

**Oral History Interview of  
Judith Henry**

**Interviewed by: Daniel Sanchez  
February 25, 2016  
Lubbock, Texas**

**Part of the:  
*General Southwest Collection Interviews***

© Southwest Collection/  
Special Collections Library



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

**Southwest Collection/  
Special Collections Library**

15th and Detroit | 806.742.3749 | <http://swco.ttu.edu>

## Copyright and Usage Information:

An oral history release form was signed by Judi Henry on February 25, 2016. This transfers all rights of this interview to the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University.

This oral history transcript is protected by U.S. copyright law. By viewing this document, the researcher agrees to abide by the fair use standards of U.S. Copyright Law (1976) and its amendments. This interview may be used for educational and other non-commercial purposes only. Any reproduction or transmission of this protected item beyond fair use requires the written and explicit permission of the Southwest Collection. Please contact Southwest Collection Reference staff for further information.

### Preferred Citation for this Document:

Henri, Judi Oral History Interview, February 25, 2016. Interview by Daniel Sanchez, Online Transcription, Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library. URL of PDF, date accessed.

*The Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library houses almost 6000 oral history interviews dating back to the late 1940s. The historians who conduct these interviews seek to uncover the personal narratives of individuals living on the South Plains and beyond. These interviews should be considered a primary source document that does not implicate the final verified narrative of any event. These are recollections dependent upon an individual's memory and experiences. The views expressed in these interviews are those only of the people speaking and do not reflect the views of the Southwest Collection or Texas Tech University.*

## Technical Processing Information:

The Audio/Visual Department of the Southwest Collection is the curator of this ever-growing oral history collection and is in the process of digitizing all interviews. While all of our interviews will have an abbreviated abstract available online, we are continually transcribing and adding information for each interview. Audio recordings of these interviews can be listened to in the Reading Room of the Southwest Collection. Please contact our Reference Staff for policies and procedures. Family members may request digitized copies directly from Reference Staff.

Consult the Southwest Collection website for more information.

<http://swco.ttu.edu/Reference/policies.php>

### Recording Notes:

*Original Format:* Born Digital Audio

*Digitization Details:* N/A

*Audio Metadata:* 44.1kHz/ 16bit WAV file

*Further Access Restrictions:* N/A

*Related Interviews:*

### Transcription Notes:

*Interviewer:* Daniel Sanchez

*Audio Editor:* N/A

*Transcription:* Savannah Calvert

*Editor(s):* Katelin Dixon

## Transcript Overview:

This interview features Judith Henry, Senior Associate Athletics Director/Senior Women's Administrator at Texas Tech University. Henry talks about becoming interested in athletics, attending Texas Tech, and pursuing a career in education. After teaching and coaching at Smiley Wilson in Lubbock, Texas, Henry became Dean of Students at Texas Tech before beginning her career in the athletic department.

**Length of Interview:** 01:09:22

| <b>Subject</b>  | <b>Transcript Page</b> | <b>Time Stamp</b> |
|---|------------------------|-------------------|
| Background  | 5                      | 00:00:00          |
| Becoming interested in sports                               | 7                      | 00:04:12          |
| College   | 8                      | 00:06:56          |
| Female student athletes                                     | 10                     | 00:13:22          |
| Teaching and coaching at Smiley Wilson                      | 11                     | 00:16:38          |
| Beginning career at Texas Tech                              | 14                     | 00:23:20          |
| Becoming women's administrator                              | 15                     | 00:29:26          |
| Building success in athletic programs                       | 18                     | 00:39:08          |
| Women pioneers in athletics at Texas Tech, Jeannine McHaney | 20                     | 00:45:55          |
| Margaret Wilson   | 26                     | 00:57:47          |
| Marsha Sharp  | 26                     | 00:57:47          |
| Former students   | 28                     | 01:03:19          |
| Community involvement                                       | 29                     | 01:16:19          |

### Keywords

college athletics, Lubbock, Texas, NCAA, Texas Tech University, women's athletics

**Daniel Sanchez (DS):**

My name is Daniel Sanchez, today's date is February the 25, 2016. We're at the Southwest Collection on the campus of Texas Tech University and today we'll be interviewing Judi Henry. Hello Judi, thank you for coming in—

**Judith (Judi) Henry (JH):**

My pleasure.

DS:

Could you state your complete legal name?

JH:

Judith Henry.

DS:

Judith Henry, and you go by Judi?

JH:

I do.

DS:

And that's Judi with an I.

JH:

Correct, very good.

DS:

Okay, and when and where were you born?

JH:

I was born September 11, 1953 in Lovington, New Mexico.

DS:

Okay. Could you tell us a little bit about your family background, your parents?

JH:

Sure, grew up with one sibling, four years older, a sister, and my parents were involved in education and working with youth, so that was kind of the culture. My dad started as an oil field worker, discovered that he was in the service, then the oil field—because he hadn't completed his degree and spent some long cold nights in the oil field and decided, you know, there was a

better way to earn a living. So he was a great athlete, and he played baseball at Sul Ross and was able to finish his degree, and then that's what kind of catapulted him into the realm of education. So he was a fifth grade teacher early on and then became a principle, elementary school principle, and then ultimately was an assistant superintendent in Lovington, in the Lovington school district, and my mom worked at a youth center which had a different connotation in those days. I think now it's more you think of it as a place where youth go who might be in trouble. Back in that day it was a place where you know high school kids went after school to have something to do, and there were ping pong tables, and pool tables and you know dances, and so it was a fun setting. So they were both— have always been involved in trying to be good role models and educate and help youth grow and be good citizens.

DS:

And for the record let's get your dad's name and birthdate place and same on your mom.

JH:

James Thomas Henry, he was born on August the 6, 1924 in Oklahoma, and I cannot remember the name, very small town. My mother's name, Joanne Marie Stern Henry, February 6, 1928, also in Oklahoma don't remember the name of the town.

DS:

And you mentioned you had a sibling?

JH:

A sister.

DS:

Was she older or younger?

JH:

Four years older, her name is Janet Henry, and she was born on September 29, 1949, also an educator, school teacher and retired now so that was my background.

DS:

So what was it like growing up with an older sister, and did you grow up in Lovington?

JH:

I did, born and raised. You know it was a great environment, great small town, about ten-thousand people so good, strong school systems at the time, and you know it was a place where everybody knew everybody, but you grow up with a cohort of peers and kind of experience the ups and the downs of growing up. So it was—I consider myself to be incredibly fortunate to

grow up in that kind of setting with a lot of positive reinforcement and support, and you know knowing that you went through with a certain group of, you know, peers at schools and sometimes classes have kind of a tendency to be cyclical. In my case I was in a very strong class, three of my classmates out of a graduating class of 350 went to Stanford. So you know it was just a really great experience and very fond memories.

DS:

Wow. Could you talk to us about when you became interested in sports?

JH:

Gosh must've been from the day that I was born (both laugh). You know and it was during a time that sports weren't really available for girls, but I can remember spending all kinds of hours with my dad, either throwing a baseball at that time, and he put up a basketball goal, and you know whatever. I loved watching sports and I remember watching the Yankees with him on Sunday afternoons and watching Mickey Mantle and that era because he'd been a baseball player, you know, he taught me a lot about the game, so I just always had you know, probably from him, a passion for sports and would've love to have had the opportunity to have been involved and obviously that didn't exist, and I was really—you know used to get angry with the guys that were in my class, from even elementary school because they'd get to go to practice after school and they get to do all of those things. So I ended up, because those weren't available, there was a dance studio down the street, so I'd get on my bicycle and take dance lessons four days a week, which probably, ultimately was a great thing because it was a total body development, you know it develops discipline, and it was a positive activity for me to be involved in, and then did gymnastics and swimming in the summers and so again all around kinds of activities, but still, not the opportunity to compete and have the same kind of involvement in being a part of a team, and learning those values that come out of that experience.

DS:

So were there any opportunities once you hit junior high and high school?

JH:

No, there were not, I graduated from high school in 1971, and actually Nancy Lopez is a year or two younger than I am and she was playing golf on boys golf team and kind of starting the movement in New Mexico, and then when Title IX passed in 1974 and then was implemented in 1975 is when kind of I saw, you know, that start to take place, and it was—it's interesting that you don't pick your place in history but where you happen to fall along the way makes things interesting so you know it just, always was a wannabe but now when I look at the position I'm in, would've never dreamed that this kind of position would even exist.

DS:

Yeah, because people that look at your position would've thought, well you've been an athlete all your life and really, you wanted to be.

JH:

Yep exactly.

DS:

So talk about, you know, after you finished high school, where'd you go to college?

JH:

Texas Tech, yep.

DS:

Why'd you choose Tech?

JH:

Well, I had grandparents that lived here and we—Lubbock is kind of a hub for Lovington, just because Lubbock's closer than Albuquerque which was the big city in New Mexico and University of New Mexico was a fairly liberal university at the time that I graduated, and my folks were a little conservative and not crazy about the thought of me going there. So we'd, you know, come over here to shop and for medical care and those kinds of things, and I remember during that period of time Texas Tech had classes on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, so they actually had Saturday classes, and so we'd drive by the campus and there'd be that kind of activity going on. But I just fell in love with Texas Tech when I saw it, and you know, knew that that's where I wanted to go to school and at that time out of state tuition in Texas was very similar to in state tuition in New Mexico. So probably, partly because of proximity and partly just because I fell in love with it the very first time I saw it.

DS:

And what were you majoring in?

JH:

Well, I came like many other students as majoring in business, and I took a basketball class my first semester and fell in love with the basketball class, and you know the semester changed my degree to, at that time, what's now called kinesiology was, and before that, was exercise and sports sciences was then physical education. So I was a physical education major and loved that activity, and at the time again prior to Title IX, and there were separate men's and women's physical education departments, so I've always believed that one of the reasons I'd had some strong female mentors and learned some leadership skills early was because there were actually

women running that department, there was a department chair, and again during that time there weren't very many women that were department chairs across the university or in leadership positions, so it was a blessing really for me to have that opportunity.

DS:

Well who were some of the women you met in those early days?

JH:

Well Mary Dabney was the department chair when I came to school and then Dr. Margaret Wilson became the chair, Jeannine McHaney who later became the first women's athletic director was one of the faculty members and a really strong force, Joyce Arterburn was one of the faculty members, and she was kind of the founding advisor for the high riders which turned out to be the support group for women's athletics. So there were just—it was a great group of really strong women who wanted to teach and educate and make a difference.

DS:

And what was it about that first semester that just sold you on changing your major?

JH:

Well, I think it was just that I had always had such a passion for sports and was involved in whatever way I could be, and you know, I just loved going to that class and knew that that's kind of where my future could be, and obviously that's where it took me, so—

DS:

You know normally when I interview someone that's been here it's usually a student athlete person, so I ask them what it's like to you know balance athletics and your schoolwork and here you just had the schoolwork aspect. What was it like, you know, as a student here at Tech during those years?

JH:

It was, you know, the first year I think is always a transition, particularly when you come from a small town to what to me was a large place. But I lived in Knapp Hall, and you know you make connections through your residence hall and that experience and through your classes and you know at that time there actually were women's sports, they weren't NCAA sports they were AIAW [**Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women**] sports, which was, at that time, there were again pre Title IX, there were two separate sporting organizations, one for men's and one for women's and so there—we had women's basketball, track, golf, a number of sports that women competed in. It was just on a much smaller scale, so a lot of my time was devoted to attending the sports and in many cases keeping stats or officiating, so there was some involvement. But I was also involved in the physical education student organization and Mortar

Board later in my career at Tech and so it was important, I think, to be well rounded and involved in organizations and student life in general.

DS:

Did you have anybody that kind of took you under their wing here in Lubbock, when you first got here?

JH:

Well, my grandparents were here, they were retired Air Force people so they— you know it always nice to have kind of an extended family, and I can remember my grandmother would cook Sunday meals because they didn't serve Sunday meals in the residence halls, and whoever was around that I'd picked up and took with me she fed, and you know so many times I remember walking out with any range of color, size, shape, gender that would go because it was a home cooked meal, and they would say that you know they never got to know their grandparents, and it just really made me appreciate the fact that I was able to spend some time and get to know them. So they were great, and then again because the women's department then was small, then those department chairs and faculty members really had a vested interest in the success of those students, and so I would say pretty much that entire faculty I felt that way about.

DS:

Tell us about some of those students that you might've met along the way that were student athletes, particularly females, and how you know how you saw them transitioning into sports and stuff—

JH:

Yeah and a lot of them, because they had grown up in Texas, had been able to compete, so it was a different world for me to be able to watch that. Caylene Caddell was one of those individuals and she, you know, was a multi-sport athlete and very talented, and went on to have a long coaching career at Estacado here. Karla Kitten was a great basketball player, she's now—you know, teaches in the department of kinesiology, she was an assistant basketball coach. You know it's funny it's not the big names that you would know now like a Sheryl Swoopes and those kinds of things, but it just—and at that time they were not competing on a scholarship, it was all, they paid for their education on their own, they paid for travel, you know they would go to a tournament in Dallas, and they'd spend the night at somebody's house on the floor, so it was just, you know, a totally different world than what I experience now watching our female student athletes and their modes of transportations, and the number of uniforms they have, and you know the elite athletes that they are, and it's just exciting, and amazing, and fun to see that growth.

DS:

Yeah because it's kind of parallels, you know, like the minor sports. I mean because Kal Segrist talked about how baseball was kind of a minor sport, but he showed up and the same thing, you know, you're lucky to get hand me downs on some of those things.

JH:

Oh absolutely and you set up your own nets, and you swept the gym floor, and you know you drove the cars and the student athletes at that time, drove whoever, you know kind of chipped in for gas money. But baseball, yeah, it was very much that way for—

DS:

So when you were a student here and you're mapping out what your future was going to be, what did you think you were going to be doing?

JH:

You know I didn't know, I kind of felt like it would be in education just because that was the model that I'd had growing up, and I've always liked education. So I graduated in '75 and had pursued the physical education degree and student taught at Smylie Wilson Junior High in Lubbock under Mullen [?] Hunt, who was a great mentor for me, and when I graduated, she was pregnant the year I was student teaching for her and so that position opened, and I was able to get a job at Smylie Wilson, and so that was in '75. So I taught and coached there for three years, and what was fun about that year, my first year, was it was the first year that girls athletics were being implemented in LISD [**Lubbock Independent School District**], so it was the first time to get to see, you know, them with a competitive athletic period, and schedules, and uniforms, and all of those kinds of things.

DS:

Talk about, you know, getting a program off the ground, all the logistics, and all of that, what was it y'all had to do?

JH:

Well, it was a lot and not only was it the logistics, it was seventh, eighth, and ninth grade volleyball, basketball, and track, so you know there were two of us that did all of those things in addition to teaching five classes so—and it terms of some of the infrastructure, really the Lubbock Independent School District took charge of putting the schedules together and those kinds of things. So we didn't have to do that part, and it was all inner city so it wasn't really travel, but it was just fun to watch the girls for the first time have a uniform and know that they were going to play Atkins or Evans and there was a city championship and city track meet and you know. So it was just—

DS:

So do you recall your first teams?

JH:

Oh yeah, in fact I just had—one of them is now an attorney in Oakland, and she was in town visiting her mom and she stopped by and we visited, so it's amazing to maintain those contacts, and now you know I run into some of them with their kids and grandkids, and you know they'll say, "Ms. Henry did you used to teach at Smylie Wilson?" "Yep," (laughs) you know so it's like your own little group of family that you just watched grow up.

DS:

So when you were doing this did you have a sense of how important it was to do it right? Because I mean it was the first time of doing it.

JH:

Yeah, I mean you know you want to set the standard right and you want to give them a good experience and a good opportunity and have all of the good things that a sport can teach a young person happen, so it was really important to do and that's—on top of that had been brought up to, you know, that you work hard and do the best that you can every day to make a difference.

DS:

Did you notice anything like the first time, you know junior high they weren't going out of town but at least they were going across town maybe for the first time for a game and stuff like that. What was that like?

JH:

Oh it was fun, you know you get on a bus and go compete and you know it was new to everybody and what was interesting though is that in just a three year period you see the excitement of their very first year and how much they grow and change, particularly during seventh, eighth, and ninth grade years but by the third year, you know the first year the young women were just excited to get a uniform and to have the opportunity. By the third year they're already going, well we want a different color here or—you know kind of what you expect but you know, so they were taking it a little bit more for granted just than the ones that were the first because there's only one first.

DS:

Yeah because even that cohort wouldn't have been the first by the time they got to high school because somebody'd already been there.

JH:

That's exactly right.

DS:

Wow. So did any of those first girls go on to go to compete in colleges or anything like that?

JH:

I'm not sure, I'm sure that they probably did because you know at the same time the sports were beginning to develop in the junior high and high schools, they were getting a start and elevated at the college level too, so it was kind of probably similar parallel paths. But I don't recall specific names of people that did.

DS:

How long were you at Smylie Wilson?

JH:

Three years and during that period of time I always knew that I would pursue a master's degree, so having the summers off I pursued my masters again in physical education. But what was different was Title IX then had been implemented so the men's and women's physical education departments emerged and not without some bumps in the road, you know, because there were different philosophies and different approaches, but ultimately I think a good thing, so I pursued my master's degree during those years, and then you know became a little frustrated with a public school just because they wouldn't let, in track, they wouldn't let girls run a mile, they would only let them run three quarters of a mile, which seemed to be a little antiquated to me, and you know you go to the administration hoping that you can find a solution or make a change, and that wasn't going to happen. So then, I've always been a believer that you should go with solutions and not just whine about things, and so you know the way to change that was to become an administrator and try to affect policy, and at that point, mid-seventies, there really weren't any female administrators within LISD, and so I thought maybe I go a different path. Although I did have great administrators at Smylie Wilson that were really supportive, Gerald Snodgrass was the principal at that time and just had great comradery with the people that I worked with there and they helped me grow up too. You know your first job out of college and working with junior high kids, and so great memories there. But then one of my co-teachers husband was a pharmaceutical sales rep and he—you know so I like to tell people I sold drugs, but legitimately became a pharmaceutical sales rep because my other minor in college was health, and it just seemed like it was a more lucrative career, had some travel with it. So what I found out through that experience, which I did for a couple of years, was what I didn't want to do. I discovered that I'm not a sales person, I'd go to sales meetings, and my name would be at the bottom of the list in terms of generating revenue through sales, and you know I was competing against the number one sales person in the nation for the competing drug. So you

know it just—but it wasn't valuable, again it made me realize that education was where I belonged, probably higher education, so that's what led me into higher education. So I came back to Tech as an assistant to the dean of students, so my first career at Tech started in student affairs, and that was in 1980, and so I, you know, had a boss then the dean of students by the name of Dr. Jack Baier that gave me the opportunity, and he said, "If you're going to stay in this career, pursue your doctorate. So I had an opportunity to do that at the same time I was working and pursue that in higher education, and you know so I had a chance to move up through the ranks so from assistant to the dean to an assistant dean to—then when I received my doctorate was able to move into an associate dean role and ultimately and that— would've never believed that that would've been my career path, in fact didn't even know that existed, became dean of students and assistant vice president for student affairs under Dr. Robert Ewalt.

DS:

Can you tell us something about that career, what it's like being the dean of students, some of the things that you have to deal with?

JH:

Well, it's like being in charge of 24,000 students from twenty-four seven, seven days a week. But I absolutely love that part of my life, and again I'm surrounded by great people, you have a chance to impact the students' lives outside the classroom, so it's the other piece of their experience on a college campus, so they have the classroom experience and their education and pursuing their degree, and then they have the other piece whether it's residence life or student organizations or leadership activities, and then there's the part that you deal with that's you know, they make mistakes their first time away from home, so it's an opportunity from, you know, I don't know if it's so much a discipline standpoint as a teaching moment, opportunity and so many of—I've often said that I don't think there are a lot of places that I would've wanted to be a dean of students other than Texas Tech because of the type of students that are attracted here. So typically if they, you know, had a Friday night out and had some alcohol and you know did something that wasn't particularly smart, they'd end up in our office and it was an opportunity to say, "Do you understand where you made a poor choice?" And we saw very few of those students back, so it was, it turned out—it originally really kind of scared me to think about being a disciplinarian and so to speak, even though I'd kind of grown up with that with my father being a principal, he had to deal with problems. But in the end it made me realize that it was an opportunity to teach, and it could be a positive experience, and it taught me that there are always two sides to a story because you'd get a police report and you'd think one thing and then you'd have the opportunity to interact with the student, and it would be totally different when you heard their side of the story, and sometimes the truth was in the middle. You know, but it's a really rewarding job, but it's a very, very difficult job, and it's become more difficult. I mean when I think about you know my experience in the nineties versus what Amy Murphy has

experienced in the time that she was here, they're night and day different. Some of the same issues, but a lot more intense and a lot more challenging now I think.

DS:

Well you mentioned Dr. Ewalt what were some of the things he was—first tell us what he was like, or what he's like and what were some of the things that he helped you along the way with?

JH:

Well he is, for me personally, an incredible leader, and mentor, and person, just core values and integrity and you know being honest and doing what he was going to do. So he was the first vice president for student affairs at Texas Tech, and I think his career spanned probably twenty-nine years, and so he had probably at that time ten or eleven departments that reported to him, and that changed over the years, but it was the counseling center and it was residence life, and it was—you know it became women's athletics in 1975 when women's athletics was finally created as a unit. So he had any number of those departments and he just was, you know he was a great listener, and he always taught by asking questions. It wasn't like he always, he probably did always have the answer because he was very wise, but he would ask you the question, what do you think, or how would you manage this, or what would you do? So it made you problem solve without being told what the answer was, and that's one of the things that I really remember about him. But he was an incredible proponent for women and women's sports, and it was, you know, there were some pretty significant battles when Title IX was being implemented because there were certain men that didn't want money to be diverted from football basically to fund sports. So there were some—you know Dr. Ewalt had to really support and back the women's sports and the women pioneers such as Jeannine McHaney who was the first women's athletic director, because there were people that were pretty vicious and pretty attacking during those times, and he was a backbone, somebody that you always knew that you could count on, and would be there to fight the battle and help support.

DS:

So when did you become more involved on the athletic side?

JH:

You know I always had a certain level of involvement even though I wasn't a student athlete because of the connections from the women like Jeannine who then became the women's athletic director. So I stayed involved just out of an interest and passion, again keeping stats and serving on committees, so even during the time that I was in student affairs I had a really close connection with athletics and knew the coaches, and frequently visited with recruits when they came just to tell them about campus life, and you know, the other part of the university. So I had that kind of involvement, and then had the opportunity in 1997 to make a transition from student affairs into athletic administration and that's when Bob Bockrath had left Texas Tech to go to

Alabama as their athletics director, and we were in a search, Gerald Meyers became the athletics director and during that period of time Jeannine had passed away from cancer, and Marsha Sharp actually assumed the duties of the senior woman administrator, along with her head coaching duties. So when—and she did that for probably a year and a half to two years, and part of that was just transitioning, you know Jeannine had been the only women's athletic director, and it just had to be a little bit of time and the right person before they filled that position, so Gerald became the athletics director, and because of Gerald and because of Marsha had an opportunity to interview for the senior women's administrator job, and that worked out for me, you know and I can remember visiting with some of the head coaches and them asking you know how I was going to do that job since I had not been a student athlete, had not been a coach at the collegiate level, and my answer was, I'm an administrator not a coach and a good administrator can help solve problems and find solutions, and you know that's my job is to find resources and help you get around, or through obstacles that you're facing to give our student athletes a good experience. So it really—I couldn't have been more fortunate to have had the student affairs experience and then make the transition into athletics so that I understand the importance of integrating our student athletes into campus because it's easy to get isolated, and when I was in student affairs, I remember I would look at athletics and just think, Gosh they just live in their old world, and they're isolated, and they do things completely differently, and then when I got into athletics I understood how easily that can happen so my goal has been to try to bridge the athletics department and campus, and I've had some success doing that just because the number of years and the contacts that I've had.

DS:

Well when you first got in there—let's talk about that when you first took out that job, what were some of the things you saw that you needed to tweak or change?

JH:

In the athletic role?

DS:

Yeah.

JH:

So we still weren't where we needed to be in terms of equity with Title IX and gender equity, so some of our facilities were subpar, you know we needed to make sure that we were providing the same quality of experience for both our male and our female student athletes, which meant anywhere from the way they traveled, to the per diem they got, to practice times. So there were some things that we still—our soccer field was in the middle of the track field which was surrounded by, you know the track which had a concrete kind of inner ridge around it. Well, it was a safety hazard, if you're playing soccer and you're diving for a ball and your head goes into

that. So you know, and certainly it wasn't me alone, it was a large number of people that raised funds to get a new soccer facility, now we have probably the best one in the nation. We didn't have softball field at all, and you know as Jeannine was—her final days were getting a couple of the sports added which was soccer and softball, getting softball back. So you know and you don't just add those sports and have all of the budget and all of the facilities and it takes time to generate and create those. But then you look at where we are now and what we have, I'd say we are in very good shape and have some of the best facilities, and the best coaches, and really competitive programs nationally.

DS:

You know and when you're creating those things, not only that but you've got to create a fan base. How was that, how did you go about that?

JH:

Well you know Marsha Sharp is the answer to that, and she was masterful at doing that, and you're right you do have to establish a fan base, and I'm a big believer in—I've learned this from people like Marsha and Jeannine that you do that by connecting with people, you don't just build it and they'll come, you have to have a great product that people want to come see. So you know it was Marsha's goal to make sure that her student athletes and players were visible in the community and that they gave back to the community. So if there was a fan in the hospital that needed someone to cheer them up, then they'd make those visits and they would go to schools to be role models for younger fans, and obviously during that period of time that core group of student athletes attracted a lot of the older fans who might be retired and were looking for something to do, and so it just was all about relationships and connections and obviously then the winning came with that and all of the pieces fell into place. But Marsha would tell you that you have to plan to be great, and if you don't put the pieces in place then, if you get great, if you don't have the foundation to support it, it doesn't last very long.

DS:

You almost sounded exactly like her when you said that plan to be great (both laugh).

JH:

Yeah. That's because I've heard it from her a few times.

DS:

You sounded just like her (laughter).

JH:

Well that's a compliment.

DS:

Exactly. So when you're doing all of this in those early years, you mentioned the record, how successful were those different sports in the early days?

JH:

It took some time to build them, you know Marsha would tell you that it took some years just to even beat the University of Texas, and you know they were a good standard to chase because they put a lot of money early, because they had it, into their programs. So their programs were further ahead than everybody else early on. But if—you know gradually we just kind of chipped away at them, and you know, the first time you beat Goliath, it makes you feel pretty good and then you build from that because you've put the pieces in place. But some of our other sports, you know, it took soccer awhile for us to get the facilities and get the pieces in place and everybody was trying to figure out recruiting and how that worked, and scholarships, and those pieces and how they fit together, and how did you create the best schedule that would position for post season play and so there were learning curves for all of those things and some growing pains. But I think it was, you know, a lot of people worked hard to put those pieces in place and make it happen.

DS:

Yeah because even though sports, you know, we have a variety of sports, the way you get to your end results is a little different in all of them.

JH:

Oh, it's amazing. Every one of them is different and every one of them has a different culture and you know you look at—well our women's tennis team right now is ranked eighth in the nation, that program has come so far, and our women's golf team last year was in the top eight and made it into the playoffs at the NCAA tournament which was so great for them, and our women's soccer program has been incredibly successful in post season play, and sweet sixteen for the past couple of years, so to watch those programs grow, and I think the best part is, and Marsha says this with, you know if we bring coaches in that we're recruiting that have programs that are struggling. She talks about the reward for her and building a program as opposed to stepping into a program that was already established, two different things really.

DS:

Right, yeah and I was going to ask, can you recall in each of those sports you mentioned when the change from the struggle to we're starting to make it here, we're almost there, can you pick that out? Was it more of the coach or more of the coach and athletes or—?

JH:

I think it's part of the history of the programs and it ultimately, I think, is the coach because that's who provides the leadership, that's who recruits, and that's who identifies the talent and then puts the pieces together. I think when you look at Marsha and what made her so successful was those things, but then when you have somebody at the elite level, it was Sheryl Swoopes, to know how to put the chemistry together to support somebody that is that outstanding is pretty masterful, and Marsha did that. But then I look at our women's soccer program with Tom Stone and you know we were— had made some progress with coaches that we had, but in seven years, it's been incredibly fun to watch Tom take it to the next level and what it takes and right now recruiting is so far out, I mean sophomores and you know you'll see thirteen or fourteen year olds saying that they're going to go to Duke or North Carolina or whatever. So when you get that far out, if you take over a program, it takes a while for you to get your own recruits and to build your culture. So with Tom it's been fun to watch and go through the frustrating times when it's not happening as quickly as you want it to. But then to be in Kansas City at the Big Twelve soccer championship and to watch them win the championship game and hold up a trophy and know what it takes to get there, I mean there's nothing like that feeling, and you know that's the best part of my job, is working with those sports programs and watching the coaches and help support them, and I tell recruits and their parents, that my job every day is to go try to make it the best possible environment for our student athletes to succeed and that's—I think philosophically from Kirby down through our coaches that our goal is to develop a total student athlete, one that can compete on a national level athletically but who comes out with a quality degree and gives back to the community, so it's a whole person.

DS:

You know and you mentioned right there, briefly, you know you said Kirby and that kind of makes me think about what it's like to keep your program growing in the direction you want it to when you're facing administrative changes at the top, not only athletic director but university presidents, chancellors, all of those things change over time.

JH:

They do, they do, and I think somewhere in there that change is good and it's inevitable, and I think somewhere in there it's good to have some continuity. But at least, I can speak to the change between Gerald and Kirby and you know Gerald was incredible, he hired me and gave me the opportunity in athletics, and he was amazingly supportive of trying to build the women's athletics piece of it while still maintaining the balance with making sure your football program has what it needs to operate and to win because it does fund a lot of what we do and you know Gerald was a traditional model athletics director who was—you know his career at Tech is incredible, to be the kind of athlete he was, and student athlete to become a successful coach, and ultimately to sit in the athletics director's chair has been a model that we've seen over the years for athletic directors, and then you know Gerald retires, Kirby comes in and he's a different

model, and the model for athletic directors these days are different because you're talking about a multimillion dollar enterprise. So you see a lot of athletics' directors now that have law degrees, and business degrees and a different experience. They don't just come up through the traditional—kind of like university presidents used to be faculty member, a department chair and then went up the academic route. Now you see a totally different kind of model for them as well, so things change and you know Kirby he's a great leader. He believes in surrounding himself with good people and letting them do their job, he wants it to be the best athletic department in the country, and he's going to work hard to provide the support and resources to do that, and obviously he's elevated a high profile because of his most recent position with the college football playoff. So it's—and I've asked him how different that is for him, and it just puts him in a whole different set of conversations as well.

DS:

Well, you would think it would put your whole athletic program in a different prospect because I mean he's recognized as national leader.

JH:

That's exactly right, that's exactly right.

DS:

Yeah I've only met him a couple of times, but he's a good guy.

JH:

He is great, and you know he is a listener, and he cares, and he just wants people to grow and be better professionally. But he sets a high standard for that as well for the coaches and staff, and should.

DS:

Well, you know while we're talking about Kirby, let's go back and talk about some of those early women pioneers. I think Lynn Whitfield our university archivist had mentioned a few names that—she was kind of wanting your take on people, so let's start with Jeannine, if you don't mind.

JH:

Okay yeah, well, so I first knew Jeannine as a faculty member, and she was also the director of intramurals for the women's side of things, and it was in the old women's gym, so things were, facility wise very different, and she was a little fire plug and from—I think she came to Tech in 1966 and just a great, great teacher, but she would push you to your limits because she knew that there was always a little bit more that you could give, so she was one of those teachers that you just dreaded, but you knew if you survived that you were going to be a stronger and a better

person because of it, but just a brilliant mind, and she coached volleyball, so back then the faculty members before we were part of NCAA would also coach for no salary, so she was a great volleyball coach. Then in 1975 when Title IX was being implemented, Dr. Ewalt came to her and gave her the option of becoming the director of intramurals, or for REC sports, or the director of women's athletics, and so she choose women's athletics, and that's kind of what started her administrative path. She was the perfect person for that position just because she was tough skinned enough to be able to take some of the criticism and some of the viciousness that went with creating departments. Not that it wasn't painful, but she had a pretty tough shield and armor and had people's support like Bob Ewalt and Glenn Barnett back then, and you know so she just laid the foundation, laid the groundwork and fought the battles to develop and create a women's athletic department. So '75 through '94, I think that number of years and saw a lot of changes, and they had for a while an old naval reserve building that served as their offices and then went through the merge of the departments which was I think in the mid-eighties, and that was, again, a difficult thing because there were men that didn't want that to happen, didn't want women to be in their part of the world, and again a good thing in the long run I think for both male and female student athletes. But it was a very difficult thing at the time, and that's when some sports were cut, and that's also when the NCAA was merging with the AIAW, and you know some people would call that a merge and some people would call it a takeover, and so there were some battles at the national level from an association standpoint. But one of the things that always impressed me with Jeannine was the way she prepared, she would never go into a meeting without being overly prepared, and she could usually, pretty much, outwit anybody around the table and kind of knew how to position and how to negotiate and how to be hard-nosed when you had to be hard-nosed and how to back off, which battles to fight I guess. So I mean when I think about what she started with and what she built and what she left her name on by the time she left it's impactful and it changed a lot of lives, both for coaches and for student athletes, you know, she was involved at the state level and national level in trying to impact change their too.

DS:

Did she ever share some of those moments when she had to decide whether a battle was worth fighting for or not?

JH:

Yeah, and there were a lot of those that you know you just—sometimes you had to separate emotion from which ones were the right or the wrong ones, and I think probably Bob Ewalt was the best person that could help ground her and help guide, and direct and say this is one that we want to fight, and this one we need to wait on a little bit of time and some of that, for all of us, comes with experience and maturity, and a job and kind of knowing the player.

DS:

Yeah, well, and it's the same even like here you have to choose your battles, you know it's just—

JH:

Yeah, it's for everybody, you know.

DS:

Yeah and another person that you mentioned was Peg—is it Peg Wilson?

JH:

Margaret E. Wilson, but she went with friends by Peg.

DS:

Okay well we'll go with Margaret since I didn't know Peg.

JH:

She was the department chair for a number of years, and again strong willed woman also from Arkansas, she was from the University of Arkansas, great leader of that department. Again very, very high standards, and I can remember in her classes if a young man came in with a baseball cap on, if he didn't take it off, he did pretty shortly after her letting him know that that was inappropriate and wouldn't happen in her classroom, and you know chewing gum. I mean there were little things that were important to her and that's why she was good at what she did, but you know she could be another one of those people that could scare you to death but at the end of a class, or at the end of your time in that department, you'd run for a wall for her and do anything in the world, and I had the good fortune of continuing in association and knowing her after I graduated. So she was, you know, she always kept a book with people's birthday, and she'd contact them on—you'd always get a card on your birthday, and she was the chair of, they had a women's athletic council, that kind of advised and helped direct the development of the women's athletics, and she was the chair of that and did a great job in trying to direct and be a force there, and you know maintain focus on academics as well as the competition piece, so she was a force there, but just a great, great person and contributor to that department.

DS:

Did you ever just sit down and talk to her about some of the things she had to do while she was there?

JH:

I did. I don't remember—there's a ten year anniversary of women's athletics that I have an old videotape of that I need to try to get to you if you guys don't have it, and there may be a copy.

But it's funny it was after a women's basketball game, at a bar no less, and it's when people still smoked, and there was some smokers in that group, and so it was a poor quality video, but it does capture some of the history. But there are some tales in that video that are pretty funny, and as the night went on the conversation gets louder, and you hear less of the presentation but so that would've been '85.

DS:

Wow, can you tell us one of the stories?

JH:

Oh I'd have to go back and look at it to remember.

DS:

You don't want to misquote yourself, right? (laughter)

JH:

That's right.

DS:

Okay well we'll look forward to seeing that. I think Lynn would really love to see that.

JH:

She would, in fact when we discovered it and put it back in, if you can find a VCR player right, these days.

DS:

Well we've got some since we have to have stuff to transfer stuff with, so yes.

JH:

Yeah but I mean when we found it, I was just like, who still has a VCR player? So—

DS:

Yeah, yeah but you're right you know we have to move on with technology and that's, you notice, we're not recording this with a video tape, and that's kind of because I have an old, I have a videotape camera, but to transfer it to digital, it's real time to upload and real time to save it, and that isn't even counting the time to edit anything or—so long story short, it's easier just to go with a digital wav file and not have to worry about doing all of that other stuff.

JH:

Yeah it's a whole different world, isn't it?

DS:

When you know you and I both go like, well this would be a great documentary thing, you know, it'd just take, you talking, splicing to a documentary but you know—

JH:

Yeah, it's not quite that simple right (laughter). Of course our football team can break down film like by the time they get on their plane back.

DS:

Because you know with them it's an art that they learn back in the day, they can do that—

JH:

And technology allows them to break it down by position or by offense or defense I mean it's—

DS:

Because I mean we even have some game films and stuff where you know they have that—they gave them this when it's broken down offensive plays, defensive plays, and you know we were talking earlier about some of this, some stuff from departments taking off, and Lynn gets stuff that every once in a while there'll be a former football player, basketball player that'll call up and say, hey I've got some game film from when I played for Tech, do you want it?

JH:

“What do I do with it?” “Give it to the Southwest Collection.”

DS:

Yeah, we'll take it.

JH:

Yeah, I remember when Peg Wilson passed away, I talked to Monte, we'd been in touch because he knew her and to get stuff out of her office and just you know because there were—I mean she had her gradebooks from when I had been her student. So we just wanted to make sure that anything that was of historical significance that would—because she'd been involved statewide with some association that had some historical relevance with women's athletics. So we wanted to make sure that we captured all of those, but she was an impeccable record keeper of you know minutes of meetings and grades and all of that kind of stuff so—

DS:

And I'm sure you are yourself, right?

JH:

Well and I have a lot of—you know really because I kind of entered Jeannine's position even with that lapse, so many of those files were just intact, and that's why many of them are here. But there are still some you just can't let go of because of their historical significance, and you don't to miss anything for the department before they do belong here, because if somebody's doing research they're just so pertinent to what they would want to do historically.

DS:

I guess that's also a reason to maintain good ties because you know maybe they're not here yet, but Lynn goes, well I'll just call Judi and see if she'll grant you access to her stuff because that'd be another way around that. You know because we're always looking for those opportunities for graduate students, and whatever discipline to come in and be able to do their research.

JH:

Well and you guys, I mean we are so fortunate to have you and such a rich source of materials and documentation and pictures and—I mean there are so many times when somebody has said, I wonder if we could find—I'm just like, Well let's check with Southwest Collections first.

DS:

Yeah, and you know it's interesting how the athletics department is probably one of the biggest proponents of history because they value their history and they value—

JH:

Yeah and records, you know and—

DS:

And then a lot of coaches of course have been history teachers themselves so—

JH:

They have, it's interesting isn't it?

DS:

I think every coach that I had in high school was a—

JH:

So where did you go to school?

DS:

Lubbock High.

JH:

Lubbock High, and what sports did you play?

DS:

None, my sports was marching band so—

JH:

I did marching band, what instrument?

DS:

Baritone.

JH:

Ah I like the Baritone.

DS:

So let's go back to you (laughs).

JH:

Okay yeah, no, I know it's not your interview, right (laughs).

DS:

But let's see, you know, another question, you mentioned Marsha Sharp a little bit. Can you tell us some about her?

JH:

I can. I can remember when—and this is a conversation both that Jeannine has told and that Marsha has told but when Marsha had the opportunity, she was an assistant coach when Donna Wick, who was the women's basketball coach at the time was leaving, and Marsha really wanted that position, and so she was interviewing with Jeannine, and Jeannine had made the decision and I think Marsha was all of twenty-nine at that point, and Marsha was just like—I mean Jeannine told Marsha, "I'm going to give you a chance kid but don't screw it up." So I'd say she didn't screw it up, she did nothing but take that opportunity and run with it and much like the players that she recruited she—you know it was that West Texas grit and the hard work ethic, and it didn't matter how many hours a day it took to get the job done, it didn't matter if you were sweeping the floor or visiting people in the hospital, doing things that people never knew. She knew how to make a plan, I mean her vision was always to win a national championship and to do that it was, you were going to have to beat Texas and you had to recruit players. You know they could recruit any player they wanted, so you had to figure how to out-recruit and outwit Jody and of course we were fortunate to have a lot of incredible womens, girls basketball talent

in the West Texas area. But you know, she's just so meticulous in the way she plans, and I bet you could pretty much find the master plan of, this is where we start and to get here we're going to have to do these things, and she surrounded herself with staff members and people that could help define the mission and figure out the best way to achieve it, and obviously Jeannine was a person. They were still fighting some battles back then that went to war, and went to battle and tried to find the money to help her do what she needed to do, and recruit players, and travel places, and so it was just, but she—so it didn't stop at being a coach right, she's always been a great teacher, a natural teacher I think and a historian, she loves history and loves the importance of it. But you know she's been on the administrative side of things, she's given back to the community, she's an author, she's just—and you know I have the good fortune right now of having an office next to her, so I continue to value that relationship, and obviously it's grown over the years and watch and continue to learn from her and you know she gave the commencement speech at the December commencement ceremonies, and it was one of the most incredible speeches I've ever heard. So it's on our website, but her message is, take the opportunity once you have a credential or a degree or some success and use it to make a difference on a bigger platform and so continue to give back and the things that she's given this community and the lives that she's impacted, and you know she still makes visits to the hospital when there's a fan that's there or goes to—no telling how many funerals that she's been to to support family of players or whatever. I mean she's just an incredible human being.

DS:

Yeah because I mean you know you never think about that, but she's been involved in athletics here for so long that yeah, people that she knew that were in their thirties are probably well up there in years by now.

JH:

Oh yeah and you know you think about, people talk about different peoples' coaching trees. I don't know how many of her former student athletes now that she has as coaches. But so you know that legacy continues and the values that she instilled and the work ethic and the love of the game, I mean, and the other things, she was not only a successful coach but a leader of the sport, she was president of the Women's Basketball Coaches Association because she believed that—you know she didn't just want basketball to be successful at Texas Tech, she wants basketball as a sport, women's basketball, to thrive, and so she's been a leader in that. Currently, obviously, she's been leading the charge of developing our Fearless Champions Leadership Academy in our department, and we think that's the best thing that we can do for our student athletes is to mold them into good citizens with good character so that once they complete their experience here they do things even better and bigger when they leave.

DS:

Have y'all had any former student athletes or maybe interns over there that have gone on to work in other athletic departments across the nation?

JH:

Sheryl Swoopes right now is coaching at the University of Chicago, Loyola; Krista Kirkland is coaching at University of Texas Arlington. So we've had—we had an intern by the name of Jenn Cohen right when I started back in '97 that now is the interim athletic director, not just women's athletic director, at the University of Washington. So you know and then we have people like Dr. Amanda Banks who's doing great things in our Lubbock community and East Lubbock community, with trying to get those young people on the right path and direct them toward a college degree and you know, so there are so many success stories and a lot of that probably has been because of people like Marsha who've been mentors and role models and because of the values and experiences that they've learned through being a student athlete.

DS:

You know we've been talking about people that are fairly well known for the most part. What about you know maybe students that you met along the way that you impacted, whether it be from your days as Dean of Students realm, or now in athletics.

JH:

You know, it's an interesting question and there—you never know how much you touch a person's life, and sometimes they will take the time to let you know, and other times you hope that you impacted them, but you don't ever know. But there's not one in particular that stands out, but there are a lot along the way that have written notes that are meaningful enough that you, you know, they're either once upon a time handwritten, or sometimes now they're emailed and you print them off and you put them in a pile to just remember some fond times, and we just—one that comes to mind there is we just had one director of operations in soccer accepted an assistant position at Kansas, her name is Bree Young, and she took the time to say, you made a difference and those kinds of things, and that's what we're all in it for, right, is to be a positive influence and help somebody if they're having a troubled time and support them or be excited for them when good things happen. So there have been a number over the years, I've been lucky to you know I would never have thought that I would be at one institution for three degrees and two different careers in thirty-eight years, but I wouldn't trade it—I love coming to work every day.

DS:

You know and they're really busy careers so I was wondering, have you had a chance to be involved with the community in other aspects?

JH:

I have and I'm a big believer that it's important to give back to the community because we wouldn't be here without them and they wouldn't be here without us it's, I think, mutual. But particularly in my student affairs days, I was very involved in United Way and Guadalupe Parkway and the YWCA and you know running clubs just because I thought it was important to be active and to make connections and those kinds of ways too, West Texas Running Club. So I've had the opportunity to mingle with community and civic leaders, I thought it was important for our students to be involved with reading programs, and we—similarly with athletics I have less time for that because of the activities, you know, it's a full time job and then it's events on most evenings and the weekends, so the time that you really want to spend, you don't have as much, but we're huge believers in involvement with the community.

DS:

And how about your family life, how's that?

JH:

Which life?

DS:

Your family life.

JH:

My family life—yeah, well it's been my career for, in large part, but I've been fortunate to have a partner of twenty years and my mother still, she recently—well about three years ago moved to Lubbock, she's eighty-eight years old, turned eighty-eight in February and lives at Carillon , and you know that's a great community and they're great supporters of Texas Tech and Texas Tech athletics. You know they bring vans to sporting events and they take vans to the symphony but it's just unbelievable.

DS:

Yeah and a lot of the who's who wind up at Carillon, don't they?

JH:

They do, it's amazing when I go have lunch with her so, but fortunate to have her and my sister also lives and here, and so I just—and not to mention the fact that I have an incredible extended family of friends because of the number of years that I have been in Lubbock, so it's just a great community, and Texas Tech has been so good to me.

DS:

Well is there any topic or question that I haven't asked that you'd like to broach?

JH:

You've done a good job. You have done a really good job.

DS:

Because we've probably yammered for at least an hour, right?

JH:

We have yammered for an hour, and it does, you know it's a good reminder as I try to clean out files and, not quite—I have so much paper as I, you know, so as we run across things that we know would be good to be housed here, it's always a good to reminder to make sure that we get them transferred over, make sure they're in good hands.

DS:

Okay, well, if I could ever be of service to you, just let me know.

JH:

I will, same here, thanks so much.

DS:

Thanks Judi.

JH:

Appreciate you taking the time.

DS:

Well thank you for coming in.

***End of Recording***

© Southwest Collection/  
Special Collections Library