



Roy Arnold Oral History Interview, September 6, 2013

Title

“Serving Academia in Nebraska and Oregon”

Date

September 6, 2013

Location

Arnold residence, Corvallis, Oregon.

Summary

In the interview, Arnold describes his upbringing in Nebraska, his early education and his high school experiences, and his entrance into the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. From there, he reflects on the teachers who influenced his education, and discusses his academic and social experiences while a college student.

Arnold next speaks of his post-graduate work at OSU, including his study of the heat-induced breakdown of thiamine, or vitamin B1, while Ph.D. candidate. The interview then shifts into a description of his twenty-year career at Nebraska as a faculty member, advisor and administrator in various positions at the university.

The remainder of the session is devoted to Arnold's tenure as a faculty member and administrator at OSU, where he worked for another nineteen years. In this, he comments on the state of the College of Agricultural Sciences at the time of his arrival; major figures in the college with whom he interacted; his move into the role of University Provost; and the ramifications of the passage of Ballot Measure 5. He likewise shares his memories of working with two presidents - John Byrne and Paul Risser - his involvement with the Institute of Food Technologists, and his receipt of numerous awards. The interview concludes with details of Arnold's activities in retirement, reflections on his overall career, and thoughts on his proudest moments looking back.

Interviewee

Roy G. Arnold

Interviewer

Adam LaMascus

Website

<http://scarc.library.oregonstate.edu/oh150/arnold/>

Transcript

Roy Arnold: You want to check the volume? Okay? Does that sound all right?

Adam LaMascus: Yeah, it sounds terrific. Okay, so if you could say your name, the date, and where we are.

RA: Okay, my name is Roy Arnold. The date is September 6th, 2013, and we are recording this in my home, in Corvallis, Oregon.

AL: And I am Adam LaMascus, doing the interviewing, and Michael Mehringer is running the camera and tech support. Okay, so you were born in 1947, in rural Nebraska?

RA: 1941, actually, in Nebraska, mm-hm, right.

AL: And what was that like?

RA: Well, my family lived on a small farm in northeast Nebraska. My dad didn't ever own a farm, but he rented farms from others, and farmed them. I was the fourth of the children in our family. Turns out I was the only one who was born at home. The others were all born in hospitals, but I guess they figured by then they knew how to do it, so I was born at home.

AL: Yeah, so what were your parents' backgrounds like?

RA: My father dropped out of school after about the sixth grade, and then he worked as—pretty much as a farm laborer, and as a farmer, for all of his life. My mother went to college for one year, at Wayne State College. It's a state teachers' college in Nebraska. And then she taught in country schools for a few years, up until the time they were married. Interesting story there, that she and two of her sisters were all teachers, but teachers couldn't be married. If they were married, they could no longer teach. And so in April, they all three of them went up to Minnesota and eloped—all three couples. Came back, didn't tell anybody until the end of the school year. But then, of course, they weren't able to teach the following year.

AL: Interesting, yeah. You said you had siblings. Can you tell us about your siblings?

RA: I have two older sisters and an older brother. One sister lives in Southern California; one is in Missouri, and my brother is also in Missouri. He's down in the Branson area, Missouri. That sister's in Kansas City.

AL: And from the notes that we have, it looks like you went to a one-room school, and you were the only person in the grade for a while?

RA: Well, I went to a one-room country school, yes, and for about six years, I was the only person at my grade level. And that's when I'm proud to say I was the top of my class, and my wife immediately reminds me, I was also bottom and average, all rolled into one.

AL: [Laughs] Yeah. So at this time, what childhood hobbies did you have?

RA: Well, living on a farm, there are mostly doing things outside, related to the farm. Usually you had some animals around, and so some animal care, and then playing with friends, although that was a bit of a challenge since we were somewhat isolated, and you had to walk some distance to school, or walk some distance to a friend's house, or vice versa.

AL: So when you were at this school and at this age, what were your first scientific interests, and did you make any discoveries while you were at school that stuck with you?

RA: I don't know that I can identify anything in particular. I enjoyed doing things that involved building, any kind of construction project. You know, Lincoln Logs, Tinker Toys—anything. I got an erector set as a gift one time, and spent a lot of time working with things like that. I enjoyed math and science subjects. My mother was a very active reader, and I think I picked up some of the interest from her. For whatever reason, she was very interested in reading stories about

Africa, about African countries, the Kalahari Desert, and so forth. And so I kind of picked up on some of those interests, as well.

AL: And so what about high school? Did you these kind of trends continue in high school?

RA: Yes. Again, a smaller high school; there were 28 in my graduating class. But I had the good fortune of having an outstanding math and science teacher, and he encouraged a number of us to pursue our interest in math. [0:05:03] There were a lot of courses not available there, so we ended up doing some things by correspondence course, from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. But he certainly encouraged me to think about going on and continuing my education. I also was involved in the vocational agriculture program, for a couple of years, and my Ag teacher was also another person who was strongly encouraging. And actually, he was sort of the key that developed into an opportunity for me to attend the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, because he recommended that I apply for a scholarship that was available from the Fairmont Foods Company, to study in food or dairy science, dairy products areas. And I applied for it and was fortunate enough to get it. It was a four-year scholarship, so that allowed me to go to there, instead of some smaller school that would've been closer to home.

AL: And you started working at Fairmont Foods during the summer?

RA: When I went to college. The scholarship also provided opportunities for summer employment with them, and I did that all three summers, one summer in Lincoln, one summer in Omaha, and one summer in Laughton, Oklahoma. And so that provided a lot of good practical, hands-on experience to go along with my work in school.

AL: What exactly did you do there?

RA: First summer, I was generally just working in a general dairy processing plant, on a variety of things, including working on the cleanup crew, making cottage cheese, doing a number of general preparation work for the milk bottling operations, where the milk was being packaged for sale and distribution. The second year was in an ice cream and an ice cream novelty plant in Omaha, and again, did a lot of general production work. I actually ended up working a lot of overtime, since I was rather cheap labor, why, I worked the general production shift, and then frequently stayed on and worked on the cleanup shift in the evening. And the last summer, it was in Laughton, Oklahoma, and then I was in the quality control lab, and was responsible for taking samples, doing various kinds of test to make certain the products were meeting quality standards, and if not, going back and working with the people who were in charge of the actual manufacturing operations, to make adjustments.

AL: So when you got to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, how was that going to a university after being in such a rural area previously?

RA: Well, it was an adjustment, certainly, from a small school. Nebraska at that time was around 11 or 12,000 enrollment. It's now roughly double that, much like the history here at Oregon State. And so it was a bit of adjustment. Again, I was fortunate to be able to—to be selected to pledge a fraternity, Farmhouse Fraternity, which has a strong—it was established in nineteen-oh—let's see, 1911, in Nebraska. And it was a strong chapter, very strongly emphasized scholarship and student activities, and provided a lot of encouragement to do both. And so I ended up having a very successful start to college, as a result of—and there were also some people I knew in the house. Two others from my high school, who were a year ahead of me, were in the house, and they're the ones that encouraged me to look into that, and that turned out to be one of the wiser decisions that I made, so.

AL: So did you have an active social life, then, because of this?

RA: Well, I wouldn't say social life so much as student activities and organizations. I was heavily involved in a number of those, as well as working in the academic area, so.

AL: Did you have any other interests, besides the food sciences and your fraternity-related activities?

RA: Well, the other activities I was involved in—I was in a group called Nebraska Builders, which was sort of a student service project organization. [0:09:59] I was in an organization called Corn Cobs, which is a student spirit group. I was in an organization called Nebraska Human Resources Research Foundation, which strongly—it provided some class work on

basic human relations, human relation skills, communication skills, and then had a series of projects. And I worked with a youth project, where I was paired up with a junior high-aged student from a family who would not necessarily be inclined to think about college or college opportunities. And so I was sort of a mentor, and we did a number of things. And as it turns out, he did end up going to college later, and graduated, and had quite an outstanding record. My senior year was very active, because I was the president of our Nebraska Farmhouse chapter, president of the Nebraska Builders, president of the Corn Cobs, and president of the Innocent Society, which is a senior men's honorary at Nebraska. [Laughs] So that kept me involved.

AL: I would guess, yeah. Did you have any important mentors or influences while you were there?

RA: Advisers, certainly. One in particular, Dr. Burt Maxie [?], who was in the Department of Dairy Science, which later became the Department of Food Science and Technology. But he was my advisor all the way through, and I ended up working in his lab part-time. He was a dairy microbiologist, and so I did a number of experimental work in his lab. And he, again, is one who provided encouragement to think about going to graduate school at some point.

AL: What kind of research were you doing?

RA: His was in the food microbiology area, or dairy microbiology, and his particular emphasis was on food plant sanitation—to try to track the sources of contamination of food, to look at the systems used to clean and sanitize food-processing equipment. And so we did—tracing a number of organisms, tracing bacteria to see how they survived various cleaning operations, or various operations where they were trying to sanitize equipment before it was used.

AL: After graduation, what did you do then?

RA: I worked for a little over a year, again, for the Fairmont Foods Company in their research and development laboratory in Omaha. Fairmont Foods at that—had historically been a dairy company, but they had expanded and diversified. They had purchased a soft drink manufacturing company. They had purchased two or three potato chip plants. But I was working on food product development with them, mostly in the dairy area, and would also go and work with some plants on some troubleshooting, as they were introducing new products that had been developed by the lab.

AL: And so then you decided to go for your master's at Oregon State University. What did you get your master's in, exactly?

RA: I did my master's, and then stayed on and did my Ph. D. in Food Science and Technology at Oregon State, and started the program in 1963, and then finished the second degree in 1967.

AL: What made you decide to go to OSU?

RA: Well, a variety of reasons. One is I wanted to go to a department that was broader. I had been in a product—in a department focused on dairy and dairy products, and I wanted broader exposure to different kinds of foods and food science. I liked the West Coast. Some of my mother's siblings had moved to Washington State many years previously. One of my dad's sisters lived in Portland. I had been out here one time, in—when I was in high school, and visited those families, and really liked the Northwest, and so that had some appeal. And the other opportunity was I learned about a particular professor here who, it turns out, was an outstanding opportunity to begin my graduate work. He left and went to industry after my master's degree, so then I had another major professor for my Ph. D. degree.

AL: Who was this first professor?

RA: Dr. Al Day, E.A. Day. And he left and went to International Flavors and Fragrances. Unfortunately, he died of a heart attack at a very young age, in his 40s, while he was working with them. [0:14:57] And then my second major professor was Dr. Robert Lindsay, who actually was a post-doctorate when I came as a graduate student, with Al Day. And after Al Day left, Bob stayed on as a faculty member for a few years in Food Science. I was his first Ph. D. graduate student. And Dick Scanlan, who had a long career here at Oregon State, was his second. He finished just a couple months after I did. Bob left later and went to Wisconsin, and had a long and very successful career there.

AL: Dick Scanlan is one of the other people I would like to interview for the project.

RA: Mm-hm, mm-hm.

AL: So how was OSU compared to UNL?

RA: It was a little bit smaller when we arrived here. I think it was in the 8, 9,000, something like that. I guess another appeal in coming here was the great diversity of food and food products, and agricultural products, compared to the Midwest, where you're basically talking about corn, soy beans, cattle, hogs, wheat, but not the enormous diversity of specialty crops that you have in a state like Oregon, so. And then, likewise, the seafood industry is unique here. Not much seafood in the Platte River in Nebraska, so.

AL: So what kind of—outside of your studies, then, what did you do to keep yourself busy?

RA: Studies were plenty. As a graduate student, you discover that you're occupied pretty much full-time in class work, and then you're working on a thesis. So you're working on some kind of a scientific project, and my research project initially was actually one that was outlined and proposed by Al Day. I was able to apply for a national fellowship, General Foods Fellowship, through the Institute of Food Technologists, and was fortunate enough to receive that. So that meant they didn't have to use departmental funds for an assistantship. But the project was related to development of stale flavors in concentrated milk products, sterilized concentrated milk products, where they would be concentrated, heated, sterilized in a can, but unfortunately over time would begin to develop a stale flavor. And we were trying to figure out what the chemistry—what was happening to that product that resulted in that stale flavor.

AL: How did the research turn out? Did you figure something out?

RA: Well, we did find some answers, and it kind of took a different course, and it found that one of—found a series of products. At that time, Food Science Department had a mass spectrometer, which was quite unique. They were able to isolate volatile flavor compounds from foods, and then analyze them, and identify them. And we determined a series of compounds that we were able to trace back to the breakdown of vitamin B1, or thiamine, within the product. Because of the unique chemical structure, that's one of the few places that has that same structure that those products could have come from. And so that led to a series of basic studies, of my Ph. D. degree, studying the heat-induced breakdown of thiamine, or vitamin B1. And that led to a whole series of other discoveries, then.

AL: So for your Ph. D. work, then, you continued working on that same project?

RA: Yes, particularly on the thiamine aspect, the heat breakdown of thiamine and the series of volatile compounds produced.

AL: And so it looks like once you finished with your Ph. D. studies, you were hired at LSU?

RA: No, by the last year, I did work part-time at OSU as my fourth year of my graduate study. I was hired as an instructor and taught the Dairy Products course, and then also worked with Floyd Bodyfelt, who was, again, a well-known Dairy Extension person in the department for many, many years. He's now retired. But we sort of worked together to re-institute the dairy products judging team, undergraduate students who would compete with teams from other universities across the country. So that was my assignment while I was finishing up my research, and finishing my Ph. D. degree.

AL: How did the teaching compare to when you were—as a student, I guess?

RA: One of the things I found at Oregon State when I was doing my graduate work was they had a program in college and university teaching. [0:20:03] Dr. Delmer Goode, I think, was his name, in the Education College. And I took a couple of those courses because I thought I wanted to pursue academic work, and recognized that almost all the experience I was getting was related to research, and wanted to know a bit more about teaching. Well, I took a couple of those courses, and that helped. There was also a very strong teacher in the department by the name of Cliff Samuels, who had an outstanding reputation of working with undergraduate students. And I conferred with him, and actually had him sit in on the class a few times, to give me some pointers and some advice, and all that was very helpful. And it did confirm that, indeed, when I was finishing my degree, I looked at opportunities both in industry—could have worked for Pillsbury, or General Mills in Minneapolis, but then had the offer from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, because a faculty member, a longtime faculty member there, was just retiring from that department. And I finally decided, well, I

might—let me try academics. If that doesn't work, I can always move to industry. I thought it'd be more difficult to go to industry and then come back to academic work, so.

AL: So you went back to UNL, then. What were you hired as, and when were you hired?

RA: I was hired as an assistant professor in the department for a very short time. It was still the Department of Dairy Science, and that was in 1967. But the plans had already been approved to create a Department of Food Science and Technology out of the nucleus of that department, plus faculty in some other areas relating to cereal products, meat products, poultry products, to create a Department of Food Science.

AL: And you eventually became head of that department, is that correct?

RA: Yes, I did, after a few years—after about three or four years, I guess, at Nebraska. I was asked to serve as assistant dean in the college, for advising, for undergraduate advising, and other academic affairs, activities. And during the course of my first year of doing that, the person who was the director of resident instruction, the dean for the academic program, decided to leave that position and go back to his home department. And so I stepped in as an interim person for a year in that role, on a full-time basis. As it turns out, my boss, the head of the Food Science and Technology Department, was the person selected to fill that position permanently. And after a search, internal—I guess it was an open search, but I was selected to move into his spot as the department head.

AL: So how exactly did that compare, going from being, I guess, the teaching and research aspect, to suddenly being more of an administrative role?

RA: Well, it's interesting, because it was a relatively small department. It was not more than a dozen faculty, and administration in a department like that is not a full-time activity. So I continued to teach. I taught the introductory course all the years I was in the department, while I was department head, and taught two or three other courses, continued to do my research, and actually had some Extension, some off-campus activity. So I continued to be involved in all the aspects of the program, but then had the overall administrative responsibility.

I guess the main difference is that you are spending a lot of your time trying to help others deal with their issues or their problems, some of which are fairly simple to resolve, some of which, particularly if it involves internal conflict among some or people, or disagreements among them, you're more like a referee at times. Because I had not had a lot of experience in administrative role, I did—with the faculty—formulated an internal evaluation procedure, where two of the senior faculty members would collect input from all the other faculty about the department head's performance, and they would then kind of synthesize that, and then would sit down with me and give me feedback and advice. And that turned out to be very helpful, and it didn't take but a few years later, that was sort of adopted by the college, so that all the departments in the college ended up doing something like that.

AL: Did you have any goals or an agenda when you went into that position? [0:25:00]

RA: It was a new department, a young department. A big goal was always building student enrollment. For any administrator, one of the most important things that one does is the hiring of people, because that has more lasting impact on what happens longer term. Even after you're no longer in that role, those people will be around and making contributions. So we did hire some new faculty members. We were able to get some new positions, and then had some new faculty who retired that we hired replacements, and were quite fortunate in hiring some very good faculty members, who have been quite successful in the program.

AL: So in 1974, you received the Distinguished Teaching Award. Is that correct?

RA: Yes, mm-hm.

AL: And so what exactly was your approach to teaching, then, that you feel made you such an effective teacher?

RA: Well, some of the input, I guess, that the people who developed the nomination received from students was strong commitment to students and to their being successful. I worked hard at knowing the students. I worked both as a teacher and as an advisor. And I also tried some creative things in teaching. I developed a course—and actually one of the papers

that I wrote was a description of this. It was a measurable, behavioral, objective-centered approach to teaching, where it developed a set of specific, measurable objectives—things the students needed to learn, and needed to master, to be successful in the course. But then, rather than spending all the time presenting information and lecturing, putting a lot of responsibility on the students to seek out and find that information. And so I think that got some attention from people, as well.

AL: And it looks like you won another award in 1977, the Cruess Award for Excellence in University Teaching?

RA: That's right. It was from the Institute of Food Technologists, which was a national professional organization, about 28,000 members, I guess, nationally, from industry, academia and government. And one of their awards was the Cruess Award, named for an outstanding teaching faculty member at the University of California-Davis many years ago.

AL: And what was it exactly that got their attention?

RA: Again, a nomination developed by colleagues in the department, with a lot of student input, and I think it was probably a combination of the success in teaching as evidenced by student feedback, their satisfaction with the classes, but also the advising, and growing the enrollment. We did some things to attract new students, and enrollment grew at Nebraska quite substantially. And enrollment in the introductory course that I taught—I think the first time I taught it, there were maybe a dozen students, and the last time I taught it, there were probably 75 or 80 students. So those were some of the things, mm-hm.

AL: That's a nice increase in numbers right there.

RA: Mm-hm.

AL: And so in 1980, then, you became the Dean and Director of the Agricultural Experiment Station at UNL?

RA: Correct, mm-hm.

AL: And how did this compare to your prior duties?

RA: As you move into different levels of administrative responsibility—I guess I had never set out to do any particular one of those things, but—matter of fact, I remember a conversation with the first head of the Department of Food Science, who was my first boss at Nebraska, in his office one day, and telling him, "The last thing I ever want to do is your job." And a few years later, I was doing that. But if people provided encouragement to look at an opportunity, and if in looking at it, it looked like it would provide some growth and some learning, I was willing to throw my hat in the ring and take a shot at it.

But as you move to, like, a department head, and then a dean-director of agricultural research, the learning is not so much in depth, it's more breadth, because now you're responsible for research programs—not just food science, but a whole—all of the departments in the college, [0:30:01] plus a series of Branch and Research and Extension Centers that are scattered across the state. So it's certainly a very broadening experience. And one of my philosophies that I learned earlier, developed earlier, was I couldn't expect to be on top of every detail of everything going on in the organization, and I needed to find good people and delegate responsibilities, and then hold them accountable. And that's the only way one can survive, I think, over time, in those roles.

AL: Okay, again, did you have any goals going into that position?

RA: We had some goals in terms of developing Research and Extension Centers throughout the state. Prior to that structure, there were some Branch Experiment Stations located across the state, and there were County Extension Offices in every county in the state. And Nebraska was one of the first universities that put a strong emphasis on trying to integrate those two functions, and we developed a series of five Research and Extension Centers, headed by one administrator responsible for both aspects of the program. So all of the Extension faculty in those counties, and the research faculty at the Experiment Stations, all reported to that one person, and they closely coordinated their activity—much closer than before. So that was certainly one of the goals early on.

A second goal was improving facilities, and working with the legislature to get funding for some upgraded facilities, some new facilities, some replacement facilities. And then a third goal probably had to do with international dimensions of the program. Nebraska was quite heavily involved in several international agricultural research programs, in Morocco, in Botswana, and a number of other places. And we were working to try to expand that through the USAID, Agency for International Development.

AL: Not places that you would associate with Nebraska right there.

RA: Right, mm-hm.

AL: So what would one of your daily—I guess, would your daily routine have been, back when you were in that position?

RA: As Dean and Director of the Agricultural Experiment Station, there was a good deal of travel, because of all the activities located all across the state. Nebraska's—it's not quite as big land area as Oregon, but not far behind. But from Lincoln to Scott's Bluff, out in the panhandle, which was the furthest of those, it was over 400 miles, 450 miles or so—North Platte, out in the west central. So there was a fair amount of travel. A second activity was a great deal of interaction with various agricultural organizations, various commodity organizations. There was a Wheat Commission, the Nebraska Cattlemen's group; there were commissions for soybeans and other products, corn grower's group. So there was—also Nebraska Pork Producers. So there was a lot of interaction with those kinds of organizations, and the leadership of those. Nebraska Farm Bureau was another one that was sort of an integration of all of the agricultural areas, so—and a fair amount of meeting with those groups, entertaining those groups, at times. So probably lots of meetings.

AL: [Laughs] So in 1982, you then became the Vice Chancellor for the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources?

RA: Yes, mm-hm.

AL: How exactly did you go from being the dean to vice chancellor?

RA: Well, somewhat accidentally, I guess. The person who was my boss when I was Dean and Director of the Experiment Station, Dr. Martin Massengale—he was the vice chancellor for Agriculture and Natural Resources before I was. He was selected to be the Chancellor of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln campus. And then they conducted a national search, and I was encouraged to put my name in the hat, and one other internal candidate, also, was considered for the position. And I think they ended up interviewing two or three from outside. And I ended up being selected for that. I hadn't intended to leave the—because I'd only been Experiment Station Director for two years, and I sort of assumed that a typical commitment would be, like, a five-year assignment. [0:35:01] But there was encouragement to look at that opportunity, so I did that, and for whatever reason ended up being selected for it.

AL: How did being Vice Chancellor compare to your prior positions?

RA: Even more of all the above that I described for the dean and director role, even more travel, more interaction with external constituents, much more involvement with the legislative process. I was a member of the chancellor's cabinet, so I reported to the chancellor, the same person I had reported to when I was dean and director, but met regularly with his cabinet, the other vice chancellors, and other top administrators at UNL. I guess those were probably the major differences. Less involved in program detail, still involved in hiring people, both as dean and director, but particularly as vice chancellor, and ended up hiring several department heads during that period of time, and then some other key administrators as vacancies may have occurred.

We had some legislative success on major building improvements, completion of animal science project, a new food processing center facility, a new building for food science—not new building, but a remodeled building and a major addition for Food Science and Ag Economics. They shared a building. And a food processing center, which was a totally new innovation, a way in which faculty could kind of step outside and work with industry people in partnership kind of relationships, and still protect the confidentiality of the industry product or projects. And that's been very successful.

AL: Did you enjoy the job overall?

RA: I enjoyed it. It was demanding, and still a great deal of travel. And of course, the usual issue in all of these roles is trying to balance the demands of a position like that with the demands of being a husband and father. I have two daughters. They've both graduated from high school in Lincoln. One daughter was born here the last year we were in graduate school, but then lived most of her life in Lincoln, until she graduated. And then the other daughter was born there and graduated from high school there, just before we came back to Oregon State. So I tried to be engaged with them, as well, and attend their events. I coached their ponytail softball league teams for a few years, along with another university colleague.

AL: And so I see that at some point later, you were a fellow for the American Association for the Advancement of Science?

RA: Yeah, that's an honorary designation to be made a fellow, and that's again a process where I was nominated by others based on the contributions, mostly of my research programs in food science.

AL: And then in 1987, it looks like, you came back to OSU. How exactly—why'd you move back to OSU?

RA: The attraction, again, first of all, I'd been at Nebraska for 20 years, one institution. And we knew from having been here before that we really liked Oregon State and Oregon. Big appeal for me was, again, the diversity of agriculture compared to agriculture in the Midwest and in the Great Plains, where it's concentrated in a much smaller number of products and commodities. Here, the great diversity, with all of the specialty crops, the Christmas tree industry, nursery industry very strong, seafood industry, plus the basic commodities I was very familiar with, in terms of wheat and cattle. So that was a strong appeal.

And again, I was encouraged by some former colleagues here to be a candidate when they were looking for a dean and director—excuse me, a Dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences. So I agreed to be a candidate for it, and went through the interview process, and when offered the position weighed leaving where we'd been for 20 years, versus a new opportunity, and decided that we wanted to be adventuresome and come here, so we did. Also, it coincided with our younger daughter just graduating from high school, so a little more flexibility in terms of making a move, and not upsetting their world. [0:40:04] And actually, that daughter ended up—she was going to go to TCU, but ended up deciding if Oregon was going to seem like home, she ought to go to school here. Ended up going to OSU, and graduated from here.

AL: But how did this compare to the previous job, going from Vice Chancellor at UNL to be dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences?

RA: Very similar. Very similar responsibilities: overall administrative responsibility for the programs, teaching, research and Extension, and responsibility for hiring people, for evaluating people, making promotion and tenure decisions and recommendations. All of those were things that I was familiar with, just in a very different set of people, and a very different set of departments, and industry. One of the differences was because of all of those different commodities, the external demands for attention from all of those commodity organizations was multiplied several times. There were relatively few of those, compared to Oregon, in Nebraska.

AL: What was the state of the College of Agriculture when you arrived?

RA: It had gone through some—quite of bit of administrative change. A former dean, Dr. Briskey, had gone to Kuwait and was leading a project there. Had actually two interim deans, for about a year each, I think, in between all of that activity, and so they were looking for some stability in terms of the leadership. And they had had, just had some recent success. That legislative session, the year that I came had decided to fund the Agricultural and Life Sciences Building, the construction of that building, provided some funds for upgrades and some branch stations, particularly a major addition at North Willamette, near Aurora, which focuses on nursery crops, small fruits and vegetables. And that was actually the first of what became several Research and Extension Center-type entities here in Oregon.

AL: And how did OSU compare to your prior experience as a grad school student?

RA: It had grown some. It was, like, 13-14,000, I think, when we came back here, so it had grown some. It was smaller than Nebraska, which had grown to 22-23,000 by that point. Something that I had noted when I came to graduated school

is that Oregon State was a strong research institution, had some outstanding scientists who had been very successful in attracting external grant funds. Had very good research equipment. I'd say they were ahead of Nebraska in both respects, in terms of outside grant funding, and the extent of variety of the research equipment available. So there were strong programs here, certainly.

AL: Do you have any memories of Warren Kronstad?

RA: Yes, I got very well acquainted with Warren, and of course he was outstanding as a wheat breeder, internationally known, and renowned for his contributions a wheat breeder. But, yes, I got quite well acquainted with him. In fact, his widow, Carol, lives two houses over from us.

AL: Were they any other major figures in the College of Agriculture that you remember?

RA: Well, there were a number: same department, Crop Soil Science, Arnold Appleby, the longtime faculty member in the weed science area, worked across a variety of crops or products. Jim Oldfield, Animal Science Department, had been head of that department for many years—certainly very, very well known figure at that point. Ag Economics Department, the head was Gene Nelson, who left some years later and has been department head at Texas A & M for many years.

Mike Martin was in that department, since he went to Minnesota in an administrative role in their college of agriculture, became dean there. Went to Florida as vice president for agriculture. Went to New Mexico as President of New Mexico State, as president. [0:45:02] Went to LSU as chancellor, and is now head of the Colorado State system. So he's obviously had quite a varied career in major administrative roles. And there were many others throughout the college who were very, very significant contributors.

AL: So in 1991, you became provost?

RA: Yes, the fall of '91. The provost who hired me was Graham Spanier, and in the fall of '91, he left Oregon State to become chancellor, interestingly enough, at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and then later left there after four or five years, and became president at Pennsylvania State University. But when he left, it was not too long after Measure 5 had passed here in Oregon—property tax limitation. And so there were lots of challenges in trying to deal with those reductions in funds, and elimination of programs. And John Byrne was president at that time, and actually, I was almost ready to go to Ohio State at that point, as their vice president for agriculture. They had recruited me to look at that position, and had interviewed there, and was in the final stages of looking at an offer from them.

John Byrne went around and talked to deans, and several faculty senate leadership, about naming an interim person for a two-year assignment as provost, because of the perceived difficulty under those financial situations—which were quite unusual in those years; we've become accustomed to them since them—being able to attract someone from outside to come into the provost role. And then after he talked with his cabinet folks and he approached me, and asked if I would agree to come into the provost role for a two-year assignment. So I did that.

AL: Yeah, I was going to ask how Measure 5 was definitely a big deal, what specific ways did it affect the college, that you remember?

RA: Well, it affected all the colleges, and we were dealing with it while Graham was still provost, and in that first year, there were several program reductions. While I was dean, we had actually made some decisions to reduce number of departments, consolidate some departments. There used to be a separate Poultry Science Department. It was consolidated with Animal Sciences. There was a separate Soil Science Department, and it was combined with Crops Department, to become Crop and Soil Science. And then there were some reductions in numbers of faculty positions as a result of Measure 5, and that affected just about all of the areas in teaching, research, and Extension.

AL: And so when you took over this position, what were some of the duties and challenges that you faced?

RA: Well, overseeing continuing implementation of Measure 5 reductions, because they didn't all happen the first year. They continued to have effect over a two- or three-year period. I think I heard John Byrne say the other day, in a conversation I had with him, that he's working on his own memoirs right now, and so he was on top of all these details, like the cumulative effect over the multi-years was, like, a 38% impact, or something like that, on state general funds,

for the teaching programs. Some of that was offset by increases in tuition, and so it wasn't quite as devastating there as it was in the research and Extension programs, where they don't have tuition as a source of revenue. So, overseeing the continued implementation of those.

Again, one of the major responsibilities is hiring, and hiring deans as deans retired, or may have gone elsewhere, hiring replacements for those folks, hiring other administrators, like Larry Roper, Vice Provost for Student Affairs, was one of the hires I was involved in as provost. That wasn't immediate, but that occurred after Jo Anne Trow had retired from that position. And then looking at—there were enrollment issues. As tuition went up, enrollment went down, and trying to figure out ways to make Oregon State more appealing to students. And the beginning of some things were launched during those years—the dual enrollment, dual admission/dual enrollment with community colleges. [0:50:00] The University Honors College was established during those years. The Department of Ethnic Studies was established as a new department, in spite of some of the budget reductions; the Difference Power Discrimination set of classes were put in place. So there were a number of things like that, that I was involved in, from the provost position.

Also as provost, there's another level of responsibility of the system, the Oregon State University system, because all of the provosts form an academic council at the system level, and any new program proposals from university have to go through that group, and be recommended, before it goes on the agenda of the State Board of Higher Education. And of course, all that is changing now, as that group is—looks like it's going to either go away or be replaced by local boards, depending on what the smaller universities decide to do.

AL: I was going to ask, how exactly did OSU evolve while you were in this position?

RA: Well, there was a lot of emphasis on efficiency. John Byrne asked the Peat Marwick people to come in and look at administrative structure in particular, and find ways to gain some efficiencies there. Again, I mentioned, just mentioned, some new program areas that were created during that time, to try and respond to demands from students, in particular, that were interested in seeing some new program opportunities in those areas. Also, there was a lot of effort on getting the structure for fundraising and development right. There had been a development office, university-wide, that then got merged into the OSU Foundation. The colleges each had development officers that then became staff members in the foundation, but still worked with individual colleges. There was talk about developing a capital campaign and some planning. While I was dean still, I was asked to chair a committee, or serve on a committee, to say, "What does OSU need to do to be ready for a capital campaign?" And we made a whole series of recommendations, but it was many years later before OSU was finally at a point to pursue that. And as you know, that's been very successful in recent years.

AL: It sounds like a very interesting and challenging time. What was one of your typical days like?

RA: Well, again, lots of meetings, academic deans. There was a provost council. All of the academic deans and some of the other key administrators served on that. Again, was a member of the president's cabinet that met weekly. Academic deans met about every other week. Lots of individual meetings, one-on-one meetings, with deans. Lots of involvement with establishing administrative searches for dean positions or other positions. Attending meetings at the state system level. Going out and visiting departments or colleges, with faculty groups, from time to time, just to try and stay tuned to what was going on within the various academic units. So again, lots of time interacting with people in various ways.

AL: You mentioned John Byrne. He's been coming to Special Collections a lot, using his old papers.

RA: Yes.

AL: Do you have any particular memories of John Byrne?

RA: John was—I would label him as an excellent delegator, in his approach to his administrative leadership. He believed in hiring people, charging them with the responsibilities, and then delegating to them, again, holding them accountable if things didn't work out. Like any president, he didn't want to be surprised by something that was happening, and so it was important to maintain close communication and keep him informed of things that were happening. But he didn't try to micromanage what was going on in the organization. So I considered him an excellent role model, with respect to how to go about running a large organization in a way where you knew what was going on, but you were allowing the people you had hired to carry out their responsibilities and exercise their leadership. [0:55:02]

AL: And what about Paul Risser? Do you have any memories of him?

RA: Yeah, I worked four years with John, and then four years with Paul. Paul was an outstanding visionary. And I think when the board hired Paul, they were looking for someone who was a visionary person, and Paul was certainly that sort of a person. He had lots and lots of ideas. He would spend time working on white papers, sort of outlining a new idea or a new initiative, and then presenting that to the world. Over time, I learned that he was—he was willing, very open to having feedback, and he began to share those things with me before he announced them to the world, and was able to provide some feedback. And there were some ideas that he had that didn't see the light of day, because all the other things we were dealing with, it was pretty clear that they were going to be—not be well received by the faculty leadership, or deans, or others, for a variety of reasons; the timing may not have been right. But he definitely had some outstanding ideas that he brought, and I think both presidents certainly made OSU a better institution.

AL: How exactly did your position then evolve, especially near the end of your time there as provost? How did your position evolve?

RA: We were able to get away, a little bit, from the Measure 5 mentality of always worrying about what had gone away, what we had lost. And certainly with Paul's vision, some things like OSU's statewide initiative, that he was strongly responsible for initiating—I served on a team, an OSU statewide team, with several others, actually chaired that group, to come up with some models as to how OSU could be more of a presence across the state. And that led to what now would be the OSU Extended Campus activities, that are quite significant. And also during that time, the early work on the notion of the OSU Cascades campus began, and that was finished after I left the provost's office.

But interestingly, after I went back to the College of Agricultural Sciences, Tim White, who was—who followed me as the provost, and then was the interim president for a few years, asked if I would go over to Bend and spend roughly half-time over there, in the initial months of getting that program organized, because they were just approved by the legislature in, like, around the first of August, and expected to start up that September. And so there was a lot of scrambling early on to get things under way, and until they hired a permanent campus administrator.

AL: And at some point in the early '90s, you became a fellow for the Institute of Food Technologists?

RA: Yes. I don't remember exactly what year, but, yeah, that was another recognition. I had served that organization; I was their national president while I was serving as provost from—I was national president, '94-'95, and I had been on the executive committee for a few years. And then, that's really a three-year term: a year as president-elect, a year as president, a year as past president. And the three presidents, "work very closely together," primarily to keep the executive director from being jerked in different directions, from one year to the next, every year a president changes. So I had been heavily involved in leadership roles in that organization, and I think the fellow recognition was largely a result of that.

AL: So how exactly did you get the position of becoming president?

RA: I had been active in the Institute of Food Technologists, several of their committees; I had chaired several committees over the years. I was elected to serve on the executive committee, and so I had actually declined an opportunity to be nominated to be president for two or three times before. And one of the reasons was that I had not—I was not a fellow, and I felt that some of the—that a strong credential for being considered as a president, you needed to be a fellow of the institute. And that happened in 1990, as you said. [0:59:59] And then some years later I was asked again, and I said, "Well, I'm willing to be nominated, because I'm pretty sure I won't be elected." And I was quite surprised when I was, so.

AL: So what exactly were your experiences as president of IFT, then?

RA: IFT, as I said, at that point it was about a 28,000-member organization. They have a national meeting each year. It's a combination of a national meeting, a scientific meeting, where lots of papers are presented, and a food expo, which is various ingredient suppliers, equipment suppliers, various other service to the food industry kinds of organizations, some local groups—Stahlbush Island farms, here in Corvallis. They are one of the exhibitors in the food expo each year. Oregon Freeze Dry, Albany, is another one. The national meeting involved chairing the executive committee—excuse me, as national president. Quite a bit of travel, because there are local sections around the country. There's an Oregon section

of IFT. And so over the three-year period, traveling, and meeting with various of the sections, being asked to go there and present a talk, either at a section meeting or sometimes at one of the universities that offer food science and technology program. So there was a fair amount of time spent in travel during that. I think my microphone just came loose. Okay.

AL: And so in 2000, you became the Executive Associate Dean for the College of Agricultural Sciences?

RA: Right.

AL: How did this come about?

RA: I left the provost role in—I guess January of 2000 was the last that I served in that role. In the summer of 1999, I was diagnosed with breast cancer. About one percent of breast cancer cases occur in men, and I happened to be one of those. And because it's usually not detected early in men, it ended up it had moved into the lymph nodes, so I had surgery, a modified radical mastectomy, and then followed by chemotherapy, followed by about seven weeks of radiation treatments. And I had already been thinking. I'd been in the provost role for eight years; that's a pretty long period of time for one of those positions. And although I continued to work during those treatments, I always scheduled chemotherapy treatments on Friday and was back in the office on Monday. I cut down on some of the evening activities, just to reduce exposure to other people, because your immune system is very compromised during chemotherapy treatments. But I continued to work all through that period.

But about that time, the College of Agricultural Sciences—the dean then was Thayne Dutson. He was one of my first hires as dean, hired as Experiment Station director, and then, later, he became dean after I had served in that role. They had created a structure with an executive associate dean position, because they had redefined how the associate deans would work with units. Rather than one with research, one with teaching, one with Extension, they were each responsible for all three functions for a particular set of departments, or branch stations, or Research and Extension Centers. And they were looking for an executive associate dean, because the dean also was director of the Experiment Station. So I led a lot of the personnel functions, the internal functions.

They defined that position, and so when I saw that, I called them up and said, "I'm thinking of stepping out of the provost role, and wondering if there would be an opportunity to be considered for that position." And they said, "Yes," and so that's how I ended up back in that role. I took on, also—part of that responsibility, half the time was program leader for the Agricultural Extension Program, Ag and Natural Resources Extension Programs. So I was half there, and then half I was executive associate dean.

AL: And then in 2005, you earned the Phyllis Lee Award?

RA: Yes, that was presented—the second one. The first one was presented to Phyllis. Mm-hm.

AL: What was the occasion for this award? What were you being awarded? [1:05:01]

RA: It's awarded at the Martin Luther King breakfast event each year, and it was set up, again, to honor Phyllis Lee for her years of service in leading the diversity programs at OSU, the Office of Multicultural Affairs, and she was the first recipient of it. And then they set up a nomination process, and somebody nominated me for it. The criteria was someone who would—who, in their leadership roles, represented the spirit of Martin Luther King, in terms of openness, and the encouragement of individuals, irrespective of their backgrounds, to be successful.

AL: And then, so 2006 was a big year for you. You retired. You also received the Dan Poling Award. You also received the OSU Alumni Association Beaver Champion Award.

RA: It was not the Alumni Association, the Beaver Champion. The president of the university actually presents that award each year. I had received it as a team award, for the statewide, OSU statewide, some years previously, while Paul Risser was president. But after I retired, again, the president invites nominations from people, of people who have made contributions to OSU. And for whatever reason, he and his cabinet decided that I would be the recipient of it that year, so, mm-hm. And I think it might be sitting somewhere. It's either on a shelf here, or in a shelf downstairs. I think that might be it right over there, so, mm-hm.

AL: Okay, do you mind if we take a look at that?

RA: Sure. [Background muttering] There are actually two of them. I'm not sure this is the one. I think the other one is downstairs. Yeah, this is the—1997. This is the team award. Let me go get the other one. Take just a minute. [Pause]

AL: Okay, so you've got your two awards here.

RA: This was 1997. This was a team award for the work with the OSU statewide initiative, presented by Paul Risser. And then this was 2006, presented right after I retired, at University Day, by President Ed Ray.

AL: And so post-retirement, I see you've traveled a lot.

RA: We've traveled a fair amount, yes, mm-hm. Our trip of a lifetime was a wildlife safari to Botswana, and we have traveled with groups, to Australia, New Zealand, to Italy. The two of us planned a trip and traveled in the Scandinavian countries a few years ago. Last year, we traveled to the Amazon and Peru.

AL: And so your wife, Jane—you mentioned that you had gone to grad school with her, that she'd been here at the same time? Or where were you [unclear]?

RA: We met as undergraduates at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She was a year behind me in school. We met there, and we were married a year after I graduated—actually married on her graduation day from UNL. She graduated in the morning; we were married that evening. All of our friends were in town, so it worked out well, so, mm-hm.

AL: So, big day right there! [Laughs]

RA: We lived in Omaha just a few months while I was finishing up my work at Fairmont Foods, and then came here to graduate school. She also did graduate work at OSU.

AL: And what did she get from OSU?

RA: It was in the child development and nursery school education area. She did a master's degree.

AL: So what else have you been up to with Jane, post-retirement?

RA: Well, I mentioned earlier our two daughters. The one daughter and her husband live in Portland, and the other and her husband live—she's the one who came to OSU. Met her husband here; they're both OSU graduates. They live in Olympia, Washington, and they have two children, who are now almost eight and four. And so we've spent a fair amount of time interacting with them [1:09:59], spending time in Olympia. And actually, we just had the two grandkids here a week ago, and then went out to Seaside for Labor Day weekend with them, which we've done every year for the last several years. I'm serving as a board member on the Ag Research Foundation.

I've been involved in a national project, Food Systems Leadership Institute, which I was asked several years ago by the Kellogg Foundation to draft a proposal to set up a Food Systems Leadership program, and then I worked with a design team, designing that project. They're just about to celebrate their tenth anniversary next month. But they take, like, 25 fellows each year into the program; it's a two-year program. But they have week-long sessions at North Carolina State, which is a host institution, at Ohio State, and now at Cal-Poly, in San Luis Obispo. And they're trying to develop leaders who are capable of working more broadly across the food systems—not just think about agricultural production and marketing of food products, but think about health, think about nutrition, think about environment, be able to work with constituents from those other perspectives, work more effectively with other programs within higher education. And a number of the people who have been through that program have now moved to higher levels of responsibility in their universities, or in industry.

AL: So do you have any thoughts on the current direction and state of OSU?

RA: Well, the growth has been—recent growth has been very impressive, particularly during the first few years, when we were struggling with enrollment declines. And again, to the credit of Paul Risser, he put together an initiative, a

marketing initiative, for OSU to raise the visibility of OSU and its programs. And over the years, that began to pay off, and enrollment began to increase. And that's continued under the leadership of Tim White, as the interim, and then Ed Ray—resulted in the current leadership. Certainly the amount of construction, and new facilities, and improved facilities, is very impressive, that's going on right now—has over the recent years.

Linus Pauling Institute, that's one of the other things that happened while I was provost, and John Byrne was president, was the work with Linus Pauling Institute to move to Corvallis. And then that set the groundwork for the fundraising to build the new building that's very impressive. The new international building, the INTO-OSU, and that international building—both residence hall, and classrooms, and offices—those are very impressive additions to Oregon State.

AL: And any particular points of pride, looking back on your career?

RA: Well, there are a few things, I guess. One tries to look back and say, "Did I make any difference anywhere?" I think in terms of some of the facility things that we were successful in doing, the food processing center at Nebraska. That was an innovative approach, and it's turned out to be very successful. Working with Thayne Dutson, who was then the Director of the Ag Experiment Station, we were able to get funding for the Food Innovation Center in Portland, which is a similar, very innovative approach—the only branch station nationally that's in a major metropolitan area, I believe. Funding for the new seafood lab in Astoria, legislative funding to create the Coastal Oregon Marine Experiment Station—again, one of a kind, over in Newport. So those are all things that are significant, program-wise.

I think one of the things that happened during the years as provost was that we appointed a group to look at the promotion and tenure guidelines, and Oregon State turned out to be one of the leaders in broadening the criteria for promotion and tenure, following some of the concepts of Dr. Ernest Boyer, who had published—he was from the Carnegie Foundation—who published a book entitled *Scholarship Reconsidered*, which some folks here at OSU took very seriously. Conrad J. "Bud" Weiser was kind of a leader of that [1:14:59], in the College of Ag Sciences, and then talked with several other deans, when he was serving as dean for two years, right after I served as dean. And that led to appointment of a committee to look at our promotion and tenure guidelines. They made a number of recommendations, developed a definition of scholarship that was much broader than the former, very narrow definition, and those were implemented many years ago, and they continue to be in place today. And OSU has been asked to worked with numerous other institutions as they've thought about—a number of places had done it at a college level, but not at a university-wide level, and so OSU was quite unique in that regard. So the success of the OSU Honors College was another one that we look at with a considerable amount of pride. And then, ability to attract and hire a number of outstanding individuals into leadership roles, as deans in student affairs, and other administrative roles at OSU.

AL: All right, I think that's everything, then. Well, thank you very much.

RA: Okay. Mm-hm. That meet your time guidelines? [Laughs] [1:16:13]