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An Interview with Dr. Robert Aalberts

An Oral History Conducted by Claytee D. White

The UNLV @ Fifty Oral History Project

Oral History Research Center at UNLV

University Libraries

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The transcripts received minimal editing. These measures include the elimination of fragments, false starts, and repetitions in order to enhance the reader's understanding of the material. All measures have been taken to preserve the style and language of the narrator.

The following interview is part of a series of interviews conducted under the auspices of the UNLV @ Fifty Oral History Project. Additional transcripts may be found under that series title.

Claytee D. White, Project Director
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Preface

Robert Aalberts grew up in a small town called Bemidji, Minnesota. He enjoyed all kinds of outdoors sports in winter and summer. He attended school there from kindergarten through his bachelor's degree.

Robert obtained his master's at the University of Missouri, and then taught geography at the University of New Orleans. After 4 years there, he decided to attend law school at Loyola University, and received his law degree in 1982.

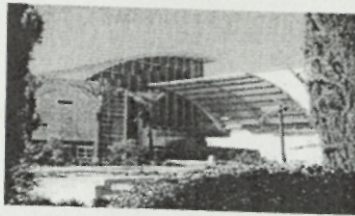
His first job out of law school was as a corporate lawyer for Gulf Oil, but after two years he decided to return to teaching. He taught at Louisiana State University in Shreveport for seven years. While there, he published several textbooks, wrote articles for business journals, and also wrote for law reviews.

Mr. Aalberts was encouraged to come to UNLV by a friend who worked here, and he got the chance to do just that in 1991. When he first arrived, there was no law school, and he taught legal environment of business, real estate law I and II, and became editor in chief of the Real Estate Law Journal in 1992.

Today Robert continues to teach, write, edit, do research in the new law library, and serve on various committees. He has served in the past on promotion and tenure committees, and currently serves on a committee which seeks to improve teaching on campus. He also enjoys various sports events on campus and informal get-togethers with colleagues.

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Robert J. Galbreath

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Robert J. Galbreath

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Claytee D. White

Signature of Interviewer

11/16/2006

Date

This is Claytee White. It is November 16th, 2006, and I am in the office of Robert -- would you pronounce your last name for me?

Aalberts.

-- Aalberts. And you're in the business department here at UNLV; is that correct?

The College of Business, Department of Finance; that's correct.

The College of Business, okay.

Yes. And I teach business law in the Department of Finance, legal studies.

Wonderful. Good. Thank you so much.

First I want you to just tell me about where you grew up, what that was like, what your parents did for a living.

Yeah, well, that's a good question. I actually grew up in a place very different from Las Vegas, Nevada. I grew up probably like a lot of people living here. I grew up in a small town in northern Minnesota called Bemidji, Minnesota, a small town of about 30,000 people and a fairly isolated area, a very, very cold place in the winter. It sometimes got 40 to 50 below in the winter. It had very pleasant summers. It's a very pretty area with a lot of lakes, a lot of water. The Mississippi River flowed through the lakes in the area. It was actually a very nice place to grow up because of all the things you could do outside in the four seasons.

Tell me something about some of those summer sports and winter sports, especially.

There were a lot of sports up there. Being a small town, perhaps not a lot of other things to do. Sports were always on everybody's mind. So we played just about every sport you can think of. Summer -- a lot of water skiing. Everybody water-skied. I actually grew up on a lake, and we had a speedboat. And we used to fish and water ski a lot and swim and that sort of thing and canoe. In the winter we would ski and toboggan and sled and play ice hockey and skate on the lakes and in rinks. And then the usual sports. A lot of baseball in the summer; football in the fall; basketball and wrestling in the winter.

I was on the wrestling team and ran track and cross-country and that sort of thing. So I was pretty active in sports.

So from that kind of life and that kind of weather to Las Vegas...but we'll talk more about that.

Tell me about your education.

Well, I grew up, again, in a small town of Bemidji, Minnesota. Went to high school there. My dad was the registrar at the university, Bemidji State University. So I went to the university there, and graduated in three years with a degree in geography and social science and a minor in Spanish. So that was my education from that town. I then went to graduate school at the University of Missouri, and a number of years later went to law school at Loyola University in New Orleans.

Now, did your mother work outside the home?

No. She stayed at home. She was an RN, registered nurse, but she stayed at home.

Okay. She's from that generation.

That's correct.

So after school was UNLV your first job?

No, not at all. Actually, my first job was after I got my master's degree at the University of Missouri. I got a job as an instructor at the University of New Orleans. I was actually a geography teacher, a full-time instructor at 23 years old. So I was the youngest instructor in the university, which was sort of intimidating at times and daunting to me. But it was a great job and I enjoyed it. And I taught there, full-time geography teacher, for four years at the University of New Orleans.

Then in my fourth year I decided I would either have to finish my Ph.D. or I would have to do something else. And this was 1978. I looked around at the jobs teaching geography with a Ph.D. And at that time liberal arts was doing horribly in terms of teaching opportunities. There were actually five jobs in the whole United States at the college level teaching in geography. So I said I really can't take that risk.

So I started going to law school at night at Loyola University. I always had an interest in the law and politics and public policy. And I did that and got my law degree in 1982.

Now, did you get married along the way?

No. I didn't get married until 1984.

Tell me why New Orleans?

I went there for that job, teaching at the University of New Orleans. Well, it was a great place to

go to because it was an exciting city, but very, very different from what I was used to growing up, needless to say, culturally and climatically. In just about any way you can think of, it was just the opposite of what I was used to growing up. So it was an adjustment, but it was a healthy thing to learn.

Great. Tell me about law school. So you always had an interest. What was that transition like? And did you go full-time?

No, actually I didn't. I always had an interest in politics and public policy and law. And when I was in college I actually worked an internship for a congressman from Minnesota. And that got my interest in law even more. I taught political geography, which had a lot to do with public policy, particularly environmental policy. And I always had an interest, obviously, in issues regarding land and the environment. Having grown up in such a nice environment in Minnesota, environmentally and climatically and everything else, it looked like a nice fit.

So when I went to law school, I actually went at night and worked in the day, which was very hard to do. And then later I transitioned to the full-time -- after two years -- full-time in law school so I could graduate a little quicker.

My first job out of law school was as a corporate lawyer with Gulf Oil Company, which blended nicely with the law and the geography/geology background that I had, physical geography, that sort of thing. So I did that for two years.

And why did you go back to the academic life?

I went back to the academic life because I really didn't like the very structured environment of a large corporation. I didn't feel like I could breathe in that environment. So I took a big pay cut -- but it was one of the happiest pay cuts I've ever taken in my life -- and went back to teaching. Got a tenure track position as a professor at Louisiana State University in Shreveport.

So ten years there. So you must have gotten tenured while you were there.

Yeah. I had that job in 1984 and I was tenured four years later. Then I was promoted to full professor in 1990 just before I took my job here in 1991.

Now, what was getting the tenure like there, the process?

It was very similar to here, but it wasn't as much of a publish-or-perish-oriented university, but you definitely had to teach well and had to show some research production in order to get tenure.

But it wasn't as stringent as it would be here. There were some fairly tough barriers to getting tenure there.

Did you publish in a certain area, certain research?

Yeah. At first I did a lot of articles in general business kinds of journals. Then I made a transition more into law reviews. And I do both of them still today. I still continue doing that. And I also have written several textbooks. So I've done that sort of thing, too.

Do we use your textbooks here?

One of them, yeah. One of them is not in print anymore. But one of them is.

Okay, good. I should have asked something earlier. The name of your hometown, could you spell it for me, please?

Sure. B-e-m-i-d-j-i.

Good. I would have never spelled that correctly.

Now, after living in New Orleans for so long, why would you decide to come to a place like Las Vegas?

Actually, I lived in New Orleans for ten years. I lived in Shreveport for seven years. That's a long time. That's 17 years in Louisiana. I had no problems leaving Louisiana at the time. Louisiana was going through some very, very tough economic times because of, really, a recession caused by declining oil prices. And the state government was in shambles. And academics were suffering greatly from no raises and the inability to expand. And that was very frustrating. The politics often times were quite corrupt, which often times hurt our university system I thought.

Even though I like the state, I like the people -- they're very nice, they're friendly, and the culture is very interesting, the music's great, the food's great, and it's just an interesting place to be -- I really didn't think I could grow and do the things I needed to do in academics in that kind of environment, at least for a long time.

So you came to Las Vegas. How did you find out about the job? And tell me about the process of being hired here.

Oh, this is an interesting story. Actually, one of my friends at LSU, Dr. Mike Clauretje, who's also in the finance department -- he's not a lawyer; he's a Ph.D. and teaches finance here -- he and I were friends at LSU. So he got a job here in 1988 and started telling me how great it was and

how much fun it was living here and what an interesting place UNLV is to teach and how it's expanding and growing and all the optimistic, upbeat things that were going on. So he urged me to apply for a job once it got open. And I did.

Oh, good. So what's that application process like?

Well, it was interesting, to say the least. I applied in 1990, but, unfortunately, there were some problems with the procedures used for hiring me that were objected to by the Affirmative Action Office regarding me and a female applicant. Apparently, there was a feeling that the procedures weren't being applied exactly right. But, in most people's opinion, they weren't material differences. But they were kind of playing it by the book then. And so they actually disallowed the search.

So I didn't get the job. Nobody got the job. And then we had to wait a year and the job came open again. And I applied again. And this time procedures were adhered to very, very closely. This time I got it.

And did she apply?

She did.

Before we talk about living here and all of that, being at UNLV, Katrina must have been very close to your heart. And you probably knew people back there.

That's correct.

One of the things that we would like to do is to do some survival stories of the people who came here. And you have to let us know if you know anyone.

Sure.

Okay, great. What did that mean to you?

Katrina?

Katrina.

Oh, Katrina was a real heartbreak for me because I did have friends there. One of my good friends there is disabled. And he was trapped in his apartment in Metairie, Louisiana, which was in Jefferson Parish -- it's adjacent to New Orleans -- and spent five days surviving on water that he drank out of cans of corn and peas. And he couldn't leave his apartment because he was in a wheelchair.

Apparently, what happened is all his friends thought another friend had gotten him and taken him out and they were all wrong. So because of that misunderstanding, he almost died. Fortunately, he was on the right side of the levy, the levy that didn't break. So there was no flooding. But if there had been flooding, he would have drowned.

He later was able to get out of his apartment after five days and was able to wheel his wheelchair around debris and get to Veterans (Memorial) Highway and flag down a car that took him to a hospital.

So that was one of the stories. And he later came here to Las Vegas for about two weeks with FEMA money and stayed. And we saw each other and talked about it a lot. But he did survive. Now he's having a real tough time adjusting because he lost his job and his job hasn't come back and business hasn't come back.

So he went back?

He went back.

Would he ever consider leaving to come here or go to another place?

He has strong family ties. And like a lot of people from New Orleans, they are somewhat reluctant to leave. They love their city. They love their culture. Even though they have so many problems there, they still love the city so much. And he's one of them. So he won't leave.

Wow. Tell me about preparing for a hurricane. I know that there must have been procedures that everybody thought that this one is going to be the same as all the others.
Right.

What did you do when you were living in New Orleans and a storm was coming?

When I lived there, there were several hurricanes that were coming close, but we only got the edges of them. But I did see what a hurricane could do. It is extremely destructive, obviously. But basically, what you would do is you'd try to tape up your windows and you'd fill your bathtub full of water, which my friend should have done, in case the water fails like it did. Just hunker down basically is what you have to do.

A lot of people in New Orleans would go to the French Quarter because it's the driest, highest area, and just literally party. They call them hurricane parties. Drink a drink called Hurricanes, which is named obviously after the hurricane parties, and do that. I never partook in

that sort of activity, but I know a lot of people who did.

But another thing is just that it floods there a lot even just with heavy rains. And I did go through some very bad flooding, which my apartment's flooded, and I lost some personal property. So it's just awful. Flooding is just an awful thing to go through.

Wow. I grew up in North Carolina. I know just a tiny bit about hurricanes, but nothing like what went on there.

So now you're in Las Vegas.

Right.

Which year is it?

This is my 16th year.

Okay. So you came here in which year?

'91.

1991. What is this university like compared to maybe the older schools that you taught at in Louisiana?

In a lot of ways UNLV is a lot like the University of New Orleans. It's a commuter university, a state university in a large city, with most of the students coming from the city. So in that way it parallels UNO a lot.

I think the difference is that we're growing and we're prospering and we're in a much better fiscal situation than they are. I believe our attitudes and our politicians are more oriented towards supporting higher Ed than they were in Louisiana. I hear people complaining about we're not getting enough. But compared to Louisiana, we're doing very well.

So I think everything's relative. Things can always be better, but things can definitely be worse. I've seen it. And so I think things are much more upbeat and optimistic here than they would be at University of New Orleans.

LSU in Shreveport is also in a fairly large city. And it's a commuter school, again. A nice university, but again suffered from lack of resources.

So you're coming from an area with live entertainment and a lot of good entertain. And now you're coming to Las Vegas, which we call the "Entertainment Capital of the World."

Compare the entertainment and what you liked about that music, whatever, and compare it

with Las Vegas.

I think the entertainment in New Orleans, a lot of it, seemed to be more spontaneous and more personal and, perhaps, more enthusiastic in its content than it is here, where it seems to be more packaged and institutionalized, if you will. New Orleans is kind of a city where people act on impulse and you don't always know what's going to happen next. It's always kind of an exciting place to be one day to another. Sometimes in negative ways, too. But it's always kind of a surprise.

So tell me about UNLV in the beginning, what it looked like, was it easy meeting people, just your general feel for UNLV.

In 1991 I think UNLV was a good place and it was easy to meet people. People were very friendly.

Bob Maxson was the president then. He was a very friendly president. He learned everybody's name. He knew my name immediately, which I thought was really great. It made me feel really welcomed. He had a nice party in the fall and everybody would come early in the fall and meet. We'd meet the new faculty and the new faculty would meet the older faculty. And then a lot of times they'd invite you places.

We had a very active gourmet club and faculty club that was much bigger and much more active. Now it's much smaller than it used to be, unfortunately.

It was a fun place to be. It was a very friendly place to be.

There was a gourmet club?

Um-h'm.

And we still have it?

We have a faculty club. The gourmet club -- I'm not in it anymore; so I'm probably part of the blame -- but we just couldn't keep up with it because of our kids growing up. They were little. And after a while we didn't have the time. But there was a very active gourmet club and faculty club, which is still around but not nearly as big as it used to be. They meet fewer times I believe than they used to.

This was at various restaurants?

No. We would meet at people's homes. And everybody would bring a dish -- be assigned a dish

and bring something.

Oh, that's neat. Oh, that's interesting.

So tell me about working here, being in this department, the building. The campus has grown a lot since you've been here. What was that aspect like? The students? The actual work?

I found that the students were very similar to the way the students were at LSU and UNO. I felt they were very friendly. I always got a long well with my students. I really liked my students. It was fun.

They're not traditional students in many ways. So a lot of times they just come to class and then they go home. I think they're missing out sometimes by not taking advantage of the things that there are to do around here. You can do anything you want at UNLV that you can at any other university, but you've just got to work at it a little harder, clubs and sororities and fraternities. There's a lot to do. But, unfortunately, because kids are working a lot and occupied with other things, old friends from high school and so forth, that they don't get out and meet as many people, maybe, as they should and experience what I think should be experienced in college. **I agree. Sometimes I go to some of the presentations on campus, some of the speakers, and our students are not taking advantage of that.**

Right.

Tell me about the classes that you taught when you first arrived. And did you have room to experiment here?

Yes, I did. I taught legal environment of business. I taught real estate law. I was actually brought in primarily to be with the Lied Institute of Real Estate Studies and to teach the real estate law courses. I was able to come up with a new course, real estate law two. So I was teaching actually two courses in it, which is rather unusual. You don't see that in too many business schools; have two courses. My textbook is in real estate law. So this worked out very well.

I also in 1992 became editor in chief of the Real Estate Law Journal, which I'm still doing. So that worked out nicely for teaching my classes and for my students to help participate and so forth with the journal, you know, to understand how research works and what's going on in the area of real estate law. So that all worked out very nicely.

So, yeah, I've always been able to have the freedom to experiment. I started a new course just a couple of years ago in Internet law, which I think will do well, and experiment with that. And I've written some articles regarding that area of the law. So, yeah, I've always had the flexibility to do what I wanted here. And I've always appreciated that.

Good. A couple of questions. Is this the time to buy real estate in Las Vegas? And tell me why or why not.

Is it what? I'm sorry.

The time to buy real estate in Las Vegas.

It appears to be going down in price. That's what all the economists and all the experts seem to think, at least in the residential. Commercial is still pretty strong. But residential has gone down. So this actually might not be a bad time. And also the interest rates are still pretty low. They're only about six and three-quarters right now, which isn't bad at all historically. So, actually, this probably is a good time.

You have to be sort of a contrarian. A lot of people are kind of scared of real estate right now. But when people are scared of real estate, that's usually when the prices are lowest, obviously. And when everybody else is buying real estate, that's the worst time to buy. And a lot of people, of course, have gotten stung on that.

You talked about President Maxson when you first arrived. What was his presidency like and what kind of impact do you think he had on the growth of the school?

Well, Bob Maxson was basically -- and I'm saying this in a nice way -- like a cheerleader. He would go out and just be so enthusiastic and happy and glad-handing -- and, again, I say that in a nice way -- kind of guy to brag about UNLV and to tout its positives and to try to raise money and recruit the best students and recruit the best faculty and try to keep them here. And I always liked that about him. I mean who wouldn't? Those are such nice characteristics.

So I think that he had a lot to do with putting a positive spin on things. I know he had his problems with the basketball coach, with Tarkanian, and that took away a lot of the focus from the positive things he was doing. And I thought it was very unfortunate that that sort of thing ensued.

Well, and I think that when you first arrived, I think Tarkanian was still here.

He was.

Tell me about that time, about the basketball team, about the feeling on campus because we were a winning team. Even though we know that there were some things going on in the courtroom, in the background, what was that like?

Well, it was a lot of fun in many ways because I came here in 1991 and I went to the basketball games. I could barely get a seat even in the highest, loftiest parts of the Thomas & Mack. But I went to every game. And they were very exciting and the teams were very good. But it was Tarkanian's last year. He had already tendered his resignation and then decided he didn't want to resign after a while. Then there was a big, huge fight over that, which, again, took away a lot of focus from the positive things that were going on at the same time.

But it was a lot of fun going to the games and seeing such good, high quality basketball. We haven't really seen that again and it's a shame. But it just shows how hard it is to get a program like that at the top rung like Tarkanian did.

What do sports do for a big university?

Well, obviously, I like sports. I have season tickets. I go to the football games. Sometimes I go watch the minor sports play. But I think what it does is it gives students a chance to participate and do what they like to do and it also brings people out. I think it creates some school spirit. But, again, with a large urban population like we have, nonresidential students, a lot of them, again don't take advantage of the sporting events, too. They get to go to games free and a lot of them never go. So it might have maybe less of an effect than it would on like a Big Ten or SCC kind of university.

How did you feel a few years after you arrived, probably four years later, when we got a law school on this campus? What did they mean to you and how did you feel about that?

Well, I think that was wonderful. That was one of the best things I think that ever happened to this university. And for me personally it was a wonderful thing because now I would have new people to meet, new colleagues, people of like interest to me since I was teaching law in the business school and also a place to do research, a good law library, which I've used a lot.

I think we have a great law school here. I think for the short time it's been here, it's done very well. I think Dean Morgan has done a great job. And I know him personally and think very highly of him. And I think very highly of some of the faculty I've met over there, too.

That's great. Why do you think that it took so long for Nevada to even get a law school, the state?

Yeah, it did. And we were, by far, the largest state without a law school for many, many years. I think it was, again, the perceived price. There were probably some politics maybe from some people that were existing lawyers in the state that saw it as competition. I think that there's always those kinds of political forces that exist that try to keep certain things from happening. And I think those were all existing at the time. But I think it took way too long. I really wasn't involved with the politics of creating the law school. But I know that it was a pretty rough time getting it going for many years.

I should know this. Did Kenny Guinn come in after -- yes, he did.

Yes, he did.

What was that like? Did you get to know him?

Yeah. I liked Kenny Guinn a lot. He was a president for one year after Bob Maxson, as interim. He also was very accessible. You saw him every day in the student union. You could talk to him. He also was pretty good at learning your name. He wasn't quite the cheerleader type as Bob Maxson, and very few people are. But Kenny Guinn I thought was a real steady hand for that year and a very nice man. Personally, he was very supportive of real estate education here at UNLV and helped our Lied Institute a great deal, made it a high priority. And we really still appreciate that a lot.

What are some of the things that he did?

Well, what he did was make it the highest priority for raising money because we had a match at that time in which Christina Hixson, who manages the Ernst Lied Trust, would match anything that someone else would contribute. But she would only do it for a certain period of time, which was soon to run out. So seeing that, Kenny Guinn said, "Well, it's only natural that we would want to take advantage of this matching scenario." So he went out and made it a high priority.

And we were able to raise quite a bit of additional money because of Kenny Guinn.

Kenny Guinn was our master of ceremonies just last week for our Leader Award of the Thomas & Mack Company. We mentioned that he had been a big supporter of the real estate education. A lot of people aren't aware of that fact, but he was. But those of us who were here at the time

realize that and are very grateful to him.

Real estate obviously should be very important in this university because I mean look where we are. But it hasn't been, unfortunately, since Kenny was the president and hasn't been made a really high priority. And we never could understand why that was. We just thought it was a natural, but it really hasn't. And we're hoping that's going to come back now. There are some recent developments that indicate that it will be. But they're very, very recent developments.

The Las Vegas Strip starting around the time you arrived grew tremendously.

Right.

What was that like to see that? To see all of these new hotels? And I want to know --

(End tape 1, side A.)

I found it mind-boggling, again, the kind of rapid growth and unprecedented growth that was going on really pretty much after I got here. The Mirage had just been built when I got here. And I was just in awe of that place. And then everything after that sort of even got better and bigger and more spectacular. I've always been in awe of Las Vegas. I sometimes can't believe the place and what it's done and how it just keeps on growing. And I think that's the way a lot of people feel about it.

As far as the university is concerned, I think that it obviously affords our students employment opportunities. It's probably attractive to some people who want to come to school here because they maybe are attracted by the glitz and the glamour. I teach MBA courses and I find that the quality of MBA students we get is pretty good. And a lot of them have come here and gotten their undergraduate degrees at very, very good universities from all over the world, really, and have come here and gotten very good jobs and then start the MBA program as night students. So I think that's had a very good effect, the employment environment here, for luring in potential graduate students in business. Probably law school, too, has seen that.

Now, I never thought of that connection.

The next president after Kenny Guinn was Carol Harter.

Right.

1995. For 11 years she was president. We saw growth that we had never seen before. And we could almost compare it with the growth of Strip. Tell me about that period and that

growth here on campus.

Yeah. Carol Harter came in and all kinds of additional growth did occur. Carol Harter was quite a different personality than her two predecessors. She was more aloof, seemed to be more isolated really and didn't seem to get to know the faculty. I don't think I've talked to her more than one or two times in the 11 years she was here, which I thought was a little bit strange. But she definitely was able to do certain kinds of things with the legislature and the regents in terms of securing funds for building, which was very positive. But I think sometimes that she had not always a very positive effect on the faculty because she didn't seem to be faculty focused and faculty oriented like her predecessors were. And that to me was a disappointment.

The new president that we have now, do you see that focus changing?

I'm hopeful. I've met him a couple of times. He seems like a nice man. He's a very bright person. He's got very, very impressive qualifications. I think he has the ability and the knowledge to take us to another level, to a higher level. So I'm hopeful.

Tell me about some of your colleagues here in the -- we call it all the business school. We know that there are various schools here. But tell me about some of the colleagues that you've worked with over the years and some of the ones that you remember.

Okay. Again, I'm in the finance department. But the finance department is really made up of finance; business law, where I am; real estate and insurance. So we're kind of a polyglot department. But there's been some very nice people in this department. Probably one of the best loved, most loved member, who unfortunately passed away in 1997, was Don Hardigree, who was a professor of insurance. His daughter teaches now in the hotel school, teaches hotel law, Christian Hardigree. And he was just a great guy and a lot of fun. He was a good friend and it was a big loss.

His replacement, Dr. Paul Thistle, came here from western Michigan. He actually was a very, very good replacement. Probably the best researcher in the whole College of Business. Very smart, very helpful, very easy to write with. He's really been a very positive force in my opinion.

Loren Seidman, who retired in 2000, was a legal colleague who had been here since 1969. He really knew what was going on around the university. He has a lot of institutional memories.

So he was always a fun person to talk to. He and I did quite a bit of research together. He was a very smart guy, a very good lawyer.

We just hired a real excellent new lawyer named Leigh Anenson. She's a young woman from the University of Akron who came here. She's already doing great things and she's going to be a real force in the future. We're real glad to have her here.

Percy Poon is our chairman. Percy is originally from Hong Kong. He's a finance professor, and he's doing a tremendous job as our new chair in bringing our department together. He's very respectful of all four disciplines. So he's been a very positive force.

Of course, last but not least, there's Mike Clauretje, who came here from LSU where I was, who has always been a lot of fun to work with and is a very, very bright guy and an excellent scholar, as well.

Now, does the department chairmanship, does it move around person to person?

Yeah. In the past we've usually rotated every three years.

So have you had that opportunity yet?

Haven't had the opportunity yet, and it's not one I actively seek out.

Okay, good. Have you participated on any committees or organizations here on campus?

Are you a member of the faculty senate or anything like that?

Haven't been on the faculty senate. I've been on some faculty senate committees, some important ones like promotion and tenure. I'm currently on a senate committee to try to improve teaching on campus. So I've done a lot of service. But I haven't been in that particular body.

When you said insurance a few minutes ago, I thought of a businessperson here in the community named Bruce Layne.

Yeah.

Are you familiar with him?

I know who he is. I don't know him personally. But, yeah, I do know who he is.

Okay, great. He's one of our early --

He's one of our graduates, right.

Yes, one of the early students.

In fact, Ron Anderson, who is another person I probably should mention, has been around here

since the early 70's. He and Dick Hoyt, who's also been an excellent faculty member here since the 70's, were friends of Bruce Lane. Ron Anderson was in particular.

Good. That's nice.

Before we finish I want to ask about -- you just mentioned the name of one of your friends, Loren, who has retired now. But there is a group of you who get together often. Tell me about that group and how that started and what you guys do.

That's a good question. It actually started way before I came here in the 1980's. And what they did was they started gathering on Friday afternoons for a social period at a Mexican restaurant at Flamingo and Maryland Parkway. When that particular place closed down in the early 90's, we shifted over to Moose Magilicutti's, which is across the street, which then later became Moose's Beach House. But we're there every single Friday just like clockwork.

There's been at various times as many as 30 people who have done it. We're down to probably on the average 8 to 15 here. A lot of them are people that have been here a long time and are well known like Chad Mervache in biology and Clarence Ray from economics and Lawrence Seidman, as well as a lot of people from this department like Mike Clauretje, Percy Poon, myself. So over the years we have had that. And Paul Thistle is involved. Don Hardigree used to come. We're still doing it. And now we're at the steakhouse because Moose's has closed. That just started two weeks ago.

So two places so far.

Right. And Chris Hudgins in English and people from other colleges and departments come by sometimes, too.

That's wonderful. So where are you now?

Stake Out, which is right across the street from Moose's. We just moved across the street.

I see. And is that a place that if I came in with a video camera that I could get some good stories about UNLV?

From our group?

Yes.

I think you could get some great stories, yeah. Some of those people -- Chad Mervache from biology, for example, is in his late 70's now, came here in the mid 60's. So he has more stories

and he likes to talk. So he would be perfect. Clarence Ray is also from South Carolina. So like a lot of southerners, he's a good storyteller. He'd be a great guy to interview, too.

Good. Well, I really appreciate this. I think that is my last question. Yeah. I really appreciate this.

Well, I appreciate you asking me, Claytee.