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Andrew Huse (AHu): Okay. Today is February 9th? Isn't that today?

Andy Honker (AHo): Tenth.

AHu: The 10th? Oh, man. Today is February 10th, 2005. My name is Andrew Huse, program assistant for the Florida Studies Center. Today, we continue a series of interviews in the Tampa campus library with USF faculty, student, staff, and alumni in order to commemorate 50 years of university history. Today, I'll be interviewing Andy Honker, who came to USF in 1969 as a resident instructor. And, currently, he just retired as head of campus recreation, right?

AHo: Right.

AHu: And we're very glad to have you here. Good morning.

AHo: Morning.

AHu: Well, I guess we'll just start with—tell us a little bit about your background before coming to USF. And when did you first, you know, hear about USF and decide to apply?

AHo: Well, I went to school—bachelor's degree at Penn State University in recreation and did a master's at University of Illinois, also in the recreation and park administration field. Spent three years in the public recreation and parks field in county systems in New York, Long Island, and Virginia and went back to Penn State as an instructor for a year and took some advanced courses there. Came to USF primarily, I think, through Ray King, who was the director of housing at that point in time. And they had a position as a resident instructor that was a little different than most of the resident instructor positions had. Normal setup was in charge of a residence hall or two and part-time teaching.

In this case, there was a third duty, which was working with the recreation and intramural programs with the residence halls. And I had two small residence halls, Zeta and Eta. [I] lived on

campus for almost two years, right across from the credit union building, basically in the RQA building. [I] taught some classes in physical education and also worked with intramurals and recreation. And so for me, it was an opportunity to have a combination of teaching and practical application. I was a practitioner and a teacher at the same time, and that was attractive, and it's one of the reasons I—probably the main reason I came.

AHu: Okay. What were your impressions when you first came on campus?

AHo: Well, campus was fairly new, you know. It had students on it since 1960, so only about nine years. More buildings than you'll see in the real early pictures, where everything was sand. But still a lot of—a lot of sandy areas. And, you know, a lot going on, and just an attractive place for starting to—it was starting to grow. It was kind of an attractive location because of the opportunities to sort of create programs, create traditions, create things that were just really evolving.

AHu: What about your impressions of Riverfront Park?

AHo: At that time? At that time, the park was fairly primitive, basically. Was subject to flooding in the fall or the, you know, toward the end of the rainy season when the water used to accumulate. We had only portable or—not flush toilets. There was no running water down there, basically. A lot of the facilities that are there now were not there. When we had canoes for rent, we took them down there on a trailer, and we didn't have the picnic pavilion. There were picnic tables, but there was no picnic pavilion. And a lot of things changed with the bypass canal, [which] controlled some of the flooding. And then, over time, we were able to make a lot of improvements there. The major improvements came when they widened Fletcher Avenue, and that was—there was a tradeoff there in lieu [of] contributions from the county for the right of way and the widening of Fletcher. And so the county parks department, along with the university, did most of the improvements there with the pavilion and the boat house and restroom buildings, and—

AHu: What year was that, roughly?

AHo: That, I don't know exactly. It was probably late '70s.

AHu: Okay.

AHo: Somewhere around there.

AHu: Now, one of the early things I remember associating with Riverfront Park and the research I've done, is River Riot.¹ Now, tell me about that event. How did that get started? I don't know if it was—you know, it got started in your department. But when's the first time you heard about it?

¹ River Riot was an annual music event at Riverfront Park sponsored by the student government.

AHo: No. It was done—it was really done through the student organizations and the programming office at the Marshall Center, what was then the University Center, as far as I remember. And it was a major—it was kind of a Woodstock kind of event.²

AHu: That's what the pictures look like.

AHo: It was sort of a carryover from the '60s, in a way. I don't think—I think it was in the early '70s, and it didn't go for too long. It had bands and a lot of people, and there were—the major problem was that the park really couldn't accommodate the parking, the traffic. Most of the people had to park up along Fletcher, which was two lanes and, you know, slopes on the side and not much parking area. And so there were a lot of traffic issues with it. They did a parachute jump or drop one near, you know? Somebody landed on a car instead of in the grass. I'm trying—I'm not—I don't remember all of the specifics but—

AHu: Oh, sure.

AHo: But the park didn't really have the facilities at that time, certainly, for that scale of event. I don't remember—

AHu: Sure, well, in the—

AHo: —how many people were there, but—

AHu: And I'm sure that the beer bottles were countless, too, at the end of an event like that. It looked like a wild and woolly bunch from the pictures in the *Oracle*. So when you first, you know, got into the department and everything, how was it set up? How many people did you work with? Who was your immediate supervisor?

AHo: Well, when I switched over in '71, I actually became a full—I had a full line over in physical education, recreation, and athletics, which was really a three-pronged department. It had elective physical education, it had what was then called recreational sports, and it had intercollegiate athletics. And the director, who was Dr. Richard Bowers—Dick Bowers—reported to Student Affairs, actually. And the physical education majors program, which was a separate program, was in the College of Education. And so the program I was teaching in—I became assistant professor in '71, and I had a full-time position over there and left the resident instructor position. That was teaching in the elective PE program, on a part-time basis, about a third-time, and about two-thirds in recreation and intramurals.

AHu: Okay.

AHo: That staff in the recreation side was pretty small. We had basically nobody that was, say, full-time—not—and not teaching. At that time, actually, everyone that was working in either recreation or athletics was teaching. All the original coaches were teaching part-time, and anybody that was working in intramurals and recreation was teaching part-time. And so for the

² In August 1969, the Woodstock Music and Art Fair took place on a dairy farm in Bethel, New York. Over half a million people attended.

first couple of years, there were three of us who were faculty members who were teaching and working with recreation and intramurals, and one person who was nine months and was not teaching, although she occasionally did teach a class when they needed somebody, as well.

In '72, Nelson Butler, who was the director in the recreation area at that time, moved over to the leisure studies program to teach and do research full-time. And I became the de facto director at that point, although, essentially, people's titles were more like assistant director for this program within that division of PE, recreational sports, and athletics. But, basically, I was in charge of the recreation area. And Nelson's position at that point was not replaced. And so, basically, for quite a few years after that, there were three of us, two of us that were teaching and one on the nine-month. And, initially, the two of us that were teaching, Woody Trice and myself, were on nine-month contracts as well. And then there were some part-time summer appointments, depending on summer funding [and] classes that were available.

We worked with a federal grant program, National Youth Sports Program, for a number of summers, as well. But that was the setup for, I guess, most of the '70s. I'm not sure exactly when things changed over, but as all those programs grew, the physical education program ended up being linked with the PE majors and that curriculum under the College of Education. And athletics and recreation became separate entities, both reporting to Student Affairs after a while.

AHu: Now, before we get too—

AHo: I was going to tell you, one of the interesting things, when those two programs were there, the two physical education programs, Dr. Louis Bowers was the chair of what they called "professional physical education." Richard Bowers was the chair of the other division of elective PE, rec sports, and athletics. In that PE building, on the second floor, there's one big reception counter, or there was at that point in time. Their offices were side by side, behind that reception counter. And there was a receptionist at that desk, and occasionally someone would come in and say, "I need to see Dr. Bowers." And the receptionist would say, "Which Dr. Bowers?" And they would say, "The one that's in charge of the PE program." And then she would say, "Which PE program?" So it was pretty confusing for people, for a moment.

AHu: Yeah. Yeah. Well, I noticed that early in my research, too. It's definitely a recipe for confusion, for people not in the know. Before we get too far away from your resident instructor experience, I just wanted to see what kind of war stories you had from your time in the dorms. I know that it was an interesting time in US history and in USF history. What was it like?

AHo: There were—that was still a time when there were some Vietnam War protests going on, '69, '70. They did set fire to the paper—the materials in the dumpster right by the apartment we were in, there by—near Epsilon, in what would be the west end of Epsilon Hall. And there were, you know, there were protests, demonstrations on campus and things, you know, nothing—

AHu: Sure.

AHo: —too radical that I remember. And it was interesting, having the combination of the residence halls and the teaching and the intramurals and whatnot. One of the residence halls

there, Zeta at that time, housed a lot of the soccer players, some of the guys from England and Ireland who were on the team at that time. They used to play on that little green space behind that apartment between the street and Zeta. They'd have these little pick-up games out there. They called it the "Zeta flats." So there was a soccer game going on. I have two sons—well, I have three sons, but two of them at that time, when we moved here—the third one was born here—but they were four and two. And so they used to ride their tricycles around on the sidewalks there. They knew all the students, and a lot of the students knew them by name. It was kind of funny. And the first summer, when there were no—there were no students in the residence halls there, in the summer of '70. And my oldest son was all upset, because he said, "Where are my students?" They had a great time with them, so it was fun in general. Yeah.

AHu: So you probably got to know some of your students pretty well because you'd have them in class, and then you'd have them at the residence hall.

AHo: Yeah, there were some students that I would have in class and that were in the residence halls right in that area, and then also may have been in the intramural program, because one of the ideas there was to have someone on the housing staff who was, you know, promoting some of the intramural programs in the residence halls. And at that time, there was quite a heavy participation with the residence halls. All the residence halls were more in the older style, with shared—large bathrooms shared or, you know, those eight-person suites that were in Andros, so that people weren't quite as isolated and used to having their own room and, you know. Probably nobody had computers to, you know—

AHu: Oh, sure.

AHo: —be locked in on as soon as they got back from class, so yeah.

AHu: Definitely. What about—one of the big issues at the time seemed to be recreational drug use, and it was pretty controversial. You remember anything on campus at the time or in the halls?

AHo: I really don't. I never had any direct experience with cases of that in the two years I was in the residence halls.

AHu: Okay.

AHo: [I] don't really have any stories about that.

AHu: What about—did the power ever go out? It seemed like there was a tradition in the '60s, that whenever the power went out the residence halls would all empty and there would be some kind of chaos that would ensue.

AHo: Well, the residence halls usually emptied, you know, when the power went out. I don't remember, but it triggered the alarm. People would set fire alarms off, you know, in non-emergencies, and the residence halls would empty, and that was always fun, too. But no, I don't remember any large party things on there.

AHu: Sure.

AHo: Of course, that's almost 35 years ago.

AHu: True.

AHo: So I'm not sure.

AHu: Before we leave the dorms, any other war stories? Any pranks you remember or anything like that? Besides the fire alarms.

AHo: No, not really.

AHu: Okay. Now, you mentioned intramurals and pickup games and things like that. It really seems like you got here at the university when a lot of that was really alive and kicking because we didn't have that much organized athletics at the time. And there was even different faculty teams who played against each other. You remember anything about this?

AHo: Well, there were a—in certain sports, there were some faculty and staff teams, and there still are. I mean, there's still some faculty and staff members—

AHu: Sure.

AHo: —participating in a variety of different activities over there. There was a particular faculty unit, or a team that called themselves “Faculty,” that played in flag football, what was then touch football, actually. [They] played in basketball too, I believe. In particular, those two. And for a little while, we actually had a separate softball faculty-staff league with six or seven teams, early on there in the '70s, for a while. But participation in terms of the number of students on campus and enrolled at that time was pretty high. The alternative, you know—there probably were fewer students with cars. And transportation arrangements—a little more isolated, probably. And facilities were very good for that time, particularly outdoor facilities.

We were still short on indoor court space, particularly when basketball started, because there really were only two indoor courts in the whole gymnasium building. And there were four outdoor courts. So basketball, for instance—most, you know, two-thirds of the games, at least, got played outside. So windy days were not very popular for basketball if you had outside shooters, for instance. But the turf facilities and softball and football, soccer fields, and tennis were good. Outdoor racquetball—the only racquetball courts—there were six three-wall courts over by—north of Andros, near the police station.

In fact, before I came, before the gymnasium building opened up—I think the gym opened in '60—1966 or '67. I'm not sure which of those years. But, prior to that, the PE classes really were taught outside. The old Argos pool was the teaching facility, and over at Andros on the other side of the street, there was—where the golf practice facilities were, there was also

originally a shelter, a covered shelter there, where some of the fitness classes took place and other classes were taught outside.

AHu: Okay. What about—what do you remember about the beginning of the basketball team? Actually, getting—I mean, I know that you probably weren't intimately involved.

AHo: No.

AHu: But was there any particular fallout for you?

AHo: Well, spacewise, because of course, you know, they started with a freshman team. Practices and games were in the gymnasium, in what we call the "upper gym" in the current—in the rec center now. And, of course, later on, we had women's basketball and volleyball and all of those, prior to the Sun Dome. The Sun Dome, I think, opened in 1980. And so at the time when we had athletic teams using the gym and intramurals using the gym and classes using gym, the scheduling was very tight with those two courts, basically. You know, one use—it was either teaching, or it was recreational, or it was athletics, because you couldn't really have a practice and an intramural game going on, or an intramural game and a class. So that was a very tight schedule. Like I said, a lot of the intramural activities at that point were outside. And during the seasons when we would have intramural basketball or intramural volleyball, there was virtually no free open rec time in the gym, except for Saturday and Sunday times. Sometimes on Saturday and Sunday, but other than that, there was no open rec.

AHu: Okay.

AHo: So that was a big change to have first the Sun Dome, and then also the addition to the rec center. The second gym.

AHu: At what point—do you remember there being a point that, you know, arriving at USF and working for a while, and saying to yourself, All right this works, you know. I'm going to stay, you know. I mean—

AHo: Well, I don't know. The people were very good to work with right from the start. The—you know, like I said before, the opportunity with a relatively new university—opportunities for growth, for program growth, for facility growth were good. And, of course, the climate was hard to beat. [At a] certain point in time, my kids started school, and they were doing well in school. It's a good time just to stay around.

AHu: Oh yeah. Now, before we kind of jumped back and filled in some things, you became head of recreation and—so, what was, you know, what were your responsibilities, and what were some of the first things you remember kind of tackling? What were some of the projects over the course of the next, you know, 10 years or so? We talked about Riverfront Park and the widening of Fletcher. What were some of the other big issues going on?

AHo: Well, it was always a challenge in those days because of the small staff, and the growth in enrollment, and growth in the programs, and demand for programs, the numbers of intramurals

participants, the number of people wanting to use this facility or that facility. Probably, the biggest challenges were trying to accommodate the demand with the available space. You know, the scheduling was an issue. We also started getting increased demand for community events on the facilities, you know, in a variety of things because of no comparable facilities available. We did the statewide Special Olympics for quite a number of years, before they started rotating that and moving it around the state.³ That was a large event every year. And a lot of other community requests, some of which we couldn't accommodate for ongoing use, for youth sports and things like that, which we just couldn't do without displacing student use—

AHu: Sure.

AHo: —which we didn't want to do. So we had, and still have, a large number of student employees who did, and still do, an awful lot of very responsible pieces of work in the recreation area. At that point in time, I could say as we had only three professional positions. We've had probably—usually six or eight key student intramural supervisors who work with the intramural programs, and then we had another couple of dozen, probably, people who worked on facilities at various times, lifeguards for the pools, and people working at the park and all.

At this point in time, including the maintenance staff—and, of course, that came later on—there are 23 or 24 full-time people and about 200 student employees in campus recreation. So it's, you know, quite a difference. We used to have a student, on those few hours when the gym was open, checking IDs to come into the gym, the basketball part of the gym or to the small weight room that was down in the basement. Now, of course, we've got a building that's open something like 105 hours a week, and they're open—open gym time there, so we're monitoring the access to the whole building. We have people teaching nine-credit group exercise classes, we've got lifeguards, we've got people working on the floor of the weight room or the fitness area, and the park has expanded and everything has grown. The outdoor facilities—we have people monitoring the outdoor facilities, and so it's quite a different setup, and a much larger setup.

And initially, as things grew, of course, the program needs of all three of those programs—PE, recreation, and athletics—all grew for time and space and offices and everything else, and so we had—a lot of those same needs were shared by those other two programs, and [there were] a lot of cooperative ventures to try to make things work until there were enough facilities. And so that, all of that, took some time. The field areas, for instance, initially, the—while there were six intramural fields out there for football and soccer, as there are now in the two terraces. But initially, they were Bahia grass, and so there was no irrigation. And so sometimes they had grass, sometimes they didn't. A lot of times there were sand spurs, and so—getting those converted to Bermuda, getting lights. Softball fields initially didn't have lights. You know, getting additional fields so that we wouldn't be wearing down the same fields, sport after sport, during the whole intramural season. So, you know, facility growth [was] probably one of the biggest things over that time frame to accommodate the demand.

AHu: Well, and today it could be dark outside and you could be hearing the cheering of a game going on.

³ The Special Olympics is an international competition, modeled on the Olympic Games, in which mentally and physically handicapped athletes compete.

AHo: Sure, sure. Sure, we had games going on until 11 o'clock, almost midnight, depending on the numbers of people.

AHu: So from the beginning, and it sounds like still today to a pretty large extent, you've really had to lean on the student help to fill in all the gaps, right?

AHo: Student employees, like I said, did, and still do, very responsible work. I mean, we have—particularly early on in the '70s there, and early '80s, we probably had students doing things that full-time people were doing at other universities.

AHu: Sure.

AHo: I would say we'd be doing all the scheduling, they would be doing—you know, with only a few professional staff and people with other responsibilities. You know, we couldn't always have [a] professional staff member there when every activity was going on. It just, you know, it wouldn't have—wouldn't have worked. [We] couldn't put in that kind of—those hours. And so we had intramural supervisors who were basically in charge, and still do to some degree, in certain time frames. Even though we have more staff, there's still strong reliance on people to be in charge of activities that are going on, to open and close facilities, and that's students right now that open and close the building, basically—the rec center over there—and call for assistance when needed. Same with the Riverfront Park, [which is] primarily student-operated.

And so one of the most rewarding things over the time has been to see those student workers and know how much they gained from working in those positions, and then having them come back years later. We've got a lot of them out in the field, actually, in the recreation field at universities and other programs. And even those people who aren't—not working in recreation—I mean, there are people out there who are engineers and lawyers and working in all kinds of fields who still come back, and when they're on campus they'll come by to see us and share stories about what they're doing.

AHu: Well, yeah, and taking that experience with them, that—you know being—so much responsibility being placed in their hands, then being able to go someplace else and say, "Oh, I can do that."

AHo: Well, we did—we had two employees—there was a session that Eric Hunter actually did at one of our state workshops, a professional state association, that involved two of our alums that were in their own different fields who came and did a part of that session, you know, relating how things that they learned or had to do, in dealing with people in particular, with our program, you know, helped them in what they're now doing. And so that's always neat.

AHu: So, really, over the course of your duties, you really spent a lot of time on students.

AHo: Sure, yeah.

AHu: I mean, probably as much if not more than other staff or faculty members, right?

AHo: Well, it's hard to say. Probably, in some ways with larger numbers.

AHu: Okay.

AHo: In one way or another, directly or indirectly.

AHu: Well, sure.

AHo: And so it's—then the more administrative responsibilities I got as we grew, the less face-to-face contact. But when you have a facility like the rec center that has over half a million users every year, you know, two to three thousand people a day—and that includes of course, faculty, staff—why, you know that there's an impact there and you're making an impact on a lot of different people. I taught—well, I guess regularly about the first 20 years. And so the last 15 I've, you know, I've done classes here and there, just lectures or whatever, but not been teaching on a regular basis. So the number of students I've seen in the classroom in the last 15 years are a lot less than the first 20 years.

AHu: Because I see you were made associate professor in '79.

AHo: Right.

AHu: So you were still very much in the teaching part of things at the time? For the next 10 years or so?

AHo: Oh, yeah, sure. Oh, yes. Yeah, I was part of the whole 10-year process and all of that.

AHu: Okay.

AHo: Up until—well, I say probably the late '80s.

AHu: Well, you know, the secretary, Marian, printed out an article about your recent retirement and everything, and, you know, there's some very great praises heaped upon you. One of them, Edith saying that you just had this special demeanor, as far as for students to work with you. If you had to answer a question about that, what is it that it takes to—that it requires to really work well with students and everything, especially for so long?

AHo: Well, I don't know. I just sort of tried to kind of take people where they are—who they are—and work with them from there. And obviously, [I] always had certain standards and expectations for students in working for us. But we always realized that these are students, and many of them are 18, 19 years old. Some of them aren't. You know, [it's] a wide range of students at USF, obviously. But, over the years, I can remember having calls from faculty or staff about a facility being late being opened [or] a lifeguard not showing up on time or whatever.

I would frequently ask those people, “Well, do you ever have students not show up on time or miss your class or be late with papers?” You've got to figure out these are the same people that

you have in class, and if they're not perfect in class, they're probably not going to be perfect in a work environment, especially if they've not worked much before, and especially if they've got other things going on. Because mentally, they've got all kinds of things going on in their lives. And so we've tried to work with students and try to do that in a very positive way, and try to use them in positions that they're comfortable in and want to be in.

AHu: So, what were some of the other changes, some of the other issues that came up over time? Obviously, the Sun Dome relieved a lot of pressure, as far as space was concerned. You know, what were just some of the other changes going on around, during the '80s even, when it comes to facilities and your duties?

AHo: Well, the biggest challenge there, probably, in the '80s, as we started working toward trying to get more of a designated recreation center kind of facility. As I've said before, as programs grew, it became increasingly difficult to share space and time, particularly between our recreation and athletics programs, because [of] the same time frame in terms of, you know, late afternoon and evening, in terms of the peak times. I mean, we have—the recreation users are in the rec center all day long, and they're—on the staff side, there's a concentration of users that [go] early morning before work, lunch time, and then after work. But students are coming and going all the time, but it still peaks after three o'clock. Three to 9:00, 3:00 to 10:00, is the peak, you know, the peak times of the students, and those are the same times when athletics needs facilities.

And so even with the Sun Dome and the growth with that, it became hard to share space again, because the Sun Dome also, besides athletics, set up other events, concerts, and needs to rent the facility. And so the recreational courts there are—we're on the second level, and, of course, they had to move seats back and forth, and so, you know, it became—as they got busier with events and athletics growth, it got harder to take. If there was one night a week open in there, or two nights, you know, a Monday and a Thursday, it became very hard to use those, logistically, because the seats had to go back and forth, and, you know, all the labor and the time to do that just for one night at a time. And so it became tougher to schedule that.

And we've—of course, there became pressure for different kinds of facilities, fitness facilities, weight training, conditioning, with all the growth in that area. And we had almost no space for that, basically. And so it became a challenge to get funding to do that, and, of course, that came from capital improvement trust-fund moneys and student fee moneys, same kind of fees that were used to do the Sun Dome initially. And then sometime there, late '80s, about 1990 maybe, we finally got the proposal approved. And the auxiliary gym at the Sun Dome was done at the same time as the rec center expansion there and covering the entryways. So we had hoped to probably get more space than that.

But at the same time, the auxiliary gym there freed up space as well, because when the Sun Dome had an event, they used to always—the teams were always over in the other gym, but now they've got the auxiliary gym. And so we would've liked to have had about 9 or 10 million dollars to expand instead of four and a half. We got about 45,000 square feet added to the building at that point, and it was the kind of space we needed with the large fitness area, with some additional aerobics space, and renovating one of the rooms in the old part of the building,

and adding the other gym. But there's still a need for more. I mean we're small now, compared to facilities that have been done recently.

AHu: Well, one of the things I wanted to ask, too, is kind of the proportion of recreation to athletics. When you first arrived it seems, like, athletics is pretty low. Athletics was low and recreation was, well, relatively high, and I guess both really expanded a lot. But with athletics really taking off during the '90s, late '80s and the '90s, it seems like the—

AHo: Well, there was actually—when I started, there was actually a written set of priorities, one, two, three, with the classes first—with the PE classes—and the recreational were second, and athletics was third. It was a one, two, three priority.

AHu: What would you say the priorities are now?

AHo: Well, in many ways, they've just kind of—recreation stayed in the middle, the other two have kind of flipped. You know, in terms of the physical activity space and the—that, obviously, and the kinds of activities, and the demand that comes with a large Division I athletic program. Now, that's a whole different case. And then the compatibility of the teaching and the recreation facility is much greater than the compatibility of the recreation and athletics because of the time frames.

AHu: Sure.

AHo: There are some issues still with drawing the scheduled classes, and you know. But most of those are being done between 9:00 and 3:00 sort of time slot. But evening classes, you know, or if it's squeezed with some six o'clock classes that need activity space, and that still goes on. From a personal standpoint, I've always—and I was—let me say, I was an athlete at Penn State. I played varsity soccer at Penn State. It was a very different intercollegiate scene at that time, in terms of how everything went. And so I've always been focused on the participant side. That's why I'm in the recreation field, because the focus is on the participant and not on the spectator or the watcher, but somebody being involved, and actively involved, and having the benefit of that activity, basically.

And so I've always felt that the recreation programs and facilities and space, and providing for people to, you know, do it on their own, were primary, really. And you could just look at the numbers of direct participants. And, of course, you know, over time, the thing that really drives athletic programs now—again, my estimation is not offering it for the participants so much as for the community and the interests of the larger, larger community. It's much more driven by factors outside the university than it is by providing that activity for the student's opportunity to participate.

AHu: Sure. Just like—

AHo: Which is what it used to be.

AHu: When this, like—

AHo: When I was in—when I was a college athlete.

AHu: Well, and that so much of the funding has to come from outside, too.

AHo: Right.

AHu: Which is—

AHo: It's impossible for students to provide that funding.

AHu: So the beginning and the end product are both outside-driven?

AHo: Yeah.

AHu: One of the—I think one of the more fascinating questions we can get into is—and which is why I've saved it sort of towards the end, but how has recreation and student expectations changed since you came? I mean, we've already talked about there weren't PCs [personal computers] to bolt people down in their rooms.

AHo: Right. Yeah.

AHu: You know, so many things seem to have changed. Of course, people have always pretty much been into fitness. But it's really snowballed in the last 30 years. So, what would you say made the changes?

AHo: Well, I think the major thing, and it's basically a change for the better, really, is when I first got into the field, most of the focus on programming and moneys and facilities were focused on group activities, organized programs, you know, that in most cases took somebody leading them, or a team or a referee or something. You know, it might not have been necessarily a team activity, but it was something that, you know, okay, we're going to provide this program. And, over time, as schedules and whatnot—I mean, the percentage of students—I haven't looked at any research, but I'm sure the percentage of students that work now, compared to the percentage of students who used to work in the '70s, is far greater.

And between people's work schedules and class schedules, they expect, if they're interested in fitness or recreation or whatever, they expect things to kind of be available when they're available. And so the whole idea of what we used to call sort of "informal recreation," just having facilities and equipment available for people, is much more important than it used to be. And that's one of the reasons why over time we, you know, we changed—I asked for the name to be changed from "recreational sports" to "campus recreation," because a large amount of what's being done is not sports in a traditional—what you would normally think of as a sports sense. All of our group exercise classes, I mean, it's not a competitive event. It's not a contest, you know. It's a contest maybe with yourself in improvement, perhaps. And so those activities—people wanting to swim laps when they have the time. People want to lift weights, get on a treadmill, go to a group exercise class at—

AHu: Sure, rent a canoe.

AHo: —at 10 o'clock at night. Rent a canoe, go paddle, go backpacking, go camping. All those kinds of things. Which is positive, because all research basically indicates, you know, if you're going to stay at it, you're going to find something that you can do. And so you need to find something that's available, that's not going to take nine other people to play that sport, you know, play a game of basketball or whatever. You know, two on two. Basketball is probably much more of an opportunity than a full-time, full-court game's going to be.

You know, once you get to a certain age, you won't find people, you know, a whole group to play softball, probably. Which you might play—find one other person to play tennis or racquetball or to spot you for your workout or whatever. Or you can go by yourself and somebody will spot you. So I think that's probably the—and that of course means different kinds of facilities, probably larger facilities, means they're open more hours. And so that's different.

AHu: Yeah, I thought it was very perceptive to start by talking about how much less time students have, you know, with them working a lot, et cetera. That they really have to try to pick and choose those opportunities.

AHo: Well, and they also get—they're used to much more of an instantaneous kind of feedback.

AHu: Okay.

AHo: I mean, the Internet doesn't shut down. You know, the iPod's available whenever you turn it on, your cellphones—you know. Everything else is, Oh, give it to me now. In the future—you know, they've been talking for years about a 24/7 kind of campus. You know, and increasing the number of residents, et cetera. And when you do that, those expectations are different. And so they're higher, in terms of having things available.

AHu: So when did you suggest that name be changed to “campus recreation,” approximately?

AHo: Probably late '70s, 1980, or something.

AHu; Oh, okay. That early?

AHo: If you look at a couple of publication things on there, they come from some conference presentations that were done about that time, where one of the things I was trying to do with our national organization was look at that broader kind of focus in terms of nomenclature and all that. And I think that's been very, very common. If you pick up the directory from our national organization now, it's still called the National Intramural Recreational Sports Association. But you look at the department names in there, you know, compared to what they were 20 years ago, you'll see a whole different set of names.

AHu: Well—

AHo: Broader kinds of names.

AHu: It's almost as if, too, USF kind of picked up on the way things were when it opened and over time had to change. That it wasn't all about organization, you know, organized—

AHo: Right.

AHu: But let me see, so as you get into the '90s, more and more administrative duties are pressing, correct?

AHo: Yeah, we grew, and then also we changed as part of that—when we pretty much separated out the departments, so that athletics was a separate entity and recreation was separate. We also, at some point there, about that same time, split up the maintenance operations and differentiated the athletic facilities. You know, outdoor maintenance I'm speaking of primarily. So that the Sun Dome and athletics basically had maintenance of the athletic facilities: the varsity baseball field, the soccer stadium and track, the varsity tennis courts, the women's softball field, et cetera.

And then the rest of the outdoor facilities, including the Riverfront Park and the intramural fields, the park course exercise trail, and all those kinds of things. The pools—all the pools. And that staff was reassigned. Basically, we picked up that maintenance staff. That in itself was a big change just because of the number of full-time positions, all the different kinds of issues that come with maintenance, both indoor and outdoor maintenance. So that took some time and, you know, work with the human resource side—with the personnel of that. And then, of course, our staff grew with the opening of the building in '95. We picked up some additional staff because of the new building operation.

AHu: And about what time was everything broken up?

AHo: Well, I'm not—that evolved over a few years.

AHu: Okay.

AHo: I'm not sure exactly when the maintenance—when we did the maintenance part of that. Probably early '90s, right around that, you know.

AHu: Okay. So this is like a late '80s, early '90s process here?

AHo: Mm-hm. The building opened in January of '95. It, of course, was approved and under construction and designed and all, for about three years, probably before that. And it was shortly before the building was done, I think, that we—it's probably early '90s, I think, that we did the maintenance part of that. But the other department alignment, I'm not sure. See, at one point, athletics reported to Student Affairs, and that changed over to the president's office farther down the road. So I don't—without going back to delve into the archives. Why, I'm sure you could find that.

AHu: So your duty, specifically—you weren't doing as much teaching?

AHo: Right.

AHu: And so it was these kinds of things that were demanding more of your time? The setup of the new building, breaking up of the maintenance, and working with HR?

AHo: Right.

AHu: How did things change after the new building, in '95? Did you notice much of a change or—

AHo: Well, just the—having a large facility that was always in use. And, again, there [were] maintenance issues with that, although physical plant still does a good bit of the routine maintenance. The rec staff, however, does basically most of the pool there, the special kinds of things like all the floors in the gym and the aerobics rooms, and the cleaning of those, the mats, all the fitness equipment, the routine maintenance and whatnot, and contracted out for parts and all that, on all those machines and things. So those are not in—physical plant does maintenance that they would do in other buildings. You know, restrooms and the routine kinds of things, the office areas. And so that put another increase on attention to things that—you know, if you've got that many users every day of the week, you're going to have a lot of things to kind of keep up with. And, again, another increase in the scheduling, and just coordination of the different kinds of things that are going on.

AHu: Sure.

AHo: So that brought on a fitness coordinator position, you know, right before we opened the building, another whole group of student employees in that area.

AHu: Well, and it seems like, too—I came to campus in '95, and the facilities there were just booming. I mean, you'd go there at 8:00 at night and it's just full. So, really, the student body was really primed for this, it seems like, because as soon as it opened—am I right?

AHo: Sure, sure.

AHu: It just really took off? So that must have been encouraging.

AHo: Oh, sure. Well, and it was also—it was good to see that what we had added were things that people were going to come and use.

AHu: Yeah, definitely.

AHo: Which we thought we knew that, but till you see it, you know?

AHu: Sure. You're never, never quite sure. So, what about, you know—take us up to your retirement here. What else went on recently? Got a few minutes left.

AHo: Oh, gosh. Well, I don't know. We're still looking at expansion needs on that building, and hopefully in a couple of years we'll be in the pipeline for adding maybe another 50,000 square feet to that. Adding some things that we don't have, like an indoor running track, perhaps, that would perhaps be elevated. Offer an opportunity for people to jog and walk out of the thunderstorms and out of the sun. We have people who come in the indoor pool because they never use the outdoor pools during the sunny times, because of exposure to the sun. And so that, expanding the fitness area and some of the other areas that need more space. So that's something that hopefully will be in line down the road. Outdoor facilities probably as well. There probably will be some changes there. It looks as though there'll be some athletics with—they're expanding their outdoor facilities and maybe repositioning some of the recreation ones in that shift. So, you know, there's been talk on that for a while. A couple of years, actually.

AHu: Any plans for Riverfront Park?

AHo: The park was just—recently, the ropes course was overhauled. There are some new elements down there and some replacement of some of the other elements. That was done this fall. I'm not sure if everything's finished or not. Been out of the picture from November 1st. There's always just—it's hard to know exactly what expectations are going to be and what students are going to want to have available.

And, like I said, the more resident students there are and the more traditional-age students there are, the more demand there will be. And not that nontraditional students don't participate, because they come on their own as well. I mean, we've got people, you know, got retirees in there, and senior citizen students that use the building as well as 18- to 22-year-olds. But just because of time commitments, people that are going to school part-time on Monday and Wednesday nights are not going to be out here as often as people living on campus.

AHu: Sure.

AHo: And that'll always be a challenge with trying to keep up. You know, as—same situation with the Marshall Center. Having a big enough, nice enough facility to accommodate the needs of current students.

AHu: So, usually, in passing, I like to ask a couple of final questions. So one of them is—there's kind of two sides to it. What was the best thing or the best time in your job? And what was the toughest thing and the most challenging thing, or specific time, or incident?

AHo: Hmm. Toughest thing, probably, was getting the final approvals on actually securing the new recreation center funding and construction of that project. The needs were such on both ends, between recreation and athletics, that, in fact, at one point in time there was a proposal that all the new facilities be added to the Sun Dome.

AHu: Wow.

AHo: And all the money be spent there, and that there be a fitness area adjacent to the Sun Dome and all that. Which we knew was probably not going to function very well.

AHu: Yeah.

AHo: And in fact, the University of Florida's O'Connell Center—at the same time, their students were providing funding for some new facilities up there and were specifically saying that they didn't want them around the O'Connell Center, because they couldn't use what was there. And so that was kind of a tough time there, you know, making sure that those facilities were secured. And the decision finally was made to kind of do a combination of projects there, and do additions to both facilities, which, you know—like you said, from the day it was opened, it's been heavily used. And you couldn't have accommodated that—I mean, you couldn't do aerobics classes when there's a concert in the Sun Dome. You couldn't use an aerobics facility that's, you know—

AHu: Sure.

AHo: —and have a concert going on next door in the same space, basically.

AHu: Sure. For the crowd and the noise both.

AHo: So, I mean, that was probably—that was kind of a tough, tough stretch there till that got done. One of the best of times, actually, was to see that project completed and opened, you know.

AHu: Both all wrapped up in one.

AHo: And just—yeah. Yeah, it was kind of, you know—it was a Dickens thing: It was the best of times and the worst of times.⁴

AHu: Oh yeah.

AHo: But that would stand out in terms of finally seeing that happen and seeing how many people were coming through the doors all the time.

AHu: Oh yeah.

AHo: And just, over time, whether it was student users or faculty-staff users or whatever program, you know, getting feedback. You know, seeing those people as they're coming in to work out or whatever, when they were playing intramural football or whatever they were doing. You know, getting feedback from people about how much they appreciated what was available.

AHu: Well, that new recreation center, too, that opened in '95 seems like just the culmination of so many different things. One of which being, the same reason why you changed the name to “campus recreation,” that people wanted to do things that weren't structured. You know, they wanted to come and work out when they had time, et cetera. So it seems like a culmination of a lot different trends and certainly a lot of effort on your part.

⁴ A reference to the opening line of *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens.

AHo: Yeah, one of the things that—as I said at start—what attracted me to come here was the combination of teaching and practice.

AHu: Sure.

AHo: And one of the things that I've been involved with, both in teaching and some writing and whatnot over time, has been that translation of theory to practice and comparison of theories about why people play, and what makes it satisfying for them, and how things are organized and practiced. And so when you find that, hey, that worked, and people were rewarded and satisfied from the way we set that up—

AHu: Sure.

AHo: —then that's rewarding.

AHu: Well, we've got just a few seconds left, so I just want to say that it was rewarding for you to come here today. Thanks for spending the time with us.

AHo: Thank you, appreciate it.

End of interview.