology.

P: Who offered this [position] to you?

S: Dr. Richard T. Smith [Richard T. Smith, UF chairman of department of pediatrics, 1958-1967]. He got to know me because he was my professor at Minnesota. He and Eitzman were a combination. Eitzman and Smith wrote a lot of the early papers in immunology and infectious diseases. They left Minnesota to go to Dallas, Texas, at Southwestern. Then Dick was offered the chair here in

pediatrics by George Harrell [George T. Harrell, UF dean of college of medicine, 1951-1964]. George Harrell was hiring very young people. He hired Herb Kaufman [Herbert E. Kaufman, UF chairman of department of ophthalmology and professor of pharmacology, 1962-1969] at twenty-eight; Prystowsky [Harry Prystowsky, chair of department of obstetrics and gynecology, 1958-1973] at thirty; and Dick Smith at thirty-one. Smith was hiring nobody older than [he was]. That left him very little maneuvering room.

P: How old were you when you came to Gainesville?

S: I came to Gainesville in 1960.

P: But this was 1958 that you are talking about.

S: At that time, I was twenty-eight, thirty years old. At twenty-six, you should be at the medical rotation. Then I had four years of training in pediatric cardiology.

P: Had you ever heard of Gainesville before?

S: I could not even find it on the map. [I found out] that an airplane went there.

P: Once again, who offered you this position? Smith?

S: Yes.

P: And you had already had a relationship with him.

S: Both a social and professional relationship.

P: It was a brand new school.

S: He brought Eitzman along. I knew Smith and Eitzman from Minnesota. The first patient in pediatrics came in the fall of 1958 when Dick [Smith] came here. [UF] offered me the position as head of cardiology, which would mean that I was head of myself since I would have been the fourth staff member. It would have been Smith, Eitzman, **Andy Lawrence**, and then me. I was only the fourth one here in this department of pediatrics. So, I looked at it, and my wife and I discussed it-- we are both northerners. I think we are both philosophically more centrist and liberal rather than conservative. We were afraid of the South because of its racial problems, and we did not think that we would fit in here. I turned the job down.

P: How much was [the University of Florida] offering you or did it get to that?

- S: It never got to that the first time.
- P: You rejected the offer in 1958. You had known very little about Gainesville and the University of Florida and the medical school before you physically arrived?
- I: I knew almost nothing except I knew Dick Smith; he is a charismatic individual and a great salesman and entrepreneur.
- P: You did not know Dean Harrell?
- S: Never heard of him except I walked into his office and he said to me, where did you meet your wife? [That was] the first question. I said in the delivery room. He almost fell off his chair. I [had] met Audrey when I was a third-year medical student, and she was a nursing student at Providence ____ Hospital. We were assigned to the same team.
- P: Hold that [thought]. I want to get to that in a little bit.
- S: Anyway, I turned [Florida] down.
- P: I presume that Dean Harrell did not impress you by starting off with that question.
- S: He terrified me. George Harrell petrified me.
- P: Did you take a look at this campus? The medical school was in that swampy area down there.
- S: There was not much there.
- P: The [university] had constructed [the medical school] already.
- S: The hospital opened in 1958; it was nice and warm here with a pretty campus. I went back to Minnesota and was offered the job [there]. The University of Minnesota paid for me to go down to the Mayo Clinic and to go back and run the laboratory at the University of Minnesota. I felt a moral obligation to go back to Minnesota since [the school] was paying my way. I was ready to go back to Minnesota [when the University of Florida] suddenly called me again. That was because Madison Spach from Duke had turned it down. Madison Spach would have been a superb choice. He became one of the outstanding pediatric cardiologists in the world today. He is a regents professor at Duke University now. So [George Harrell and Dick Smith] called me again on an emergency. I did not realize until later what had happened. Now I know what happened and what the emergency was. Bill Wheat [Myron W. Wheat, Jr., UF professor of surgery and chief of division of thoracic and cardiovascular surgery, 1958-1968]

was the original cardiac surgeon. He was an extremely talented person, very gifted, very bright. The adult people were doing all the pediatrics and no matter how good they were, they were not as good as those of us who were trained solely with kids. They sent up a little girl for a hole in the heart. Bill Wheat opened up the heart, [but] there was no hole. They had to close her up; she had an operation for nothing. The whole place blew up. Dr. Harrell did not want us operating on normal hearts [because] somebody had made the wrong diagnosis. He went to see Dick Smith. They discussed it and said, what about that kid from Minnesota? Can we not get him down here so that we can prevent these unnecessary surgeries? Dick Smith allegedly said, George, I thought that you did not like him. He was obnoxious. He was aggressive. He talked too much. [Harrell said,] that is all right, just get him down here. I think we can stand him if he just prevents us from operating in the wrong way. In retrospect, the problem was that the hole was not in its normal place where you can see it easily. It was way down in the muscle where it looks like you are at the bottom of a tree looking at all the roots. We call that a muscular defect, as opposed to way up front where you can see what is called a septal defect. It was there, but it was hard to find. In those days, you could not differentiate those [conditions] because the techniques were not perfected.

P: So, the [staff] really had not missed.

S: They really had not missed, but they were not aware of the fact that these defects way down in the muscle are harder to find than those that are more visible at the top. [Dr. Harrell] decided [to] call me down. I came down the second time and got a fantastic interview in the sense that everybody seemed to want me. Prior to that time, I think I was too forward. Dr. Harrell was concerned about my tremendous over-enthusiasm--[at least what he perceived as my over-enthusiasm].

P: You and your wife came down the second time?

S: No. The [university] never invited Audrey down. Dick Smith was too smart to waste money on that unless you insisted on it. Dick Smith was a tremendous saver of money. He did it very well. I say that in admiration.

P: No wonder the [university] put him in charge of the foundation.

S: Audrey never came down. I was carrying messages. We had three children and Audrey was pregnant with our fourth child, Tina, by that time. She was pretty encompassed with her duties. In retrospect, it is very interesting because that little girl they operated on went to medical school. She graduated and is now a physician in Kentucky. She takes full credit for getting Gerry Schiebler to Gainesville.

- S: Did they tie up this whole [interview] by taking you to dinner at Cedar Key?
- S: Of course. They took me on the hotel porch. Also, the first night I was here, they took me to the ____ [that served] stone crabs. I thought, wow, this is good. They took me over to Cedar Key where Dick Smith perfected ____ with **Bessie Gibbs**. We went to the Island Hotel, which had its greatest culinary skill at that time. It was a great recruitment [ploy]. [I was earning] a meager salary at the Mayo Clinic, and [now the University of Florida] was going to offer me \$10,000 a year. [Today], if you offer \$10,000, the [candidate] wants to know if it is for one week or two weeks. The next thing I knew, I got [a] newspaper clipping from my good friend **Dr. Ernie Hadad**, who is a minister in Ormond Beach. [The clipping] said, cabinet approves doctor's salary by a narrow vote of four to three or three to two. R.A. Gray, state treasurer, complains ____ by J. Wayne Reitz's [J. Wayne Reitz, UF president, 1955-1967] request to pay children's heart doctor from the Mayo Clinic at Rochester, Dr. Gerold Scheibler, \$10,000 a year. No doctor is worth \$10,000 a year. Dr. Reitz said, we are a national market. We have to pay national fees, even for Florida. In those days, any salary over \$10,000 had to be approved by the cabinet. By a narrow one-vote margin, the [cabinet members] approved my princely sum of \$10,000.
- P: Gerold Scheibler arrives on the scene.
- S: I showed up on a hot day with Audrey eight months pregnant and three small kids. Audrey's sister, Judy, was helping us come down here. It was hotter than blue blazes. Audrey was having labor contractions on the way down here, some pretty significant [ones] in Statesboro, Georgia. Audrey said, get me an obstetrician. Then she looked at me and said, I do not want [you] delivering my baby. I want to get a real doctor. We got down here and she said, sign the payroll and find an OB doctor. I [asked] Eitzman, who are the OB doctors. There are only two. Prystowsky, forget him. He is too busy administratively and Smiley [Hugh M. Hill, UF professor of medicine, 1959-present and UF college of medicine, dean of students and alumni affairs, 1963-present]. I said, Smiley? Smiley who? [Eitzman said], Smiley Hill. You go ask him. That was how I met Smiley Hill. I said, sir, my wife is pregnant, would you take her as a patient? Smiley said yes.
- P: Smiley agreed to everything.
- S: Our last three daughters are all Smiley Hill babies. I signed him up and then I went down to payroll. They said, have you had your physical? I said, no. You have to have a physical. They sent me to the infirmary. By that time, I had my first car. It was a station wagon. It was my first car ever because I could get credit on my future salary from the University of Florida. I got to the infirmary and [a staff member asked], are you our summer help? I said, no. I am an assistant

professor. [He] said, they think you are a student. You do not need a physical. Go down and tell them that you are on the faculty. I went down and told them I was on the faculty. They said, why did you come down here dressed in a T-shirt, sneakers, and shorts? We had just come from the trip, and I was not dressed in elegance. I signed on and got on the payroll. [We] rented a house on Eighth Avenue, [which was] owned by **John Stemp**. It was not air conditioned, but it had a wonderful pool. Gene Smith had looked at various places, and we rented it for a year.

P: Your kids loved that.

S: The kids loved it and it gave us a chance to cool off in the hot summer, because for us it was hotter than blue blazes here in June. It was interesting because we were in the county. The city ended at the middle of Eighth Avenue at that time. We were on the north side. We spent a lot of time in the pool. I spent a lot of time working, as is my proclivity. Dick Smith was a fantastic chairman. Eitzman was a good colleague. Andy Lawrence was Andy Lawrence and then they brought along Mel Greer [Melvin Greer, UF professor of medicine and pediatrics and UF chief of division of neurology, 1961-present] and Howard Pearson [Howard Allen Pearson, UF professor of pediatrics, 1962-1966] after that. It was a very good crew. I will never forget when Audrey said to me, one of the neighbors wants to use the pool. I asked, for what? He needs some hydrotherapy for his polio. The lady who came [to talk to Audrey] was from Allentown, Pennsylvania. I thought, they cannot be bad if they are from the same part of the country [that] I am [from]. I got there one day and there was a Ph.D. in history and political science doing his exercises for his polio. He was paralyzed from the waist down. That was how I met United States Senator John East of North Carolina [John Porter East, U.S. senator, North Carolina, 1980-1986]. John East lived on Eighth Avenue right by the **Jenkinsons**. John East was a Ph.D. student in political science and history at the University of Florida. Remember, John East beat the incumbent Senator Morgan [Robert Morgan, U.S. senator, North Carolina, 1974-1980] on the basis of the Panama Canal. That was a big issue for them and then [East] became [part of] the ultra right wing of the Republican Party of North Carolina. Then he developed a thyroid [problem], but the physician in Congress, **Freeman Cary**, missed it. Sissy East sued the United States Congress over that and lost. Freeman carried it, but lost his job. Then I saw [East] at a hotel, and he still was bitter about the fact that the vaccine came out six weeks after he developed polio. [John East] got so depressed, that [he] went into his garage and committed suicide.

P: Here in Gainesville?

S: No, in Washington, D.C. They were very good friends of Joe Jenkinson's family.

Gainesville in those days was dry. In spite of frequent referendums, we lost several times because the money was supplied either by the churches or by the people in the liquor stores one inch over the county lines. They wanted to keep their monopoly, so they kept liquor out of the town. I think that it was the excitement of a brand new medical school. When I got here, the first class [had] just graduated. I missed the first graduation by a couple weeks, so I never knew Mark Barrow [Dr. Mark V. Barrow, Gainesville cardiologist] as a student. I knew him as a house officer. All I heard was from **Dorothy Woodward** who said the senior skits were terrible because the language was so filthy. I have not [yet] seen a senior skit [performed by] a medical student where the language is not filthy. I do not know what the big surprise was. When [UF] built the hospital, somebody forgot to build a cardiac catheterization laboratory. I think somebody had prostate trouble because [the administrators] built four prostatectomy rooms, but no cardiac cath labs. You had to do your cardiac catheterizations in Jape Taylor's [Jape Taylor, Gainesville physician] _____ lab--very primitive by Mayo Clinic standards. Then, you had to bring in an x-ray to do your special x-ray techniques and add your cardiography. Coming from a premier center like the Mayo Clinic, it was pretty medieval here as far as technology. That was an enormous step down.

P: How did you find the students?

S: I loved the students. I thought they were terrific. One of my first students was **Bob Lacullum**. I found out that I had a whole new culture. I had to learn how to pronounce the names. I had to learn how to pronounce Ocala and Micanopy. I was very fortunate in that my first fellow was **Larry Elliot**, whose mother you know well, from Gainesville High School. At age ninety-three, she is still the cheer leader for the women's basketball team. Mary Meyers Elliot lives on Fourth Place. Larry was sent to me for six months to finish out his pediatrics before he went into anesthesiology. Larry was an extraordinarily adept person who never learned how to turn on his button. Larry Elliot just took off. We started to write. We wrote extensively together. I sent him to see the great **Jesse Edwards**, the cardiologist at Minnesota. Then he went to radiology and became head of radiology here, head of cardiovascular radiology at Alabama and then professor and chairman at Georgetown. He was there for many years. He probably became the premier professor of radiology in the country. He just retired in the last year but wrote brilliantly. He had a unique genius to make very difficult concepts simple to understand. I was just lucky. My second fellow was Ira Gessner [Ira H. Gessner, UF Eminent Scholar of pediatric cardiology, 1960-1990]. I did not do a thing to recruit him. They were just there. Gessner was, of course, an extraordinarily competent person.

P: I noticed in some of your publications that you have worked with him.

- S: Yes. He started out as a fellow in our place after being a resident with Dick Smith. Dick Smith was a very good chairman. He did not micro-manage, and he let us develop. We were all very young and we all worked very hard.
- P: When I talked to Dean Harrell, he told me that when he came in, he wanted to set up a medical school that had a philosophy that was different from the traditional medical schools. First of all, he wanted his faculty [members] to be part of the University of Florida and involve themselves in university activities. [He did not want them] to isolate themselves down the hill. Did you find that you were able to do that? Did you support that kind of a concept?
- S: I was a young assistant professor. My contact with the rest of the university was almost zero. When I first got here, there was a huge backlog of children with heart disease. Until my good friend **Jerry** Krovetz [L. Jerome Krovetz, UF associate professor of pediatrics and physiology, 1961-1964] came down a year later, I was all by myself and did the cardiac catheterizations, read the EKGs, saw the patients, ran the clinics. I had almost no time for university-wide activities nor was I approached to [participate in] any of those. Dr. Harrell [had] the idea that all of us should remain general doctors. For a while, they had a clinic in which you never knew what kind of patient you were going to see. Dr. Harrell thought we ought to maintain our contact with general medicine. We might show up [at the clinic] and see a sixty-year-old [patient] plagued with arthritis. What did I know about arthritis? I just spent six years becoming a specialist in children's heart disease. The famous story is that one of the orthopedic surgeons got a GYN condition and Smiley Hill got a bad knee and they met at the chart rack, exchanged patients, and took care of the [situation]. Medicine was changing too rapidly for us to feel competent in all areas, even in a general sense. That, philosophically, may have been a good idea, and it lasted for about a year and disintegrated because faculty, by passive aggressiveness, just did not do it well.
- P: So you were never on the library committee?
- S: I applied for the library committee on several occasions. I wanted to be on that committee, but they would not put me on because they thought I might be too contentious.
- P: Were they right?
- S: Yes. Then I applied to be on the **Quickum** Committee. They did not want me there, either. Finally, Dick Smith said, I am going to put you on the laboratory committee. I said, I do not know a damn thing about the laboratory committee. He said, we need somebody to cover ourselves at the laboratory committee. The

chairman of the laboratory committee was John Henry [John B. Henry, Jr., UF professor of pathology and director of clinical laboratories and blood bank, 1960-1963] who at that time was a professor of pathology. We met for six months. I was totally bored because it was not my area of interest. I went to Dick Smith and he offered me a chance to be laboratory _____. I said, dear Dick, I refuse to go and become a _____. Love, Gerry. The answer came back, and [the note said], dear Gerry, so glad you accepted, Dick. So, rather than have a confrontation, he just said, so glad you accepted. I learned a very important lesson from that. I remember we spent two months deciding on the laboratory slips. Who would get the blue copy, the gold copy, the green copy. I said, this is crazy. I was ordered to go there and I was going to be a good soldier. Then they brought out the new syringe. They wanted to save money. Rather than a plunger, [it had] a vacuum thing with a needle on it. I said, that will not work well with kids. Their veins are so small. The vacuum will collapse them and you will not get any blood. They said, no, we can show you a film. They showed the film and, as you know, I have a severe sleep disorder, narcolepsy, so as soon as they turned out the lights, I fell asleep. I will never forget it. I [slept during the movie]. After the film, the lights went on. I had a startled reaction and fell off the chair onto the table. Dr. Harrell had walked in during the movie, and as I got up, I said, hello, Dr. Harrell. How are you? The next day I got a letter from Dean Harrell removing me from [the] laboratory committee for inattention.

P: Harrell told me also that he wanted to get very smart young men on the faculty who were right on the cutting edge, but who did not yet have their national reputation. So, as they became famous, they would bring fame to the University of Florida.

S: He did that brilliantly. I do not know of anybody [else] who did it better. Look at the chairmen he brought into pediatrics. He had Smith. Smith got Eitzman, got Andy Lawrence, got me, got Mel Greer, got Howard Pearson, got Johnny Robbins [John B. Robbins, UF assistant professor of pediatrics and microbiology, 1961-1967], Prystowsky. This department of pediatrics has produced fourteen chairmen in the nation. This was a small, young department.

P: How did you get along with Sam Martin [Samuel P. Martin, UF professor and head of department of medicine, 1956-1964 and provost for health affairs of J. Hillis Miller Health Science Center, 1964-1969].

S: I never understood Sam Martin. I was never quite sure where he was going. I was at a meeting in San Francisco and Audrey took me into an art shop in Sausalito. I am good for one art shop every 10 million years. Browsing around the back of the art shop, I made a cardinal mistake. I met Sam Martin and a young lady--not his wife--in the back of the shop.

P: It was not Ruth?

S: It was not Ruth. I made the mistake of saying, hi, Dr. Martin, how are you? Sam Martin did not want to see me. He ran out of there so fast. I learned that if you see somebody and he is with someone other than his wife, unless he recognizes you, you ignore him.

P: You learned lots of lessons, falling off a chair.

S: I never understood Sam Martin. I knew where George Harrell was going. I knew where Dick Smith was going, but I must say that Sam Martin in his totality was unfathomable to me. I knew he was bright, I knew he was competent, and I knew he became provost. I do not think he ever understood me, and I never fully understood him.

P: When you came, Harrell was still dean. Manny Suter [Emanuel Suter, UF professor of and head of department of microbiology, 1956-1964 and dean of College of Medicine, 1964-1972] had not taken over?

S: Yes, that is right.

P: You obviously served under Harrell and Suter and all the other deans.

S: Yes. I served under Harrell. I had gotten there, and they opened up the catheterization laboratory; I catapulted the whole system into a huge confrontation. The confrontation was that the professor of radiology thought that in the catheterization laboratory, only he should push the peddle for ionizing and radiation so I could see the heart and fluoroscope when I pushed my catheter to the heart. I said, I cannot operate [like that]. I have to push the catheter because I need to see what I am doing, so I can synchronize what is going on. At the Mayo Clinic, I always had the peddle to turn on the x-ray machine, so I could follow my catheter through the heart. The professor of radiology, John Reeves [John D. Reeves, professor and head of department of radiology, 1958-1965] said, no, only the radiologist can turn on the button that turns on the fluoroscope machine. I said, I cannot do that. I have to control it because my hand movement has to be synchronized with the peddle. I went to [see] George Harrell [about this problem, and he] made one of his wonderful [Solomon-like] decisions. He listened to the professor of radiology and he listened to me.

P: Who was radiology?

S: John Reeves. **Clyde** _____ was way too smart to get involved with that. Clyde was fifty steps ahead of John Reeves. I knew John Reeves at Mass. General. John Reeves was a professor when I was there as a resident. George Harrell gave us both a peddle. He said, push anytime you want to. It worked very well.

I had a peddle. John Reeves had a peddle.

P: What about off the campus? Did your family adjust to Gainesville? Did you have a social life in Gainesville other than the medical school faculty?

S: Oh, yes. Audrey took care of that. She has a phenomenal rapport with the community.

P: I want to stop you for just a minute and get some personal information. I want to start first with your spouse. Who is she?

S: My wife was born Audrey **Jean** Lincourt.

P: Where is she from?

S: Newport, Rhode Island.

P: What is her birth date?

S: Her birthday is May 31, 1933.

P: Where did you two meet?

S: We met in the delivery room at the Providence _____ Hospital in Providence, Rhode Island.

P: What was her educational background?

S: She went to high school and then to nursing school at Newport Hospital.

P: She graduated as a nurse?

S: She graduated as a nurse in the summer of 1953.

P: [I have to] interrupt the flow of the Schiebler interview because Dr. Schiebler has a story about Mrs. J. Hillis Miller [wife of J. Hillis Miller, UF president, 1948-1953] whom we were unable to interview.

S: Audrey said on our second Thanksgiving in 1961 [in Gainesville], Mrs. Miller is a widow, why do you not invite her for Thanksgiving? I said, Audrey, she probably has fifty initiations for Thanksgiving as the wife of a former president of the University of Florida. She said, well, Gerry, it will not hurt to ask her. I asked her and she had no place to go. Until the day she died, Mrs. J. Hillis Miller ate Thanksgiving with our family at our home. It became a family tradition. We had

a very special relationship with her.

P: You never recorded her voice, though?

S: No.

P: When her son came here, J. Hillis Miller, Jr., who is up at Yale, there was a special convocation and [the University of Florida] invited him. I talked to him. I went to a luncheon and met with him and I said, do you have any material on your father? He said, I was never close to my father. You know more about him than I do. I thought that was interesting.

S: They had two sons, one at [Johns] Hopkins and one at Yale.

P: It was the one at Yale I talked to.

S: Both were apparently outstanding academicians. When I met her, Mrs. Miller was looking for a second husband. We felt privileged. For our children to grow up with her was a great experience.

P: She was a very nice lady.

S: She still received checks at her house. People paid bills to the J. Hillis Miller Health Center.

P: I knew J. Hillis Miller pretty well. I traveled a couple times with him to Tallahassee. He was a real promoter but a real forward-looking individual.

S: Great vision.

P: I want to get back to the Schiebler family relationship. Tell me about your wife's family to fill in a little bit of the biographical information.

S: Audrey's family in Newport, Rhode Island, came from two strings of immigrants. On the father's side of the family, they were French Canadians from Montreal. Her grandfather was one of the great blacksmiths of Newport during its heyday. He was smart enough to see that [horse and buggies] were not going to last forever. The boys went into the car business. [Today], when you go to Newport, Rhode Island, you will find a lot of the Lincourt family in various phases of the car business. Her father was one of seventeen children. Her grandfather's first wife had five children and his second wife had thirteen children. Her grandmother, Rose Lincourt, who died at age ninety-seven, was Rhode Island Mother of the Year in 1971. Governor Philip Noel [Philip W. Noel, governor of Rhode Island, 1973-1977] gave her the distinction of the Rhode Island Mother of the Year. She

lived in a small historic house beside St. Mary's Cathedral where Jackie and Jack [Kennedy] got married. Her mother's side of the family is Swedish. They were the great gardeners of Newport. Audrey's mother worked as an office manager. Her father worked on the waterfront for Gulf Oil. They had a lot of relatives in Newport. Audrey has no brothers, but two sisters. One is in Melbourne, Florida, and is an office manager, and the other is in North Carolina in the furniture business. When I first met the family, I walked into the kitchen [and] there was a huge basin full of twenty-three Maine lobsters. I said, this is the promised land. Why should I go any farther? That was her family. They were a very stable family. Audrey grew up a couple blocks from the ocean. She has always loved the ocean. That is why she likes our new condominium on Amelia Island [in the northeast corner of Florida].

P: Where did she go to school again?

S: She went to the Newport Hospital nursing program.

P: How did it happen that you two met in the delivery room?

S: The Harvard medical students were split into two groups. Those who stayed at Harvard had to deliver twenty babies. That was a criterion for graduation. Half of us went down to Providence to do obstetrical work. There was not a big enough obstetrical program at Newport, so the Newport student nurses came to Providence for the obstetrical training, and the Harvard students came down from Boston to Providence. Each delivery team had an attending physician, an intern, a medical student and a student nurse. Some great computer in the sky in that two-week interval assigned us to the same team. That was how we met.

P: What attracted you to her?

S: First of all, Audrey captures you with her smile, as opposed to me who impresses people within the first millisecond at the 2 percent level. She does it at the 99 percent level. I was working four nights out of five at the _____ Providence **Langly** Hospital. From seven in the morning to eleven at night, the medical students were complete incompetents. They could do nothing right. They could not find any nurse anesthetists to give the ether from 11:00 p.m. until 7 a.m. During that interval, we suddenly got transformed into wonderful anesthetists. At 7:00 a.m., we went back to our former status of being incompetent. They sent two students down at a time. The guy with me was Nathan Pierce Couch, who is now the head of [the] blood bank at Peter Ray Brigham. Nathan Couch was a very fine student. His older brother had just been killed in Korea by stepping on a land mine and within three weeks, Nathan Couch developed hyperthyroidism that required surgery. That leaves you very weak. It really takes a lot out of you. It takes a lot of muscle strength. He was so weak that he just was not up to

covering nights. I was covering my own thing and all of his, too. One day while giving ether, I was so tired that I fell asleep. The whole mask fell off the lady. [So that is where we met.] I said, there must be a message there someplace. We went out on several dates in that two-week period, and I kept in contact with her. I never dated another girl after that. At the end of the summer, I invited her to the Boy Scout camp with my parents. Her mother was not very comfortable having her daughter go to a Boy Scout camp with my parents. My father got on the phone and talked to her mother for half an hour; he convinced her that it was OK. I think she then came to Boston City Hospital because all the Newport, Rhode Island, nurses did their pediatric training in Boston. We got reacquainted during that time.

P: When were you married?

S: We were married January 8, 1954, in Boston.

P: You did not have to stand in line like your parents did?

S: No. We went to the justice of the peace to get it done because we could never agree. Audrey was Catholic and I was Lutheran--and we could not solve it. We have not solved it to this day.

P: So the safest way was to stand in line until you could find a justice of the peace?

S: We got married by a justice of the peace and then that night we went to **Lock Ober's** restaurant for our wedding [dinner].

P: Which is a very nice restaurant [with] wonderful seafood.

S: Spectacular restaurant. We have many fond memories of Lock Ober's restaurant.

P: I have not been there often, but every time I have [dined] there, I have enjoyed it very much.

S: [Lock Ober's] has a section only [for] men--still to this day. It is on a very narrow street in downtown Boston.

P: Let us get to your children. I want you to name each child. Give me the full name and birth date and where each one was born, starting with Mark.

S: Mark Lincourt Schiebler. His middle name is Audrey's maiden name. He was born December 8, 1955, and he was born at Boston **Langly** Hospital.

P: I will get a little biographical information on each child as we go through. Tell me

about Mark. Where is he? Where did he go to school and what is he doing?

S: Mark went through P. K. Yonge. He spent a year at Davidson and his last few years at Florida. He went to medical school at the University of Florida. Then he took his radiology training with Dr. **Larry Eliot** at Georgetown. He then took some advanced training at the University of Pennsylvania and spent time on the faculty at Chapel Hill [University of North Carolina] in radiology. He spent some time on the faculty at the University of Pennsylvania. He got remarried. His second wife is a radiologist, and they had a difficult time finding positions in academic medicine for both of them. They both are now part of a thirty-member radiology group at Florida Hospital in Orlando.

P: They have children?

S: He has two children from his first marriage and [a] little girl from [his] second marriage.

P: What are the names of your grandchildren there?

S: The oldest child is Brianne Lisa and the second child is Lirra Corianthe. Their mother was the former Susan Alshouse from Gainesville. When he finished his training for whatever reasons, they got divorced. He went to Chapel Hill and still maintains a very good relationship with both of his daughters who live in Winter Park, so they are a short driving distance.

P: The third child?

S: Aba Marie was born June 1, 1997.

P: [Your] second child is **Marcella**?

S: Marcella Lynn Schiebler was born December 28, 1957, at the university hospital at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis.

P: Is she married?

S: She was married and got divorced. She remarried a second time to **John Caswell**, who is a local boy. They just had their first baby, Kelly Lynn, on December 23, 1997.

P: She had no children by her first marriage?

S: No.

P: What does she do?

S: She works in the filing and billing department at Shands Hospital.

P: The next one is Kristen.

S: Kristen Loring was named after my aunt in North **Carburg**, whose home we went to in the summertime, Wilfed and Lisa Loring.

P: When was she born?

S: She was born November 20, 1958, at the University of Minnesota Hospital in Minneapolis.

P: Is she married?

S: She is married to Paul Wharton, [who has a doctorate] from the University of Florida. He is Bill Wharton's son. [Bill Wharton] used to be the registrar at Florida State University. She went to Southwestern which is now Rhodes. She finished up at FSU and took her master's in social work at FSU through the University of North Florida. She got her master's degree in social work and for many years worked as a social worker at Baptist Children's Hospital in Jacksonville. Then she worked with their child abuse and child protection team. She learned a lot about child abuse. After their second child, she retired and became a full-time housewife.

P: What are the two children's names?

S: The first little boy, who is now eleven, is Gerold Thomas Wharton. Gerold is named after me. Thomas is after Paul's godfather, Thomas **Megehe**, the _____ Papers in Jacksonville. He was born October 1, 1986.

P: And the little girl?

S: The little girl is Kristen Michele. She was named after our youngest daughter, Michele. She was born April 24, 1990.

P: Kristen lives in Jacksonville?

S: Yes.

P: The next one is **Betina**.

- S: **Betina** Lise. We [gave] all our kids a middle initial "L" for whatever reason. **Betina** Lise Scheibler was born at Shands Hospital on July 17, 1960, just a few weeks after we got here.
- P: This is the one that Hugh [Smiley] Hill delivered.
- S: After going to high school here, she went a year to Rollins College. Because there was a better journalism course at [UF], she transferred here and became Miss University of Florida when she was here. Then she went to Washington, D.C. where she worked in the office of Buddy MacKay, finally becoming his congressional assistant for health.
- P: Is she married?
- S: She is married. After spending a summer with Buddy MacKay, I said, **Betina**, it [would be a good idea that] if you are going to [have] a professional career, you better do it before you get married and have children. She went to Mercer Law School and was a graduate of [that school]. She worked with a very large firm in Atlanta for half a dozen years and then went to a smaller law firm. She met her [future] husband when she was there. His name is George Washington Brown IV. He is a family physician and assistant director of the Family Practice Training Program at Georgia Baptist Hospital. They have two children, George Washington Brown V, whom they call Quinn for [short], the fifth. He was born December 10. He is now just over two years old. Then they have a little girl who was born September 25, 1997, whose name is Grace Kathryn. They live in Palmetto, Georgia. Their house is on top of a mountain. They have 200 acres of land with 100 head of cattle and twenty horses. They raise Thoroughbreds. She has now given up her active law practice to be a full-time mother.
- P: Then we go to Wanda.
- S: Wanda was born on Hiroshima Day, August 6, 1961. Wanda is a graduate of Gainesville High School where she was a cheerleader.
- P: She was born here in Gainesville?
- S: She was born here. She is a Smiley Hill baby born at Shands Hospital. Wanda went through school here and then decided to go to college. She had two criteria: [the college had to be] far away from her parents and [it had to be located in a] warm [climate]. She went to the beginning of the college catalogue and [looked at] various states. Alaska, too cold. Alabama, too close. Arizona. She never got out of the "A's." She went to the University of Arizona [in Tucson]. She [had] never [been] there, never looked at it, never interviewed. She sent in her application and got accepted to the University of Arizona where she had an

absolutely fabulous time. She graduated with a degree in finance. Then she went to Washington for a while when Betina was there with Buddy MacKay and Mark was there taking his radiology residency with Larry Eliot. She worked for Connie Mae Banking. She is a very bright, fiscally oriented person. Then she followed [her] boyfriend to Hartford, Connecticut. That did not last, but she then worked for an insurance evaluation company called Conning. It is a firm that evaluates other insurance firms and for a while she was in Florida evaluating the equity of our worker's compensation program. She rose to a very high position as vice president for research for Conning, the highest rank of any woman at [that company]. Then she got married to a young man, **John Corchran**, from Newport, Rhode Island. The two families had known each other for sixty years. In fact, Audrey's father, Leo Lincourt, gave John Corchran's daddy, Edward Corchran, his first job as a student assistant on the waterfront at Newport. Wanda worked for a while. She had three boys and a little girl. That little boy is John Joseph Corchran II. He was born May 23, [1991], named after his uncle, the associate vicar general of the Marenole Order. John will be seven. They have a second boy who is named Henry Lincourt. Henry after Henry Kokomoor who died early and Lincourt after his family name. He was born February 28, two years after his brother. The third one is Charles Baring Corchran. He was born two years later on February 27. They are also two years apart. Then they just had a little girl, Mary **Chatterton**, [named] after some of John's relatives. Mary Chatterton was born August 4 of last year. Wanda was born August 6. Mary Chatterton was born August 4, and Wanda's mother-in-law was born August 5.

P: Where do they live?

S: They live in Darien, Connecticut. She gave up her work with Conning a number of years ago. She is a full-time mother. John is a stockbroker. He commutes to New York City every day.

P: That leaves Michele.

S: Michele is our youngest. She was born October 14, 1963.

P: What is her full name?

S: Michele Lenore. She was also a Smiley Hill baby. After going through school here in Gainesville, she went to Valdosta State [University] for four years and had a very good time there. She and Valdosta fit together very well. She got a degree in elementary education and then went to Jacksonville and taught in the public school system in kindergarten for five or six years at **Gregory Lane School** in the southwestern section of Duval County, which was [in the] middle-[to] lower-middle income strata. She learned a great deal from being a

kindergarten teacher over the years. She was surprised to find out how fortunate she had been over the years [to grow up] in [a] family [such as ours] compared to many other children. She had a fine career. [Then] she met Robert Patterson Cooke. Bob Cooke's family owns Callahan Timber--one of the biggest industries of Nassau County. They recently split the company, and Michele and Bob moved to Lake City last summer.

P: He is in the family business?

S: Yes. They own a sawmill in Lake City and a timber operation in Lake City. You may remember his mother, Mrs. Betty Cooke, [who] served for years on the board of Florida Community College of Jacksonville and was for a while chairman of the board. The family gave fifty acres of land near Yulee for the Nassau branch campus of FCCJ. If you ever drive to Amelia Island and go off I-95 down A1A toward Amelia just past McDonald's, you will find the Betty P. Cooke campus of FCCJ. The family has been very generous. There is a four-lane road in the college, which lasts for 200 yards until it goes to a two-lane road. That road is [called] William **Berges** after their first son, William Berges Cooke, who was born March 3. William will be six on March 3. [He was born in] 1992.

P: They had more than one child?

S: They had a second child. His name is Robert Patterson Cooke, Jr., and he was born on the same day, two years later. If you line up the cousins, you have two [born on] February 27 and 28 and two [born on] March 3. They are all the same age.

P: I hope they are going to find another road to name for the second one.

S: They just had a little girl. Her name is Caroline Michele. Caroline from somewhere and Michele after her mother. She just turned a year [old] the other day. She was born February 5, 1997.

P: I have lost track. How many grandchildren do you have?

S: Fifteen.

P: Do you gather them all here at one time?

S: We have had them all at one time and we [established] certain rules. When [they are] at Amelia Island [at the same time], do not try to save money by putting two families in one condo. It does not work. It may be expensive, but it certainly brings peace to the gathering. Every family has its own set of rules. Every family divides work between husband and wife differently. Everyone has different sets

of timetables--kids sleep and do not sleep. Even though they are brothers and sisters, you put the two families together in one place [and] it simply does not work.

P: Tell me now about Audrey. She obviously had to be a housewife and a house mother and a homemaker for a long time with all those kids. She has made a career of herself, has she not?

S: She has probably become one of the most famous women in Florida. She was a nurse. In fact, we would not have been able to financially handle our early life because she was making money and I was not. Since she was making all the money, she handled the money and we kept it that way for our forty-four years of marriage. Since she started it that way, she does it even now. She handles all the finances.

P: It has obviously worked out well.

S: It has worked out extraordinarily well. I do not know a damn thing about it, it suits me, and it certainly suits her. Then when Mark was born and we moved to Minnesota, she became a full-time mother. We had no car, so we did a lot of walking. Then she stayed at home and became very active with her family and with the community, particularly the Junior League. She became president of the Junior League in Gainesville. She did a lot of work for [that organization]. She stayed at home until Michele went to college and then the house became very quiet. Audrey has a significant hearing loss. We did not realize how much the kids were her ears. She did several things of which I am very proud. One is her work in the Junior League. She worked very hard to increase the cultural diversity of the group and succeeded in doing that. Lou Hendry [former sheriff of Alachua County] got her on the sheriff boys and youth ranch program. She convinced those conservative sheriffs to admit wards of the state and black kids. They never had black kids until Audrey got on the board. That was the second thing she did. It is interesting to note that Audrey and Mary **Faracy**, John Faracy's wife, were instrumental in getting the first Jewish person into the Junior League in Gainesville. It [had] never [been] accomplished until Audrey Schiebler did it. We never joined the country club because we belonged to that segment of the population who thinks it is wrong to segregate those people. We joined the Heritage Club once [its members] assured us that it was open to everybody who wanted to apply. Then she developed [the] Guardian Ad Litem Program at the county courthouse.

P: What is that?

S: The Guardian Ad Litem Program is basically a guardian before the law. It is a

voluntary program sanctioned by the [Florida] Supreme Court in which volunteers look at various family issues and then represent the child in court. They are an advocate not for the family, but [for] the child. She got the funding for that legislation. She [got] the laws [passed] for it because we moved to Tallahassee every spring. She got the funding and the laws and set up a statewide program, which became a model for which she was awarded the Medal of Honor from the Florida Bar Foundation. She [received] the award from the Florida Bar Foundation the same year that Janet Reno [U.S. attorney general, Clinton Administration] got it as the outstanding lawyer. [The Florida Bar Association] gives one award to a lawyer and one to a non-lawyer. That was how Audrey got to know Janet Reno, and they have been very good friends since that time. The other area she has been involved in is where she is today. She went down to Boggy Creek Camp Gang, which is a camp in Cassia [southwest of] DeLand for children with chronic diseases. She tried to do it by herself and did not have enough contacts to fiscally do it. This is the equivalent of a Paul Newman camp in Northeast Connecticut, which is run by Howard Pearson. He used to be on our faculty. He is a professor at Yale. She went to see Whit Palmer in Ocala, and he basically saved the finance. He had the contacts and between them they raised \$16 million. They got \$2 million from Paul Newman, and that is why there is a picture in the kitchen of Audrey and Paul Newman. Paul Newman's friends gave \$1 million. They got General Norman Schwarzkopf onboard. He turned out to be a phenomenal fund raiser. She sits as vice-chairman of the board of the Boggy Creek Camp. She spent a lot of time with it. She thinks that is one of her top five achievements. Then, because of her work with all these programs, she won the award [from] the local Girl Scout council [as] one of the outstanding women a number of years ago. Then she won the Children's Home Society award [as] the outstanding woman for that year from the Gateway Girl Scout Council. She now also sits as the vice-chairman for Ulcer Prevention. The Ulcer Prevention [program] raises money, which is matched by state monies, to do various [projects], particularly societal prowess in the health area. The chairman of that [organization] is **T. U. A. Davis** of Winn-Dixie in Jacksonville. [Audrey] just came back from Chicago to look at foster care and the privatization of foster care to see what might be done with foster care in Florida. Last fall, together [we received] the award from the Florida Center for Children and Youth as the Outstanding Child Advocates for the last twenty-five years. Two weeks ago, Governor Chiles gave us his top award, the Heartland Award, at the Children's Summit in Orlando. It is given once a year by the governor and Rhea Chiles to those who they think are the outstanding advocates for children in the state. The award is a picture of the Myakka River. It is a watercolor done by Rhea herself. We got that on February 12 of this year from the governor himself, which was a big surprise to us. It was an honor. Three of our children worked for Governor Chiles in Washington. Betina worked for Buddy MacKay. Our political proclivities are well established. I think that through a variety of pathways, we followed parallel, but complementary, careers. [Audrey] is obviously far better

established in the community than I am. The chamber of commerce recently [asked me to speak] about the political situation [in] the legislature. I did not even know where the chamber of commerce was [located in Gainesville].

P: Everybody knows Audrey Schiebler.

S: And she is a nice lady. She has Parkinson's now.

P: Gerold, I want to get back to your own career now. You came to the University of Florida in 1960 with what rank?

S: Assistant professor of pediatrics.

P: But you were the chief of the division?

S: I was only one.

P: You were alone? You set it up?

S: Yes.

P: How much freedom did you have in setting up the program as you wanted it?

S: One of the great beauties of Dick Smith is that he left you alone as long as you were doing good work. I had almost total freedom.

P: Did you have a good budget?

S: The monies were centralized with Dick Smith, but I had an arrangement where two-thirds of all the monies that I earned would go to me and one-third would go to him to run the department. When I left the Mayo Clinic, [the clinic staff] said [I was] going to be a big moneymaker compared to the rest of the pediatricians-- which happened to be true. I utilized that to fuel the whole operation, and that was a big part of my budget. I also had Jerry Krovetz come behind me and then Ira Gessner, then Bob Van Mierop [Lodewyk H.S. Van Mierop, UF professor emeritus of pediatrics, 1966-1996]. They were all first class.

P: You could set up the kind of laboratory that you wanted? Did you have the right kind of space?

S: They put me into an old photography lab near Ed Woodward. We were crammed in like a rabbit warren, but we got our work done. When Krovetz came, the only space we could find for him was a sub-sub-basement way down in the dungeon. The only time that it was ever used was during the Cuban Missile Crisis [in

October 1962]. They threw us all there because that was the only place that had twelve feet of cement all the way around. That became the command center. I do not think we ever had an ideal place, but we always had adequate space--and it was our own space. We wrote our first book. Jerry Krovetz, Ira Gessner and I would meet at ten o'clock at night and write until one o'clock in the morning. It was very quiet down there.

P: How much were they paying you?

S: They started at \$10,000 and then \$12,000. Dick Smith was making \$17,000, so I could not make more than that. It slowly went up over the course of time with the salaries that were going on in academic medicine in that day.

P: Of course, there was great unhappiness on the rest of the UF campus by comparing [faculty salaries] with medical school salaries even though I understand that your salaries had to be adjusted to the marketplace.

S: Since I was so incarcerated in the medical school, I never really got to know many people on the campus, as compared to Eitzman and Dick Smith, who had a lot of contacts. The contacts I have are through Audrey. I was pretty well insulated. That feeling was not transmitted to me, plus I knew that we were the only academic unit who put consultant fees into an academic pot. I knew the lawyers did not. The chemists [and those] in the business school just kept the money they earned.

P: When you came, this was the first time that child patients came to Shands, is it not?

S: No. The first child admitted to Shands was a little girl named Sherry Smith from Newberry.

P: There was a lot of publicity about her.

S: Dick Smith and George Harrell [were] at the front door.

P: There was a big picture of her in the paper.

S: That was in the fall of 1958. I did not get here until June 1960.

P: But children coming in as patients at Shands had to wait until you arrived?

S: I would say that we had a very tough time building up our patient census at Shands. Dick Smith is a phenomenal entrepreneur. I think he could be a salesman. Eitzman was a great doctor. When I got here, the average census

was seven kids in the whole hospital. We had a very small census. We had a difficult time establishing ourselves because we were in the middle of a low populated area.

P: A poor populated area.

S: And nobody knew us. Many of the complex cases were going outside the state because Florida had always been a colony, medically, and even to this day, Florida thinks like a colony. Somebody else has to come in to help them. Bill Wheat and I went around a large part of Central and North Florida to build up our heart program. It is very difficult because [physicians] were sending their heart patients to Hopkins or Minnesota or Texas.

P: But the poor people could not do that.

S: Sure they could. They were funded by [the] Cripple Children's Program. Before Medicaid, [there was the] Cripple Children's Program. They could get that free because they had federal grants in those institutions. They were shipping them all to Johns Hopkins, my alma mater, Minnesota, or to Texas Children's [Hospital]. Wheat and I spent many years going around the state. It took us seven years to build up a cardiac volume before we could be accredited.

P: Was this the first program in Florida or did Jackson have one in Miami?

S: Jackson had one in Miami run by the great **Francisco Hernandez**, who had trained in this country, went back to Cuba, and came back here in the mid-1950s. He was an outstanding cardiologist and a great human being. The other person was Dr. **Louis Cimino** in Tampa. I was the third one here. Louie had no program in Tampa. He was just practicing pediatric cardiology, whereas Miami had a heart program, heart surgery, and catheterization that was very active.

P: When [the state located] the medical school in Gainesville rather than Jacksonville or Orlando, the program's [location] was sold, in part, on the idea that sixteen to eighteen rural counties surrounded Alachua County. [The area had] lots of patients--old and young--who needed the kind of medical care that this college would provide. But you had to go out and beat the bushes.

S: Because you are looking at a specialized child health population, you need a huge net in order to get enough heart patients out of the whole population. Most of the specialty programs in pediatrics require a very huge net. The Children's Hospital, if you look at the net, requires a patient population of 4 million to be fiscally viable. I think it was the fact that we were educating doctors. We were putting in our own house staff alumni, so we built up a cadre of our own graduates in the area. They began to refer patients to us as opposed to guys

trained at Emory or Duke or Hopkins, [who] shipped them right past us up to their alma maters.

P: You had seven patients when you arrived on the scene?

S: Seven average census.

P: That began to grow with the passage of time?

S: It began to grow when Dick Smith was able to bring in another specialist. When Pearson came, he attracted cancer and blood problems.

P: What would be the census today?

S: The census today would probably be about 110.

P: So, it has grown tremendously.

S: One-third of all patients at Shands are children, but there are premature baby nurseries and intensive care units. We are the second largest hospital for children in the state of Florida, exceeded only by All Children's Hospital in St. Petersburg.

P: Were most of these early patients indigents?

S: They represented the whole economic spectrum, except that this area here, particularly if you go farther north, is so intrinsically poor. There were a lot of indigents. We got [many] of them funded through the Crippled Children's Program, now called Children's Medical Services. If you look at Florida economically, the farther north you go, the more people [there are who] are earning money--but not enough to qualify for Medicaid. They are the working poor.

P: All these were referrals. Was that a strict ruling at Shands in those years?

S: It was in those days and that created problems. I will never forget that the physicians in the community were upset. At times, it seemed to them that we bypassed the referral system. [These doctors] were also upset if, [for instance], they sent [a] patient [over] to [us to] look at his toes--they did not want us to look at [the patient's] diabetes without going back to them to get another referral for each disease. [But] we felt that once the patient gets to us, we should take care of all his problems because his toe problem might be related to his diabetes. The town physicians were so angry with us that they reported us to the Florida Medical Association.

P: Who reported this? The Alachua County Medical Association?

S: Yes. The Florida Medical Association sent a committee on medical schools. We met at the old County Health Department on Fourth Street by Alachua General [Hospital]. It lasted all day. The physicians in the community were making all kinds of complaints [about] us taking their patients and not staying in touch with them.

P: These were all the physicians or just pediatricians?

S: All of them. The pediatricians were never a problem. That has always been quiet because the average pediatrician has .8 patients in the hospitals at one time. The pediatricians were not big in-patient people. They were all general pediatricians, and we were all specialists. It was easy for us to live in peace besides our natural tendencies. We had a tribunal set up and all day allegations [were made by the community physicians] on [what] we were doing wrong. Late in the afternoon, George Harrell said it brilliantly: I am glad to be here, I appreciate the FMA sending its representatives down today. I have heard all these stories about the patients we are taking. Would the doctors of Alachua County who are making less money now than they did before the medical school arrived please stand up. Not a single person stood up. Even if they were [making less money], they were not going to admit it. He said to the FMA, see, everybody is doing better because we are here. It was the end of the tribunal. Nobody wanted to admit it. If you look at the flux of faculty, there are 110 physicians in this community who are former faculty--not interns or residents or fellows--[but] former faculty. Why? Because Gainesville is a great place to practice. If you have a really tough problem, you can send [that patient] to us, and we take care of all the indigents. [Gainesville] is [an ideal] place [for a] private practice.

P: Did you get along well with Marvin Kokomoor of Gainesville?

S: Of course. Do not forget that the Kokomoors and [my family were] close. One of our grandchildren was named after Henry Kokomoor. Henry Kokomoor was [like a brother] to Mark Schiebler. [Henry] did not have any brothers. There is a picture in there of Henry and Mark. Henry was killed by a drunk driver when he was coming back from work one night. **George Adell** [and] the **Brills**--we had a very close relationship with pediatricians in the community. George Adell is still one of our closest friends.

P: Marvin Kokomoor was our two boys' pediatrician. Let me go back. You were three years as an assistant professor and then in 1963, [you became] an associate professor.

S: In those days, everybody got promoted after three years.

P: You stayed another three years as an associate professor and then in 1966, you became a full professor.

S: Yes.

P: Then, by that time, you were the chief of pediatrics or [did] you start out by being that?

S: Dick Smith took a sabbatical to go to Sweden in 1967 [or] 1968. When he came back, [the medical school] decided that he should become professor of pathology. We were left without our chairman. Everybody started leaving. _____ left. Johnny Robbins left and we were falling apart. Manny Suter was dean and I became chairman in 1968. After that, I had been _____. Dick was away for a year and then the place was leaderless for a while. Everybody was leaving, and we wound up with relatively few people. We had to rebuild the whole department at that time. It started out with Dick going on sabbatical. When he came back, he became a professor of pathology.

P: I noticed [that] in 1970 you were still professor of pediatrics but you were no longer chief of pediatrics. Why?

S: It got [to be] too much and Ira Gessner was there.

P: Too much administration?

S: Yes. Also, when you are chairman, why should you be chief simultaneously? We made Ira chief.

P: What is the difference between chairman and chief?

S: [The] chairman is [head] of all the divisions, [the] chief is [head] of the sub-unit. It is like the president and the cabinet. A chief is similar to a cabinet officer and the chairman would be the president. If you are looking at the situation, chiefs are chairmen of sub-units like endocrinology or heart or lung or adolescence or premature babies. The chairman is over all those [sub-units].

P: The medical school has grown considerably from the time you arrived until a decade later.

S: Yes.

P: Growth physically? Facilities?

- S: Yes, and with each new college. We started out with pharmacy, nursing and medicine. The first professional school here was pharmacy.
- P: Pharmacy pre-dates the medical school.
- S: By far. It was in the 1920s. Then the nursing and medical school came afterwards. Then with time, **Dow Mays** came with the College of Health Professions. That was how we got here. Then [the state] built the college of dentistry here. The teaching hospital connected to [the] VA hospital by an underground tunnel from Shands. Usually, in most places, the agriculture school like IFAS (Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences) is in the middle of some corn patch with a vet school. [The University of Florida] is one of the few places where the agriculture school, the medical complex and the veterinary school are [all located on] the same campus.
- P: Is that a mistake?
- S: That is great. Let me give you an example. In our Thoroughbred racing industry to the south of us [in Marion County], valuable foals were dying early in life [from] lung problems equivalent to the baby Kennedy lung disease. When [vet school staff members] decided to address the lung problems in the foals, they [brought] the premature baby specialist at Shands over to the vet school, [and they] adapted the equipment. The veterinarians were taught how to ventilate the lungs of [the foals]. [The vet school] established the first premature horse baby unit in the world. Every vet school in the country now has a premature horse unit. The reason [the vet school] set it up here is because we live together. Physiology textbooks of the horse are written by our baby specialists for the veterinarians. It is combined. It could never have happened unless there was geographic proximity. It is brilliant. Whoever thought about putting the vet school and IFAS and the health center here was brilliant, [not only] from the point of view of scientific endeavors but [for] the opportunity for interchange.
- P: Gerry, in 1993, you were named distinguished service professor. Let us continue with your own career now. You have been involved in so many projects. It is unbelievable that you have the time to sleep or eat or [be involved in] all these other [activities]. Are you a workaholic?
- S: The answer is yes. People say that I work hard. I do not work as hard as either of my parents did when they first came to this country. I have my mother's hours as a servant girl. She easily put in 100 hours a week. My father worked at Macy's from 7:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. He drove taxi cabs over the weekend. At night he cleaned out doctors' offices.
- P: He had to because he had a family to support.

- S: That is right. Somehow there is a [spirit] that drives immigrants.
- P: Very early in your career here, as part of this work ethic that you have, you began concerning yourself with the external relations of the University of Florida. How did that happen? You came here to be a doctor.
- S **Dr. George Palmer** was president of the Florida Medical Association. He was a pediatrician in Tallahassee. He appointed me to a committee in the Florida Medical Association on scientific programs. I [knew] George Palmer because when Dick Smith tried to recruit me, he said, we are going on the road tonight to [see] a pediatrician. We drove to Tallahassee. I met Dr. George Palmer. I met Governor LeRoy Collins [LeRoy Collins, governor of Florida, 1955-1961]. I also met the chief of the Florida Supreme Court, Stephen O'Connell [Stephen C. O'Connell, Florida Supreme Court Justice, 1955-1967, Florida Supreme Court Chief, 1967, and UF president, 1967-1973]. I said, this is tall cotton. I got to know George Palmer and to this day he remains a very good friend. He got me into the FMA, and I spent all those years in the FMA, gradually working my way up to be president. I had just completed a term of two years as head of the FMA Political Action Committee. I just finished two years on one of the largest political action committee of doctors in the nation. I have always enjoyed my contacts with the Florida Medical Association. It has been an organization that has been very good to me. I am its link between academic medicine and the Florida Medical Association. I think it has worked very well. It has been an extraordinary symbiotic relationship. I think that the person who is coming along after me is Craig Kitchens [UF professor of medicine and pathology, 1975-1985 and chief of medicine, 1985-present]. I am trying to develop some linkages there that will last beyond me. I became very interested in the Florida Medical Association. Because I am a cardiologist, I became [involved] in the Florida Heart Association and became president of the FHA in the 1970s. To this day, I sit on the state and national committees for legislation, both for the American Heart [Association] and the Florida Heart Association. Of course, I became involved in the Florida Pediatric Society because I am a pediatrician. For many years, I served as its program chairman. Those are the main activities. I was interested in the Florida Pediatric Society because the better known I became, the better [the society's members] might know the people at the University of Florida. [They] might think of me when [deciding] where to send [their] patients.
- P: You became recognized as the voice of the medical center--as far as the outside world was concerned--certainly within Florida, and particularly Tallahassee.

- S: Certainly the voice for the medical center [staff members] in the sense that they all recognized I was Mr. Outside, but not the voice in communicating to the outside world. You never see me on TV.
- P: I know you do not give interviews.
- S: I do not give interviews [because] my chiefs are very competent to speak [for] themselves. They can talk to Challoner [David R. Challoner, UF vice president of health affairs, J. Hillis Miller Health Center, 1961-1982] or Metts [Paul E. Metts, chief executive officer, Shands Hospital at the University of Florida, 1977-1987] or Lombardi [John V. Lombardi, UF president, 1990-present]. They are far more competent. If I am not the executive officer of the organization, I do not give an interview. When I was president of the Florida Heart Association [and] president of the Florida Medical Association, I gave lots of interviews with these requirements: one, that a member of the staff was always there with me, and two, that everything I said was recorded. No reporter would turn me down. I always had a staff member there so he could hear what I said and could respond--everything was recorded--both to what they said and what I said. I never gave telephone interviews [to reporters]. They had to show up in person. They could have a Dictaphone if they wanted. I had a staff member there, and I gave them all the interviews they wanted. There is no sense, to me, giving my view of the world when we have a charismatic, magnetic fellow like John Lombardi. Challoner is very able to speak for himself. Paul Metts can speak for himself. Why should I interpret what they are thinking? I [also] know that the esteemed John Vincent Lombardi is not really wild about other people speaking on behalf of the University of Florida. That suits me fine. In the sense of being the voice or image of the health center, yes, but being the voice in the sense of communicating to the outside world through TV, radio, or [the] press, the answer is no. It is too easy to get into problems. I will give you an example. I was called down by Chancellor Reed [Charles B. Reed, chancellor, Florida State University System, 1988-1997], who chewed my fanny out. He showed me the paper. We had lost over the years a track of \$10 million [worth of] equipment. He talked to Challoner who said, we have six colleges, \$10 million is not really very much when you consider we have an inventory of \$800 million. The next thing you know, Bob **Garring** was saying, it is a very big problem. \$10 million is a lot of money. Two guys, who [were] sitting in side by side offices, were saying two different things to the press. The chancellor chewed me out because he thought that \$10 million was a hell of a lot of money. I did not want to be caught in saying something that was counter, and I did not want to be caught in the vortex of events between the legislature, the chancellor, the president and the vice president and heads of the hospitals. I have to report to six deans and three hospital directors through Challoner. If I am not the executive officer of the organization, I just do not give interviews.

P: What kind of work were you doing in Tallahassee with Alvin Alsobrook [lobbyist for University of Florida]?

S: I was involved with Children's Medical Services, the old Cripple Children's Program. One day in Tampa, the new secretary of [Health and Rehabilitative Services], **O. J. Keller**, told me that since I had created Children's Medical Services by statute, I could run it and set up all the rules and regulations. In 1973, I left Audrey and the kids [behind] and went up to Tallahassee for almost a year and a half and set up the division of Children's Medical Services. I learned how to write rules and regulations [and] how to lobby. I learned a little bit about the legislature. It was a revelation because it was not like the history books. When I came back [to Gainesville], it was the middle of the recession, and the house staff asked me to go up with them [to] lobby for more money for salaries. I said, I am not going to do that because you have to get the approval of **Al Stetson**. Stetson said, there is no money this year, go up there. Alsobrook was a chief aide to Senator Bob Saunders who was chairman of the Ways and Means Committee at that time. I was lucky enough to get to know Al, and Bob Saunders put in all the money for the interns and residents to get a pay raise. They were the only unit in state government to get a pay raise that year. [Staff members] dropped their clickers and said, what happened? I told the house staff that [it] was rather unusual that we were getting this money, so they gave me a plaque. I said, you guys are dumber than doornails. Take my name off and put Al Stetson's name on there. Take a photographer with you and say, Al Stetson leads fight for more interns' and residents' salaries. They took the [plaque] back to the Trophy Shop, took my name off and put Al Stetson's name on it and had a photographer there. Al Stetson called me up and said, if you can do that for the students, you can do that for the whole health center. At that time, Bob Saunders had been politically assassinated by Dempsy Barron [state senator representing District 3] [in the] legislature and Al had no job. So Bill Andrews approached the power structure to hire Al as a lobbyist for the health center, which they did. Al and I became the lobbyists for the health center.

P: You were registered as lobbyists?

S: Yes, but I registered for the Florida Pediatric Society [and] for the Florida Heart Association. When Criser [Marshall M. Criser, UF president, 1984-1989] came, we moved Al up to the main campus to become the overall lobbyist. I think that Criser used Al as his gun man and did a lot of things that Criser did not want him to do. Al followed orders very well. Al was a terrific lobbyist for the University of Florida and the health center. With the new administration under Bryan [Robert Bryan, UF provost and vice-president for academic affairs, 1988-1989 and interim president, 1989-1990] and then Lombardi, I think that they decided they did not want [Al]. I [feel that] we still are impoverished by the fact that we are the only university in the State University System that has no vice president for

governmental affairs sitting at the right hand of the president. We do not have that. We have a tremendously fragmented effort both in Gainesville and in Washington, D.C. because the office of vice president for governmental affairs was abolished. It has not been filled since Al left.

P: Is that because of [public relations]?

S: I think it is because they abolished the job to get rid of Alsobrook, and two, I think that the president likes to have multiple reporting systems, as opposed to one reporting system.

P: It was Bob Bryan who got rid of Alsobrook. Everything was fine up until then.

S: It was fine, but Bob Bryan kept Alsobrook at the request of Marshall Criser. [Alsobrook left] when Lombardi arrived.

P: Was it and is it your responsibility to cultivate the senators--George Kirkpatrick, for instance?

S: Absolutely, and every other senator.

P: So, what do you do?

S: I am in Tallahassee a lot.

P: You do not take them to dinner all the time.

S: I do a lot of that. If you look at the legislative staff, a quarter of them have been in Shands. This last Friday, a state senator called me about his daddy in the hospital. I make all those arrangements. A lot of them have been here. Our office takes care of them. We give them a place to hang out when they need to make a phone call. We may take some of them to dinner. We maintain very good relations with many prominent people in the state, and our office is primarily responsible for that. If a doctor's child is sick, we take care of them. If a senator's Aunt Millie has a problem, we take care of that. We are in a great privileged position of having six colleges that have services to offer, many of which are unique in Florida. This morning, Milt Morris [Milton E. Morris, director, Agricultural Affairs, IFAS] got a call from a very prominent politician about his lame horse. I get calls about horses, dogs, whatever it might be.

P: What do you think about this attempt to set up a new medical school at Florida State University?

A: I have been told as of this morning that I think exactly what Chancellor Herbert

[Adam Herbert, chancellor, Florida State University System, 1998-present] tells me to think. President Herbert has said [that] as of this moment, he is against it because it has not gone through the Board of Regents, and it had not gone through the planning process. As of this morning, the president said [that if asked this question], we are to follow the lead of the chancellor. The chancellor is calling all four deans together next Thursday in Tallahassee to review this with them.

P: It is liable to pass then.

S: Yes, and the chancellor said that if it passes then, he will ask the governor to veto it. If all schools are able to set up a professional school under the Board of Regents, why have the Board of Regents? Why have a chancellor, according to Chancellor Adams? If we are going to have it done through political interest, bypassing the Board of Regents planning process, and bypassing the chancellor, why have the Board of Regents?

P: Well, as a Florida historian, I know how often that has been done in this state, not necessarily bypassing the Board of Regents, but by going to "the source."

S: You know that and I know that. In the present environment, I have been told that our sandbox is that whatever the chancellor says, we are going to do at this moment.

P: And we cannot predict what the future is going to bring.

S: No, we cannot.

P: Have you played a role in the Alachua County Medical Society other than being a member?

S: No. I was on its program committee for many years. I go to the ACMS meetings. I attend all the meetings of the executive committee. I have been a counselor to many of [the organization's] presidents, but I have not served as an officer. I was very active, particularly with the medical students. I spent a great deal of time with the medical students.

P: You have been very active in the Florida Medical Association.

S: Yes, and I am very active in Alachua County in the sense that whenever I am in town, I go to all the meetings of the executive committee. I am a faithful attender of ACMS meetings when I am in town.

P: You are not a practicing physician. Is it not out of the ordinary to have an

academic become the president of the Florida Medical Association?

S: In those days, I was a practicing physician, not a private practicing physician, but I had a very big practice. Yes, it is. **Lee Doctrine** was ahead of me. It is very difficult. I think we are measured by a much higher standard than our colleagues in private practice.

P: How did it all happen? You just worked yourself up through the ranks?

S: Yes.

P: Every doctor in Florida who belongs to the Florida Medical Association?

S: A lot of them. I served five years as editor. I did a lot of lobbying for them in Tallahassee. No physician in Florida could say that he understood the political process better than I did.

P: You were editor of the *Florida Medical Association Magazine*?

S: For five years.

P: So you knew my friend Bill Straight.

S: Very well. He was a historical editor.

P: He is a Florida historian, too.

S: When I was editor, he was associate editor for history.

P: [He is a] very good friend, a very capable, able individual, and [he] has turned up a lot of interesting [information] on the medical history of Florida. When did you serve as president-elect? In 1991?

S: In that area.

P: For one year or was that two years?

S: That is a one-year term.

P: What about president? What years were that?

S: The following year.

P: Is that a one-year, too?

- S: Yes, but I had already served eight months because the election cycle [was moved] back from September to May.
- P: What were [the president's] responsibilities of the Florida Medical Association?
- S: [The president was] the chief executive officer of both the executive committee and of the board of governors. [He provided] leadership both at the state level and at the federal level for Florida. [He was] responsible for running all aspects of the organization in the sense of interweaving responsibilities. [He had] to relate to various constituencies and specialty societies and make sure that everyone stayed in harmony with each other on key issues. It was a great honor, a great privilege, [and] a great opportunity. I learned a lot about the FMA and about how to be a doctor. I [also] learned a lot about myself.
- P: What role do you play at Shands? Are you not on the executive board?
- S: I am on the hospital board.
- P: What does that mean?
- S: [It is a] newly constructed [board]. There are about thirty members. I stood on the hospital board and I sit on the finance committee of the hospital board. I also stood on the University Medical Center Hospital Board. At the present time, I am one of the few individuals who sits on both hospital boards as a full voting member.
- P: Do you want to explain what some of your responsibilities and duties are?
- S: My responsibilities are to be the legislative liaison of Shands Hospital in Tallahassee. I worked with my other compatriots, particularly individuals like Pete **Millet**, Larry **Overton**, David Flagg, and Max **Depanavitch**. It is my job to coordinate the activities in Tallahassee. My main duties are now to represent the health center and its various components and units in Tallahassee and Washington, D.C.
- P: Your greatest achievement has been the work that you have done with children, has it not?
- S: I think so.
- P: That really needs some explaining and some elaboration.
- S: I am a professor of pediatrics, so obviously the children's needs were always

there. Two, I was involved with the Florida Medical Association, which had a lot of interest in all kinds of health issues besides kids. Three, since I was a cardiologist, I was in the Florida Heart Association, and it had a political agenda for all ages, including kids. When I became chairman, I knew I [had] to enlarge the scope of our program and make it fiscally viable. I had to learn the finances of child health care. When I became director of the Division of Children's Medical Services in Tallahassee, [I] had to have a phenomenal education. I learned how the state government works [and] where the funding was. I learned how to lobby and got to know a lot of the programs. I [learned] how to write the regulations for the programs, and so being a child advocate was a very natural extension of my role of professor of pediatrics. I would be a leader in this state. I had two great compatriots, Bill Cleveland at the University of Miami, and **Lou Barnettts** from the University of South Florida. We did a lot together. We met periodically. Bill Cleveland was chairman of the group. Barnettts made smart remarks and I took the minutes. That was how we divided the jobs. They were two such outstanding academicians of national and international renown, and I was their political agent. It was a tremendous collegial, symbiotic trio. Whatever monies we got for kids in Tallahassee, we split three ways--the fact that I did most of the work, notwithstanding. They supplied the political power back home to make it possible. Most chairmen of pediatrics accept the mantle of child advocacy as part of their role, and train house staff interns, medical student fellows, and medical students in advocacy. Yesterday, I [met with] George Albright, chairman of the Health Service Committee in the House of Representatives, and we had a luncheon for the medical students. Late in the afternoon, he spoke to the doctors of the Alachua County Medical Society. I see my role as keeping the political process intertwined with my profession and the health center. My job is to get physicians acquainted with what the health center is doing because it is doing a fabulous job.

P: This is obviously an ongoing mission. You have not [achieved] all your goals, have you?

S: Of course not.

P: This is going to be a good year, the year of the child in Florida?

S: As long as the economy is good, and new money is available, it is a good year. As soon as you have a downturn [in the] economy in our state, a downturn of sales tax, nobody looks [good] in Tallahassee because [the legislators] are cutting the budget.

P: And the children then become shortchanged.

S: Become a great risk, absolutely.

P: Are you the major voice of the child in Tallahassee?

S: From the point of view of physicians at this time, yes. We are bringing along a whole cohort, because my time is limited. We are bringing along the next generation, particularly Dr. John Curran of Tampa to fill that role. I am slowly letting them do more and more and letting [them] phase me out.

P: Does the fact that the legislature is changing rather rapidly from Democratic control to Republican control impact your mission?

S: We have always said that there are no permanent friends and no permanent enemies in [the] legislature because it depends on the issue. I think I am fortunate because the next speaker of the house, **John Thrash**, is a long-time personal friend. I knew him when he was general counsel of the FMA. I have known John for almost thirty years. I think that John will look kindly on some of our requests. I am not saying that I can deliver John Thrash on every occasion. I am just saying that we will certainly have access to him.

P: But you are going to get a new governor very shortly.

S: No problem. Whoever wins, we will have guaranteed access. You cannot be a political agent and not assure access.

P: Has not Lawton Chiles been friendly to your programs and the [goals] that you wanted to achieve?

S: Absolutely.

P: How about our congressional delegation in Washington, the senators?

S: We are lucky. Audrey and I know both senators very well. I think that they work in tandem on behalf of Florida with great skill even though they are politically disparate. I think we have always had access, but part of that [is] because we are also very active in the political process. We, as a family, know that when people do us favors, when they have a fund raiser, we have to be there. You are not immune to supporting your friends when they need help.

P: I do not want to ask an insensitive question, but how about our delegation to Tallahassee--Cynthia Chesnut and Bob Casey and George Kirkpatrick--in terms of what you are trying to do.

S: First of all, Bob Casey is my protege. He worked in my laboratory as a medical student for four years. He has been a long-time personal friend. Bob Casey has

been a 1,000 percent supporter. Bob Casey has supported University of Florida [projects] 100 percent. Cynthia Chestnut is an outstanding legislator, a lot of experience, great access to the black caucus, follows [matters] well, [and] a very good legislator.

P: So we are lucky.

S: We are very lucky because they allow us access to two different parties. The Democratic Party has spent [about] \$500,000 to defeat [Bob Casey]. The problem is that Bob Casey is really a moderate Democrat, if you think about it. His assault on the tobacco industry has been unyielding. He is one of the few who did not vote for more taxes as a Republican. He has [worked on] such societal [issues] like [the need for] bicycle helmets and increased severity on drunk driving. George Kirkpatrick is George Kirkpatrick. He is material. He may be one of the hardest working legislators in Tallahassee. He has a phenomenal staff. They may be the best staff in Tallahassee. George Kirkpatrick works at his job. The rest of them may go home Wednesday or Thursday at noon [but] not Kirkpatrick. He is there five days a week working until the end. He works hard. He is enormously skillful. But George has far more mood swings than does Casey or Chestnut. Plus, we have three other members of the delegation. [Representative] Janegale Boyd was Allen Boyd's sister-in-law. They have a _____ in Newberry. Senator Betty Holzendorf, a black senator from Jacksonville, has part of our area here. Senator Charles Williams has part of Alachua County also. We have a six-member delegation.

P: You have to be concerned with the entire state, not just the Alachua County area. You need the support and votes from everybody.

S: Absolutely.

P: I am going to skip around a little bit, but I do not want to miss anything. Tell me about the building that bears your name. How did that come about?

S: We had some quarters in downtown Gainesville for a children's medical services staff. It leaked when it rained, and it was not in a very savory section of the community. It was far away from our clinic operation. In other parts of the state, the buildings for children's medical services were nice buildings away from downtown areas and close to the hospitals they served. We got in line for monies to build here in Gainesville to replace the facility we had downtown. We finally got that through. Because I am a living person, the building was named by the legislature. If [the person] is dead, the Board of Regents can do that. If you are alive, [members of the] Florida Legislature want to make sure that you are a good guy and are not going to disgrace them later. The legislature did that. I was easily taken by surprise because I missed a lot of clues in the outside world.

I walked up to the gallery to find my daddy there. I thought he was there because they were going to give Audrey a big award that day for _____ Program. All the kids came. [A legislator] announced the name of this building. [The name was] introduced under the Mullet Bill as if it were some fishing thing just to keep it disguised in the process. They named the building after me. There were some fine speeches. Every children's medical service building in the state has been named after its present or previous medical director.

P: This is a \$4 million building. Is this on the campus? Does this belong to the university?

S: The university gave us the land permanently. It was a state building on former university property. We have just leased for forty years the land on the side of that [property] to increase the size of the building and the parking lot and that will begin in April of this year.

P: Is Arlan Rosenbloom [Arlan Rosenbloom, UF distinguished service professor of pediatric endocrinology, 1986-1996] in charge over there?

S: Yes.

P: He is a good friend, too. He took me through the building so I have been in it.

S: Arlan is in charge of the building, building plans, the architectural [aspects]. My job is to get the land and the money. We have to work in tandem all the time. Arlan and I divide our duties over there as medical directors. I take care of the Florida Legislature, the funding, the programs, contact legislators, acquire the monies for the building, acquire monies for the various [projects], and deal with the university. The day-to-day operations in that building are in the control of Arlan.

P: Who selected all that wonderful stuff for the kids to play with?

S: Arlan. The problem we had was that we were attacked in the press. It got to be on the front page of *The Gainesville Sun*. Our grandchildren were at P. K. Yonge. They were asked to write big articles on government waste. I think *The Gainesville Sun* did not handle us fairly. There was a vicious cartoon by a fellow in *The Gainesville Sun*. I think people thought there were outside statues. They were inside. The building was [constructed] around them, and they give you the appearance of a friendly environment when you first walk in. I think *The Gainesville Sun* did us a disservice and nobody ever figured out how we solved it.

P: *The Gainesville Sun* is *The Gainesville Sun*.

- S: They never figured out how we solved it. All of a sudden, the problems appeared.
- P: Have you been responsible for any specific legislation enacted on behalf of children?
- S: Over fifty pieces.
- P: What are some of the more significant ones?
- S: The setting up of the premature baby system in the state, the so-called perinatal system.
- P: Was that not the forerunner for the country?
- S: Absolutely.
- P: What does that [system] do?
- S: It establishes a system [in which] babies born prematurely are taken by ambulance, helicopter or plane to these centers that take care of the problems of premature children. [The system is] regionalized so it gives them some kind of competence.
- P: Other medical centers are doing this now?
- S: Yes. There are about thirteen or fourteen in the state. [Other specific legislation enacted on behalf of children include] the seat belt law for children, [which] was a very big one, poison control, Audrey's work on _____, my work on getting unclaimed bodies to get their corneas for eye transplants, some organ transplantation work, the child protection teams in child abuse, the rewriting of the law for Children's Medical Services, [and] the **Charlie, Mack, Overstreet Law**. The Brain and Spinal _____ Trust Fund Program takes speeding fines and puts a certain part of the [fines] into that [fund]. I think that each year we are working on several different laws that relate to children. We do that as an offshoot of our university duties.
- P: I wanted to ask you about the state network of child protection teams and about Jack **Levine**. What role does he play? You have worked closely with him.
- S: Jack Levine is the executive director of the Florida Center for Children and Youth. That is an independent agency in Tallahassee. It is a child advocate's organization that gets its funding from various organizations. As I mentioned,

Jack Levine and the leadership of the Florida Center for Children and Youth gave Audrey and me the award last fall as the outstanding child advocates of the year. We work in complementary ways except my agenda is limited to medical health issues and his goes across a whole spectrum into welfare wages, environmental [issues]. His agenda is far broader than mine.

P: Have you done anything with the hearing problems of children?

S: When your wife has a profound hearing loss, the answer is yes. We are working now with **Roseanne** and George Albright and Joe **Kempker** on setting up a hearing program across all kids. About twelve years ago, we began Hearing for Kids at High Risk for premature babies and so forth. We want to do it across the whole board. Joe Kempker and health professionals of audiology are working with us. We would like to set up a system like Hawaii has where we are going to do hearing screening of all newborn children. That is our goal. We are going to start potentially, if George Albright has his way, with two pilot programs, one in Ocala and Gainesville in a rural area and the second one in Miami and the Dade County area.

P: What about children's kidney problems?

S: We have one of the best teams in the country. Bob Saunders put in money for that years ago. **Dixon Walker** and George Richard are about as good a team as you are going to get in the world today. I think we set that up twenty-five years ago. Florida has a very good system for children's kidney problems.

P: Are you involved in [projects] that deal with brain abnormalities?

S: Sure. We work on that all the time.

P: Is Florida in the forefront of handling these kinds of things?

S: I think so. We are a model.

P: What do you do so as far as Tacachale is concerned? Anything?

S: Of course, the place was a disaster when we got here in 1960.

P: That is one of the oldest operations in the state.

S: There were incompetents out there. We took over the pharmacy with Ken Finger [Kenneth F. Finger, UF dean of college of pharmacy, 1968-1979 and UF associate vice president for health affairs, 1975-1994] in the early 1970s. When we took over, there were eighty-eight outdated units of drugs. They had a whole

bunch of sweetheart deals with local druggists. One out of every twelve medications was given to the wrong person at the wrong time. They were on 8.5 _____ within a year. We had them come down from 8.5 to 4.3. It is in much better control. It now serves as an educational program for our pharmacy staff, as well as giving good care. We took over nursing, occupational therapy, [and] physical therapy. We took over dentistry [and] the medical care. That is the reason we have had very few complaints about care at Tacachale, because we took it all over by contract.

P: How old does the child have to be [to get] admitted there?

S: They are admitting almost no more children.

P: Which is what it was set up to do.

S: They are being taken care of mainly at home or in smaller groups, so they have a very marked aging of the population. I think the average age there is the late forties, early fifties. The population in the Sunlands and across the state are aging. That is why the program that we have there has done a phenomenal job of giving superior care at a very modest cost to the entire Tacachale community. If they need hospitalization, we get them right in. It has been a long haul. It took us a long time to get there.

P: What was your involvement with the Ronald McDonald House?

S: The head of children's oncology at that time, Tommy **Alley**, got started on Ronald McDonald House, and he persuaded me to look at it. I thought it would never work because we are a small town. We went to the Gators to become our national football team. They said, no. The NCAA does not allow it. Very few small towns have done it and so Audrey and I were part of the pivotal [action]. I raised \$163,000 from doctors for the Ronald McDonald House. Audrey was in charge of spending it, and I was in charge of raising it. It worked very well since she liked spending it better than raising; I was not interested in spending it. She worked with the architectural committee and brought that to fruition. My job was to get the funding and the land.

P: Where did the land come from?

S: They thought they were going to have the solar laboratory here. They moved that down to Orlando, so that land was not utilized. I asked the president if he would donate it to [the] Ronald McDonald House and so he did. Again, my job was to raise money, get the land, but the actual design, fashioning equipment for the house was done mainly by Audrey and the folks from the community.

P: Are you two still on the board of the Ronald McDonald House? Are you involved in the day-to-day operations?

S: We are involved, but not in the day-to-day operations. I sit on the long-range finance committee. For example, [the Ronald McDonald House] is going to have a golf tournament and it needs to get sponsors. My role is to line up sponsors. I already lined \$4,000 worth of sponsors. I do the [tasks] at which I am good. I am not involved in the day-to-day [business]. [Ronald McDonald House] has a very competent staff. Shands is a magnet. Just look at the families who come to Ronald McDonald House. They come from forty-four states and sixteen foreign countries. This is in southeastern United States, in the middle of North Central Florida. This is not the middle of the country like Chicago. It shows you what an enormous magnet Shands Health Care System is. So Audrey is mainly interested in the operations and furnishings, rules and regulations. I concern myself with finances.

P: When the phone rings and [I am] on it, everybody knows what [I am] looking for.

S: In certain forums, yes. That is why they avoid me. It is not always fun.

P: I bet it is not. Fund raising can be very difficult.

S: Frank Urban is in charge of the golf tournament, and I will try to get \$5,000 for him in corporate sponsors. That is where I see my role. I will talk to our son-in-law, Bob Cooke from the timber company; Bob is going to be a sponsor. I do not mind using our kids. They have been very supportive. I talked to my friends in Tallahassee.

P: The last question I want to ask you has to do with this eminent scholar's chair. I know that you were not responsible for doing that. That was the Palm Beach Heart Association. Did you help them raise the money?

S: No, I did not help them raise the money.

P: \$600,000 is a lot of money.

S: Joseph B. Shearouse, Jr. was the chairman of the board of the Palm Beach Heart Association. He was one of the chief influences. He was a University of Florida graduate. He was head of the Fidelity Bank down there and had the vision to set up two chairs, one for the adults that Dick Conti has and one in my name for kids that Ira Gessner has. He raised \$600,000 for each. That was part of my work for the Heart Association. The Shearouses are very good friends, and he had the phenomenal vision along with **Don Warren** to make that kind of donation.

- P: Who holds that chair? Or do you hold the chair?
- S: Ira Gessner holds the chair. The answer is, for all intents and purposes, no. They may copy a correspondence, but the answer is no.
- P: Which is the way you probably want it.
- S: Absolutely. Ira Gessner is a fantastic representative. Do you know Ira?
- P: Yes. I think Harry Prystowsky tells me that he was the one who got the first chair at the medical center which [was then] named for Dr. Reitz.
- S: He did it without state match.
- P: This one provides a state match, does it not?
- S: Yes, but for Harry's first one, the state match program was not in place at the time.
- P: I know his was not in place. He got Mellon money.
- S: He was a phenomenally organized person.
- P: He was able to get the money from the Mellons for two chairs. The second one [was] named for him. We stay in close touch with the Prystowskys. Our children grew up together. I wanted to ask you about the governor's task force on AIDS. Is this because babies get AIDS?
- S: Of course, they get it from their mothers.
- P: I know, you read about that. What do you do? What does this task force do?
- S: The government task force on AIDS lasted for a couple of years under Bob Graham [Robert Graham, governor of Florida, 1979-1987 and U.S. senator, 1987-present]. [The task force] is no longer even active. Bob Graham set it up and the chairman was Bob **Goodman**, my old mentor. I take certain specific doable projects. I am not going to take global projects that I cannot get my hands on. I knew that although there are millions of dollars spent on AIDS, there was no infrastructure to deal with kids with AIDS. One of my projects was to build a children's network for AIDS through Children's Medical Services. Each year I got more funding until it covered the whole state. If we can detect the pregnant mother with AIDS, we can give her medicines that will cut down the transmission of AIDS from mother to child from thirty-five percent to less than five

percent.

P: It is a preventive kind of [treatment].

S: Yes. Plus the fact [that] if the child does have AIDS, [a health care staff] needs a system to take care of them. Not many doctors want to take care of kids with AIDS because they have all kinds of illnesses. There are still people in the office who do not want to sit next to a kid with AIDS because they think they might catch it--although you cannot. The big [problem] there has been to develop drug regimens that prevent babies from getting AIDS. The big question, ethically, is should women who have AIDS be allowed to have kids? That is an unanswerable question. My role has been to set up an organization in the state by region so that we have a central point to collect all those kids to treat them along state guidelines. We have attracted an enormous amount of federal money to help us in that quest. You cannot have a kids' health care system unless you have an infrastructure to support it.

P: Are you saying that this is no longer in operation?

S: The governor's task force is no longer in operation, but my commitment to do something for AIDS kids is ongoing. We had thirty-five hospitals that all call themselves poison control centers. They were unregulated, unmonitored, [and] met no standards. The joke at Shands Hospital was that the new intern called the Florida Poison Information Center number to get information on poison control, and the phone next to him rang so he picked it up while he was waiting. He found out that he was talking to himself. He was the poison control center. He was looking for information. We said, we need to have national standards. We need one center for every 5 million people. So we need one in Jacksonville, Tampa, and Miami. They all have to be certified by national criteria. They put in reports quarterly that are evaluated on a national basis so we know what we are doing. I asked the phone companies if they would put my poison control number in a prominent place in their book. I thought I was a pretty influential person in Tallahassee, so I called the seventeen phone companies together to talk about this. Only two showed up. I realized I was not very influential. I got [Governor] Lawton Chiles and the Public Service Commission to pass a statute that with the 911 number [there has to be] the number for the Florida Poison Information Center. That is in every phone book in the state. We answer 200,000 inquiries a year. My role, as I see it, is to find topflight people in the state to set up programs that meet national standards and to get the money and the laws to implement them. This year, my law in Tallahassee is to force the 911 emergency medical services people to develop liaison protocol with my poison control people--so we are all acting together. Every county has its own EMS 911 system. I cannot deal with sixty-seven sets of county commissioners. We are going to pass laws, and each year I pass a little more of a law to make the

system work better. I have now gotten \$3.5 million and we are asking for some more this year to make those poison control centers operate.

P: Are you optimistic about getting more?

S: I am. The economy is good and there is money there. I think that since we have one in Miami, Jacksonville, and Tampa, we have a lot of statewide political power. It is not a Gerry Schiebler project for Gainesville and the University of Florida.

P: Are you trying to set up other centers in Orlando and West Florida?

S: If the population demands it. Right now, you [need] to have a poison control center with a level one trauma center, the highest, so that they are meshed. The national criterion is one center for every 5 million people. We now have 14 million people, and we have 1 million people in every day who are visitors. When we get to 18 million or 19 million people, then there will be a need for another center. Whether that is going to be in Orlando or Broward County, I do not know. We cover practically all the counties.

P: What happens to the people in West Florida who will never come up to this 5 million criterion. Do they not need the services also?

S: They have one in Jacksonville. They are hooked into us. When they ring, they get Jacksonville. We send our teams of people to Pensacola to educate students, teachers, and doctors. We are responsible not only for the poison control but also for the education of the professionals who are going into schools. We know we can handle 75 percent of the poisonings of kids at home. Our famous story is [about the time when] Audrey came home and found her plants wilting. She got some plant granules--crystals of plant-growing enhancements--and dissolved them in a glass of water to [add] to the plant [soil]. She went out to the laundry room and opened a Clorox bottle; she [inhaled] the fumes and [then] had a coughing jag. She ran in, picked up the wrong glass and drank the water [containing] the plant enhancer. She did not know if it was poison. She dialed this number and explained what she did. The [poison control center] had a master computer sheet. The [staff] pulled it up in ten seconds and said, the [granules in the water] are not going to hurt you. You are going to have a sore, scratchy throat for a few days, but do not go to the hospital, do not get your stomach pumped out. Just stay home. That [information] saved her a hospital trip and [attending] costs. Then the [poison control staff member asked], what precinct are you in. She gave the precinct. [Then the staff member] said, give me your name. She whispered, Audrey Schiebler. The [lady asked], what was that name? [The staff members] in Jacksonville laughed because they knew the Schiebler name. The [poison control center] called back four hours later and

[again] eight hours later to follow up [on Audrey's condition]. We know from personal experience. Somebody told the story about Audrey drinking the plant enhancer, and one doctor wanted to know if Audrey grew after she drank the plant enhancer. I see my role as a facilitator to implement programs for kids. I am not going to solve the Iraqi oil crisis. I look for projects to do that are within my capacity.

P: Gerold, what role did you play with the university's medical facilities operations in Jacksonville?

S: I sit on the board and I represent them in the legislature. I am one of the few people who sits both on the Shands board and the University Medical Center.

P: That is set up in Jacksonville as part of Shands?

S: They are thinking of purchasing them. It has not been done, yet. It is an independent board on which I sit. It is a private, not-for-profit corporation that runs the University Medical Center. All the doctors there are University of Florida physicians. They are an adjunct to our medical school.

P: This is the facility on Eighth Street in Springfield Park where the old St. Luke's Hospital used to be?

S: Yes. It has become the Mayo Clinic hospital because they wanted to move out of the low-rent district to the high-rent district. Methodist [Hospital] is still there.

P: I was born in St. Luke's Hospital. They should have a historical plaque there. Do all the Mayo patients go there?

S: Yes. There are some private doctors who go there, but it is a hospital with the lowest census in town. It is very efficient for the Mayo staff because the hospital is nine and a half miles from the clinic.

P: Was the facility in Jacksonville a private hospital at one time? Methodist Hospital?

S: No, it was the old Duval Medical Center. Methodist was side by side. The deal that Shands is thinking of right now is having Shands together with Methodist and University Medical Center as one conglomerate and combine those two things.

P: In that area, right in proximity to it before integration, there was a black hospital, **Breuster**.

S: **Breuster** became Methodist Hospital. The old **Breuster** is now used by Methodist as sort of an AIDS facility or long-term facility.

P: I did not even know that it still existed.

S: Yes, part of it still exists. In Tallahassee, you might be looking for Florida Agriculture and Mechanical University--FAMU-- for a new law school, and these others have not asked to get their hospital back, have they?

P: No.

S: They closed the FAMU hospital in 1963 because they gave lousy medical care to a segregated hospital. They finally closed it and put it in Tallahassee Memorial because that was the way it should have been all along.

P: They closed the law school at FAMU, too.

S: Sure, because none of the graduates passed the Florida Bar.

P: They set it up to keep them out of the University of Florida and then when Judge **Devain** said that UF had to admit them, there was no longer any need for that. There is a Gerold Schiebler lectureship also.

S: That is the Pediatric Alumni Association. That is our house staff who has collected monies each year. They are going to meet on Amelia Island this year at the end of April. They pick someone each year to be the [speaker] for that particular lectureship for the Pediatric Alumni Association of former interns or residents who are now in practice.

P: There is a Schiebler lectureship, a Schiebler chair and a Schiebler building. I gather you are more famous than Sam Proctor.

S: Oh, no, Dr. Proctor, never.

P: This recent award that you [received], tell me about it, the Sharon Solomon Child Advocate.

S: That [award] is given by Jack Levine and the Florida Center for Children. We were nominated by Carol **Zeagel**. Carol **Zeagel** knew Audrey because she followed Audrey to the court system as coordinator of the Guardian Ad Litem Program. We were nominated by them, and [the award] was given to us by the governor last October 24 in Orlando. They pick one person a year. We were nominated by the board of the Florida Center for Children and Youth on the basis of our twenty-five years of work, because very rarely do you have a couple who [have] followed parallel pathways. Audrey has her own agenda and I have mine, but they are complementary.

P: Did you know Sharon Solomon?

S: Of course.

P: I knew her. She died of cancer. She was doing work very similar to what you are doing.

S: She was the first executive director of Florida Community College at Jacksonville.

P: The most recent award that you and Mrs. Schiebler just [received was] in February, the Heartland Award. Why is that given?

S: It is given once a year by Governor Chiles and his wife, Rhea. They select [the recipients] themselves. Again, they [present] the Heartland Award [to] individuals in the state, individually or a couple, who they think have contributed most to the overall welfare [and] benefit of the children of Florida.

P: This was when you received Mrs. Chiles's painting.

S: Yes. [It is] a print of her watercolor of the Myakka River called *Florida Heartland*. It is named the Heartland Award because the award is a print done by Rhea Chiles of one of their places on the Myakka River, [located southeast of Sarasota].

P: You are getting ready to go to Tallahassee next week. What is your program for the legislature this year?

S: They have given me twenty-eight things to do funding-wise, and I have a list of priorities from the health center.

P: Do you have any legislative goals to reach this time?

S: Absolutely. [These goals] are made by the university, and we have several pieces of legislation and a large number of funding issues, too.

P: What do you hope to achieve in this sixty-day [period]?

S: I know that I am measured every year--like the National Football League. How many passes did they catch last year? How are you going to do this year? There are no "C's" in my profession for effort. It is "A" if you succeed and "F" if you fail. I would like to achieve some of the health center's priorities that are given to me [passed in] legislation. I would like to be able to do it in such a way that I remain in synchrony with the chancellor and with my friends in the

legislature. I think when you have six deans and three hospital directors who all have their own priorities, it is Dr. **Challoner's** job, my boss, [and] who is the vice president of health affairs, to set up priorities. He has a list and I will follow those priorities in order to get monies for each of the projects that they want.

P: Do you have any new projects and programs that you think will be funded this time?

S: Absolutely. We would like to get some money from managed care for the medical school. We would like to establish some sites where the various health professionals, doctors, pharmacists, and nurses can all work together. We are asking for monies for that. We are asking for monies for our residency program in veterinary medicine. We are asking for monies for attention deficit hyperactivity disorders, [a program] run by Dr. Bernie **Maria** to find out what to do with those children and how best to handle them. We are asking \$200,000 for indigents who need dental care, particularly at the Eastside Clinic. I am asking for \$1.7 million to purchase the Eastside Clinic building because Shands has advanced us the monies. We are asking for monies for a joint program between Bethune-Cookman College and [UF's] college of nursing to have some interrelations.

P: You have not associated with them, have you?

S: No, it is a new program between our college of nursing and the dean of nursing at Bethune-Cookman. We are looking for monies for long-distance learning--synchronous learning--that will tie in Jacksonville, Tampa, Orlando, and Gainesville. We are looking for an increase in monies for indigent care for Shands Hospital. We are looking for monies for a drug information service with a 1-800 number that [concerned people] can call in and find out about various drugs. We are getting more and more foreign visitors. They bring drugs into this country [that are not] used here, and they might have some reactions. [A] doctor calls up and says, I have this person from England who got these drugs, which are not in the United States. There is increasing need for some kind of place that can show how drugs relate to each other and which are **acidigistic** and antagonistic--ones that may cause reactions when used together, or ones [which when taken] together are less than adequate. Those are some of the [projects] that we are looking at financially this year.

P: Are you looking for any bricks-and-mortar money?

S: We are. We are looking for early money to [construct] a new building for the colleges of nursing, pharmacy and health professionals. We are looking for early planning money on the state **pica** list. We are looking for money for an addition

to the [Children's Medical Services] building. We are looking for money to fund the Eastside Clinic, and we are looking for money to pay the utilities bill at the [University of Florida] Brain Institute.

P: It is hard to believe that there is any land left down the hill for you to build on.

S: [The University of Florida] has architecturally planned to build the brand new pharmacy, nursing, health professionals building because [those staff members] have been very cramped for space.

P: If it goes through, would that be in the space across from the new Brain Institute?

S: It would be in the parking lot area behind the present pharmacy building. It would be to the west of the Brain Institute.

P: I am always reluctant to see that last little green area as you go down the hill past the old museum.

S: So am I.

P: But it is going to disappear. Let me ask you a few questions about yourself. First of all, I know that you have had an eyesight problem for a long time, yes?

S: About seven years ago, I had a major detached retina and just have figure vision. There is not enough light in the eye. It deviates. Basically, I have ____ so I just shield it because the light hurts me.

P: Is this a problem as far as driving is concerned?

S: I do not drive. I have narcolepsy. I have a sleep disorder.

P: How do you get to Tallahassee?

S: With my bodyguard.

P: You have a driver then.

S: At all times, day and night. He picks me up no matter where I am at any place within a 200-mile radius.

P: I can see that [that] would be a problem. My eyes are not the greatest either, and I do not drive at night.

S: **James** and **Grady Brown** are assigned to me twenty-four hours a day. They are always on beeper. They take me anywhere [I want to go and] any time I want to

go.

P: This means even going to your office on campus?

S: My secretary's home is such that she picks me up on the way down and takes me back. If I have to stay longer, Audrey picks me up. That does not mean I cannot drive. On rare occasions, I do drive. I am a better night driver than Audrey is.

P: You have an Amelia Island condominium. That is just to relax?

S: No, we are going to move there.

P: When you retire?

S: Right.

P: Is that in the immediate future?

S: In the year 2000.

P: That is in the immediate future.

S: Right. I will be seventy-two. I will have been here since 1960. It would be forty-two years.

P: Have you enjoyed [the condominium]?

S: This is a new one for us. We had one in the middle of the woods. Audrey has always liked the ocean. In the new [condo], we can see the ocean, which has been a life-long dream of hers.

P: I have not been over there in many years. How close are you to [the town of] Fernandina [Beach]? Ten miles?

S: Yes. It takes a good twenty minutes to drive down there. Amelia Island Plantation is on the lower third of the island. If you look at Amelia Island, it is like a big carrot. At the top of the carrot is Fort Clinch. If you are looking at this carrot, on the northwestern tip is Fernandina Beach. Amelia Island [Plantation] is two-thirds down. From the A1A cut-off to [Amelia Island] Plantation is nine miles.

P: I remember Fernandina [Beach] before the restorations; [the town] was a wonderful place to walk around. They have done a lot of very fine work over there. Are you able to spend much time with your family?

S: My wife takes care of that.

P: I know, but I mean [time with] your grandchildren.

S: Yes. That is a big priority of Audrey's.

P: Do you travel at all? Travel associated with business? Do you take time off?

S: Sure. Ninety percent is business. As soon as you are through with me, we are going to head to Amelia Island. Before we go there, we are going to Lake City and have dinner with our daughter. Wanda is [coming] down to Amelia Island in a few weeks with four of her girlfriends. We are phasing down and are spending more time on Amelia Island. On Friday midafternoons, we are in a car going to Amelia Island. We will go there tonight.

P: I was going to ask you a question about religion, but I gather from the conversation that we have had so far that you are really not a very organized religious person.

S: Audrey was brought up Catholic and I was brought up Lutheran. At one time, we spent a great deal of time with the United Church of Christ with Larry **Reimer**. With our time in Tallahassee and our time on Amelia Island, we were never home. What we do for Larry is give him \$3,000 a year for his discretionary fund for whatever he does as a pastor. When the [Church of Christ] asked for a donation, we put in \$15,000 for the church. If we have a connection with the church, it is with Larry Reimer and the Church of Christ. A lot of our girls got married there. As far as being intimately involved on an ongoing basis, the answer is no.

P: You do not go to church on Sundays, necessarily.

S: No, except on special occasions. On most Sundays, we are on Amelia Island.

P: Are you able to read?

S: Of course.

P: Do you do a lot of reading?

S: Day and night.

P: What do you read?

S: My work.

P: Do you read books?

S: No, no time for that.

P: Newspapers?

S: Rarely. I get up at three o'clock every morning and work.

P: I asked you if you were a workaholic and now you are proving to me that you are.

S: I admitted that I was.

P: The [books and articles] that you read relate to your work. You do not read for fun.

S: There is no time to read for fun.

P: But you are able to with your eyes.

S: Yes, sure.

P: Do you watch television?

S: Pro-sports.

P: Do you go to football games?

S: By demand. My job requires it.

P: But you do not go just to be going.

S: Audrey goes the first quarter and the second quarter. She stays for half time. One millisecond into the third quarter, she says, Gerry, I have talked to every politician here. I am going home. She goes home. She says, I want air-conditioning. I want to be inside from the noise. I like a place where there is some food and drink, and I like a nice, clean lady's bathroom.

P: What is your philosophy of life?

S: I never knew that our family's [genealogy can be traced] back to 1597. I just found that out this fall. I did not even know that I could trace my genealogy. That was complete news to me. When they say can you explain Gerry Schiebler, I

say, maybe I can best explain it by my recently found [ancestral] coat of arms. In the original German, the knight is above. He is on a horse in full-battle dress charging with drawn lance. Underneath in German it says, strength and the relentless pursuit of goals. Underneath, is a golden anchor of hope that says, compassion in the service of those in need.

P: So you are carrying on the family tradition.

S: Without knowing it.

P: As you look around the world, are you happy with what you see?

S: I am happy with what Audrey and I are doing. I think if you are saying, am I comfortable with the erosion of language on TV and the movies, no, I am not. Do I think that there has been a gradual laxity and loosening of some of the moral fiber of our society? I have concerns about the movie content, TV content. Maybe I am Victorian, but it still bothers me. I am not happy with the fact that there is an increasing balkanization of our society in voting patterns. I know that my constituency of doctors votes 86 percent Republican. I know that the trial lawyers vote 83 percent Democrat. The blacks vote 89 percent Democrat. Far right Christians vote 84 percent Republican. I not happy about that. I am not happy about a nation where the president's popularity goes up when his sexual peccadilloes go up simultaneously. I do not speak much about them. On the other hand, I see my grandkids at age five and their wisdom of the computer. I do not even know how to work a computer. Their knowledge, panorama and vision are fantastic. They see things phenomenally. I know that our grandchildren go to private schools. That bothers me because I think they are never going to meet all segments of society. None of them will drink water from the tap. They all drink bottled water. I find that discombobulating. I think I may be incarcerated in the past. I am not comfortable with everything in our society, but I also know that I am going to do those things that I am capable of doing. I am not going to cure teen-age pregnancy. The university has been tremendously supportive of allowing me to do a lot of [projects]. I could never do what I do without the support of the university infrastructure. I have access to a fax machine and Xerox machine, which gives me power. I am a phenomenal distributor of information. That is part of my statewide network. The university and my bosses have been incredibly understanding. They want me to work on the university agenda, but they do not mind having me work on other [projects] that also are societally important. I have been very lucky. The university and President Lombardi know that I am [working on other projects] besides university work. They are comfortable with that. I think that is important. It could not have been possible without it. To answer your question, am I comfortable in the world [into] which my grandchildren are [entering]. No, but I suspect that has been true of everyone's grandfather in history. Are you comfortable with it?

P: No. I feel just like you.

S: With all the "F" words on TV, I am just discombobulated. My father and mother thought a great evening at home was [having] a bottle of wine and my father reading French poetry [and] translating it into German for my mother. If I said to Audrey Schiebler, Audrey, I am going to read some French poetry tonight, she would say, are you sick?

P: Times have changed. What have we not talked about? I do not want to leave without having asked you about some [points] that should be documented.

S: I have never really gotten over my brother's death or Henry Kokomoor's death.

P: You never quite get over those [sorts of tragedies]. Sometimes it feels as though it were just yesterday. But you are lucky that you have all your children and your grandchildren. And all of them, I presume, are healthy, growing and flourishing.

S: We always worry about them, though. Audrey and I had to go see a little boy five years old. Do you know the Camp family in town?

P: I think I do.

S: Joe Camp was the president of the Gainesville High School student body when Mark was head of the student body at P. K. Yonge. [Joe] was a football player at Florida State University and captain of the FSU football team. He went to medical school with Mark and is now a urologist in Tallahassee. He has a five-year-old child with leukemia. Audrey and I left and said, how would we handle that if one of our grandchildren had it? I do not think we would handle it very well. I was [at the office] at 7:00 this morning and gave Joe Camp a key to the office so he could use the phone or fax machine. I tried to be supportive. I cannot take care of his child, but I can be supportive. We treasure the health of our grandchildren. We hope they stay healthy.

P: I was going to close this off by asking you what you do for fun, but I think you have really answered that question by saying that you work.

S: My work is my fun.

P: You do not have any hobbies?

S: Except Audrey Schiebler.

P: You are not an orchid grower? You do not collect stamps.

- S: I collected stamps as a youth and that gave me my knowledge of geography. I gave my old stamp collection to Mark who is keeping it up now. I got a stamp collection from my father who had gotten [it] from his uncle. One of the tragedies of our family is that I lost my grandfather and my uncle and my brother on the field of battle. My grandfather was killed in the Franco-Prussian War [between 1870 and 1871]. My Uncle Fitz, my father's brother, was killed [in World War I] in the Second Battle of the Marne [in July 1918]. My brother Klaus was killed in the Battle of Shuri [in May 1945]. There is a lot of blood on the ground.
- P: Your brother is buried at Arlington National Cemetery?
- S: Yes.
- P: Maybe it is just as well that this twentieth century is fading. It has been a terrible century in terms of lives lost and wars fought. Thank you very much.
- S: You are very welcome. I just wonder how much more we could have said if we had another two or three hours.