

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY  
ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

YSU History

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Penny Pavelko

Interviewed

By

Sam DiRocco, II

On

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SUBJECT: YSU History

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P: This is an interview with Penny Pavelko, for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program, on YSU History, by Sam DiRocco, II, at Leetonia K-12 Student Campus, on March 25, 2004.

D: Ms. Pavelko, if we could start off maybe talking about where and when you were born, and what you can remember from your childhood.

P: I was born in 1948 in Warren, Ohio. I only lived there for two years, then we moved to Austintown, Ohio. I went to Austintown schools until the end of sixth grade. I was with the first group of students to go to Lloyd School, the first elementary school built in Austintown. I went there for six years. At that point my family moved to North Jackson and I graduated from Jackson-Milton High School in 1966. I always knew I was going to go to college, and I decided in ninth grade to be a math teacher. I was the daughter of a steel worker. My mother was a practical nurse, and I never considered anything except going to Youngstown University. It was not a state university at the time.

D: Do you have any siblings?

P: I have three younger sisters. I was the oldest so I was going to be the first in my family to attend college. I never considered anything else. I just knew I could afford to go there, or hoped I could afford to go there. People in our area just really stayed home.

D: So your mom was a practicing nurse but she had no college education?

P: She was a practical nurse. She had gone to school for one year to be a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), and she had done that when I was in fifth grade. I had been very impressed that she went back to school. At the time there were three children. I was in fifth grade. My number two sister was in second grade, and the youngest at the time was only a baby. A fourth sister was born years later. But I was very impressed that mom went to school having three children.

D: Can you take me back to one of the neighborhoods that you lived in? Or describe some of the activities that you did as a young child? Some of the games or hobbies, or describe your house or the neighborhood friends?

P: I lived on Route 46 in Austintown. The house is still there. My parents had it built new and they did a lot of the work themselves. I was very young but I remember being put to work pounding nails in two-by-fours, they told me I was helping build the house. One of the earliest things I can remember is the big snow of 1950. I don't remember that he was sick, I just remember that he wasn't home. But when we got up that morning we didn't have a garage, and the car was under snow. The neighbor had come with his tractor to plow out the driveway, and he couldn't even see the car and he had piled more snow on top of the car. My mother cried, and that's really what I remember is my mother crying because she couldn't get the car out to go to the hospital. That's really all I understood, but I do remember lots of snow. So that was one of my very first memories.

D: What were some of the hobbies or games?

P: The neighborhood I grew up in was almost all boys. So I was a tomboy when I was growing up. We played lots of cops and robbers, and cowboys and Indians. Those were the games that we really played. We played a lot of badminton and kick-the-can. There were some trees in the neighborhood and we climbed trees and rode bicycles.

D: Was the neighborhood ethnically diverse?

P: No it was not. I remember not having television at home. I can remember when the first family in the neighborhood got a TV and invited the whole neighborhood over and sitting and watching the one TV show.

D: So the neighborhood was pretty close-knit, pretty tight.

P: Yes it was.

D: Now you made note that when your mother went back and took her classes that it was inspiring or influential for you?

P: I was very impressed because none of my friends' parents had a college education. Almost everybody's dad at that time worked in the mills. The whole area worked in the mills. My mom made this decision. She had always wanted to be a nurse. I didn't realize that until she told me then. It was a one-year program and she became a Licensed Practical Nurse. She retired as an emergency room nurse from St. Elizabeth Hospital.

D: Did you have any influential teachers when you were growing up? You said that in grade nine you were leaning towards mathematics. Was there someone who inspired you?

P: Yes. I didn't realize it at the time but it was my fifth-grade teacher, Ruth Shea, at Lloyd Elementary. She is the person that planted the seeds to make me a math teacher. And for years I wanted to let Ruth know that, and it was maybe five years ago I finally sat down and wrote her a letter. Then three years ago I wrote to her again, we met for lunch, and had a marvelous day. She showed me some old pictures. She remembered everything. She remembered where I sat in the classroom and who sat next to me. I was very impressed that she would remember that. It was fun because when I knew her I don't even know if I knew her name was Ruth, but I was very comfortable calling her by her first name. And then sadly that fall she died. I was just traumatized that she died, but it was also so nice that we had a wonderful day together. The other person who really made the deciding factor was in ninth grade, Art Mazarro, at Jackson-Milton. I loved his style of teaching, and he just made such an impression on me, and I knew then that I wanted to be a math teacher. Interestingly my first decision to be a teacher in seventh and eighth grade was history. I still am kind of a history buff. But I think I was afraid there was going to be a surplus of history teachers, and I was very good in math. I was so impressed with Art Mazzaro's teaching, and that was the deciding thing.

D: Very good. Now if we could just real quick talk about your father and his profession. You said he worked in the steel mills.

P: Yes.

D: Were the majority of the fathers in your neighborhood, or at least the people that you went to school with, did they work in the mills as well? Could you maybe describe some experiences that your dad went through or things that you remember about your father in the mills?

P: Sure. Most of the fathers worked in the mills, and I'm sure now that there were not the benefits that there are now. There were a lot of strikes at the time, and there were times when they were laid off. I guess I didn't realize at the time that we were kind of poor. It's just I didn't know that. We weren't *poor* poor, but I didn't realize how tight things were. I tease my mom and say we ate a lot of macaroni and cheese back in that time. I mean

when they would be laid off or on strike there were not any kinds of benefits that there are today.

D: Did your father work in the mills his whole life?

P: Yes.

D: Was he still working in the mills when they started to shut down in the seventies, or was he already retired?

P: No, my dad had left the mills at that time.

D: Now being the oldest and having the desire to go to Youngstown University, let's move into that area if we could. Describe, if you can, how or when you knew for sure that you were going to be attending college.

P: I just always knew I was going to go to college. I mean, probably in grade school, and when I think back now, that's pretty amazing because my parents didn't go to college. In fact, other than my teachers, I don't think I knew anybody who went to college. None of my aunts or uncles did. I just always knew I was. I really don't know what my parents' reaction was. Was it "How are we going to afford to do this?" They encouraged me.

D: And when you first attended your major was...?

P: It was math.

D: And no hesitation with that?

P: No.

D: Did you commute to campus?

P: Yes I did.

D: Could you maybe describe a typical day for Penny at the time?

P: You might want to put in there my name was Penny Laakso, and it was often pronounced Lock-so. I did live at home. I did not have my own car yet. So I rode with friends and I would pay them gas money. Of course gas was a lot cheaper then. I worked part-time all through college at the local grocery store in North Jackson, it was Seem's Golden Dawn at the time, and I worked there for four years. Parking was a horrible, horrible problem at the time at Youngstown University. There were some gravel lots. Maybe there was enough for two hundred cars. So we parked out on the streets, because if you could get in a lot it cost ten cents. That was money that we didn't want to spend, so we would park out on the streets and walk several blocks to go to class.

D: Now you copied off a map for me and I will include that with the transcript, but could you describe what campus looked like for you your first year?

P: Yes. It was right in the middle of the city, and obviously it's still in the middle of the city, but there were city streets that ran through, and there were cars driving through all the time. More than that, some of our classes were in old houses. One of the remaining houses that you could still see would be Wick-Pollack that eventually became the hotel. But there were other houses that were not as pretty as that. There was one, we called it the "President's house," and I believe at one time years before I was there that President Jones actually lived there, but I'm not certain of that. When I was a student that was where the president's office was, and we continued to call it the President's house. It was on Wick Avenue. I believe it was right next to Butler Art.

D: And just to be clear the years that you attended Youngstown University were...?

P: 1966 is when I started, and graduating in '70.

D: And the switch from private to public, could you maybe describe that?

P: The switch took place in 1967, when it became Youngstown State University. And one of the nicest things to students at the time was our tuition had been - we had been on semesters at Youngstown University. Our tuition at that time was four hundred and fifty dollars a semester for a grand total of nine hundred dollars a year. When it became a state university we went to quarters, and the tuition I'm pretty sure was one-hundred and fifty dollars, and then there were some fees on top of that, but I believe it stayed under two-hundred dollars a quarter for the year. And it remained that until I graduated in 1970.

D: Was there a campus bookstore?

P: There was a campus bookstore. That building is not there anymore. It wasn't a bookstore like we have now that sold lots of sweatshirts and things, it really just sold books. It eventually had a few tee shirts or something. It was by a faculty parking lot. Let me try and show you on the map here. It was behind Jones Hall. Central Hall, and it was just a little end of this building right here. It was just really kind of a walk-through thing, and you waited in line big time to get your books. A new book at that time was about ten dollars, and I could document that because I actually peeled off some of the stickers and put them on the fronts of my books.

D: Did you buy the books new? Did you share the books with some of your fellow classmates? How did you go about that?

P: We would try to get used books. The bookstore once in a while had places, but there were vendors that came in and sold books. We students formed a network of trading books and I remember with friends taking literature courses, you did not have to take them in a certain order. So I will take 501 and you take 502, and then the next quarter we'll trade all of the paperbacks. We did a lot of that so we could save on book costs. But back

to the old houses. There was the President's house, and there was East Hall and West Hall. I think West Hall was just used for storage, but East Hall was, well, I guess you could almost call it a former mansion, and there were classes held there. I had a class on the porch. The porch was on two sides of the house, and it had been enclosed. We couldn't see both sides, and the woman who taught stood at the corner and could look down both aisles. We sat in desks. I also had a class in Wick-Pollack, upstairs in one of the bedrooms. They had a blackboard on the wall, and student desks.

D: Much different than compared to now, you can see the progression basically when you were there from private to public.

P: As soon as it went state, there was state money coming in, and the building process really began.

D: I did an interview with Dr. Frederick Blue, who was in the history department basically since 1964, this would be his last semester. He described his "office," quote, unquote, the area that he had to share with four or five other faculty members at the library at the time. So you can definitely see the major differences in the private to the public. If we could now turn to some of the activities, or things that you participated in while you were at YSU.

P: I knew I was going to live at home because I didn't have the money to live in town. Actually the only student housing was in Kilcawley. Just the one part of Kilcawley was there, and I think it was mostly athletes who lived there. I think it would have been very difficult to get a room, and I couldn't have afforded it anyway. But I made up my mind that even as I was going to Youngstown University, then Youngstown State, I was going to make the best of the program. I was going to be involved. I had been very active in high school, in a small school, and I was now going to what to me was a big college. Probably the first thing I joined was the Student Education Association, which just seemed like the logical thing to do. I was involved a little bit with the math club; again, it was kind of the logical thing because I was a math major. Where I really got involved was I made a connection with Student Council. I knew somebody that was on Student Council and they said "why don't you run?" I just didn't feel I had the connections, and he gave me some suggestions to actually campaign. And so I campaigned.

D: Was this your freshman or sophomore year?

P: That was my sophomore year. I visited different organizations, and one of them was the International Students Organization. I guess no one had ever gone to see them before. I introduced myself and explained I wanted to be on Student Council, and asked if they had anything they thought I could help them with. I played the politician role. I would do what I could to help them, and I probably made at least a dozen visits to different small groups on campus. The election lasted two days and it was in Jones Hall, and I actually have a picture of me there. We made campaign signs. We would actually talk to people as they came through, and this is me here with the campaign sign. Of course I cut out the letters; we didn't have computer printers or anything at that time. I actually spoke to

people when they came through, and sure enough I got elected. I was thrilled. I just thought this was going to be a lot of fun, and plus I had now talked to so many different people and met a lot of people. When I attended the first meeting a couple people approached me and said, "Would you like to be secretary?" And it was like, "My gosh!" I'm just joining this organization, and I thought if that's the way to get involved, sure I'd like to be secretary. Most of the people in Student Council were either in a fraternity or sorority. I remained an independent. Much of that is my personality, but part of it was I couldn't afford to be in one either. So it was very surprising that as an independent I was elected an officer. I enjoyed it and it got me connected with more people. I knew Mrs. Dikema, who was one of the advisors, and it was her husband, Carl Dikema, who was Dean of Arts and Sciences. So I knew her well because being an officer I had to consult with her. Dean Gillespie was the Dean of Men at the time, so I knew him well, because he was one of the advisors at the time. We met once a week. Of course I had to do the minutes, and write letters and things like that. I got involved in a committee, and I can't remember what the committee was, I have to think back. But the timing was right from a political point of view. I presented my final report the week before they were going to elect officers, and I campaigned within Student Council to be elected Chairman. I really didn't think I was going to be able to pull that off.

D: Chairman of Student Council?

P: Yes. I had talked to Dean Gillespie at the time, we had become pretty close. I said, "Do you think I can do this?" He really encouraged me to run. Interestingly the person that was opposing me is named Paul Dutton, and certainly his name is going to pop up. Paul is an attorney in Youngstown now and later served on the Board of Trustees at YSU. He was a big fraternity man, and I just thought "I'll never beat Paul," but I did.

D: Now this is at the end of your sophomore year?

P: Yes, going into my junior year. And so I was elected Chairman and I brought the newspaper, *The Jambar*, for you. It's funny because it says "Penny Elected Chairman," if it had been a male I think it would have had the last name. But "Penny Elected Chairman," and then the little sub-heading was I was the first girl in years. I think today it would have said "woman," but at the time I was still just classified as a "girl."

D: So it indicates some of the mentality and viewpoints of course in the mid to late sixties at this time. Were there some pressing issues or events that you had to deal with while on council or as Chairman?

P: Well, one of the best things about that time, and I believe that was in my junior year, because of my position of Chairman I was invited to be on the committee that was making a long-term plan for our campus at Youngstown State. Throughout my life I've served on many committees, and you put your time in and you say things, and then years later nobody even knows you were there and it's all forgotten. I'm going to guess there were at least fifteen people on the committee, and I think it was Dr. Coffalt, he was the vice-president at the time and I think he was the Chair of the committee. The mayor of



Youngstown was there, and other influential people, I believe there was an architect from town, and some kind of a city planner, and then there were some students. They polled the students and asked what did we want, and they told us that we could dream. So we said we wanted it to look like a campus. We live here, we go to college, and we want a real university. And they said, "What do you mean?" And we said, "We want you to close the city streets, and we want you plant grass, and we want you to plant trees." They had come with plans about what kind of buildings, that's what they were looking long-term. I think we knew that was going to happen. We had the state funding, and of course we had the parking issue, we were interested in that. But they told us to dream, and that's what we said is we wanted it to be a campus.

D: An enclosed area where you could distinguish that's where the campus was at.

P: It was going to be a campus. You were going to come there and say, "This is Youngstown State University." And I remember leaving that committee and thinking, "This is going to be lost, they're going to build their buildings. Sure it's going to be nicer, but they're never going to close a city street." I thought, "They'll plant grass, but they're never going to close a city street."

D: Because if we look at the map here there are several streets that are intersecting what is now campus. There's four just glancing at it right now.

P: So then I graduated in 1970, and the building process was going on. Ward-Beecher had been finished. The Engineering Building had been finished I think in my sophomore year, I remember it in scaffolding. I think one of the parking decks went up. It was really developing as a campus, but the roads were still there. Then I graduated and I started teaching, and I think it was in either '72 or '73 that was the first time I was really back on campus. I walked there and I stood in front of the Engineering building, and I don't remember who was with me and I said, "There was a street here." They were looking at me like I was crazy. I said, "No, there was a road right here, and you can't tell." You cannot tell that the roads were there. Not only did they take the roads out, they piled up the dirt and they made it rolling hills. And they didn't plant just trees. I thought if they planted trees they'd plant little sticks. They brought some nice size trees so that within five or ten years it was beautiful, and it is now a beautiful campus. And every time I walk on that campus its like, "Oh my gosh, I was on this committee that proposed that!" And it happened. Its probably one of the more positive things in my life, that a committee I served on that actually did what it said it was going to do. When I look long-term now at the city of Youngstown with their 2010 goal, they seem to be dreaming the same way. I really think they can do it. I think it's the same attitude. They're looking outside the box, and I believe that they can do it.

D: Now we have the copy of the front page of *The Jambar*, which as you stated, said just your first name, and this "girl." Was there sexism within the Student Council?

P: Within Student Council? I don't think so we were really pretty close friends and we had an office of our own on the main floor of Kilcawley with our own telephone. I think

we probably had to go through a campus operator. I don't really remember that, I don't even remember who had the key, maybe while I was officer I had a key, I don't remember. But it was a place that we could come at any time, and being an independent student and not having a sorority house to go to, it kind of became my central place to go, and we became very, very good friends.

D: Describe the professors, the faculty. Was there a balance between female and male?

P: It was definitely more male, especially in math. Mrs. Nell Whipkey was one of my female instructors. She was excellent and I had her for several classes. She has now retired but she remained there for quite a while. I taught at Youngstown State from 1980 to 1987, I was an adjunct faculty member in the math department.

D: Do you remember any minorities holding positions within the faculty and professors?

P: Not in the math department.

D: With your father working in the mills and of course as you stated when you first started going there cars were zooming all over the place. Can you describe Youngstown when you were there? What was it like?

P: Well, it was still the steel town, and it smelled. I can close my eyes and smell a steel mill, I just remember that smell. I didn't realize how dirty it was because of the smoke from the mills. Everything was gray. I think a lot of it still is, I think it's in the buildings, into the stone. You forget that until you drive through somewhere that there still is an operating mill and that smell immediately comes back.

D: So you graduated in 1970 and then you started teaching?

P: Yes.

D: Where at?

P: I started at Austintown Fitch, I had done my student teaching there during the winter quarter, and they hired me before I was even done student teaching. I didn't have my degree yet, and of course it was pending my degree, and I still had to take one class in the summer. My goal had been to graduate in four years, I missed it by summer term, so I took it in the first session and finished. I think that may have been the only time graduation was in September, and I didn't graduate until September 2, and then started teaching maybe two or three days later. I did not have a transcript in hand, even though Fitch knew that I had graduated, it took longer to go through the state to get my teaching certificate.

D: And then you stayed at Fitch for...?

P: Only one year. I had always wanted to teach in a small school. I did something very daring, I resigned without having a new job, and when I look back now that was probably a very foolish thing to do. But I just believed I would get a job, and actually I found two of them, but I accepted the one at Lordstown.

D: Your younger sisters, seeing you commuting to school, did they eventually then go to college? Did you help them out? Were you influential for them?

P: My second sister went to YSU and graduated from there, and my third sister, she started at YSU and always had wanted to go away. She went to William Woods College in Missouri. I think she went to Youngstown a year-and-a-half or so and then transferred to William Woods. My youngest sister went to Ohio State.

D: Any of them involved with math?

P: No.

D: So you're the only one. Okay. Being that you attended a university in the mid to late sixties. Were there any issues or events that stirred up campus? How did the campus react to these things that were going on?

P: Certainly. It was the Vietnam era, and there were men on campus who were certainly avoiding the draft by staying in school. I served one meeting, I was appointed to the discipline committee, at that time I was vice-president of student government, and it was because of my position I was appointed to that committee. I really didn't know a lot about it, and we heard a case about two young men who were accused of cheating on an exam. They had stolen an exam and run out and the professor had actually chased them and caught them. There was no doubt that they had stolen the exam. (End of Side A of Tape.)

D: (Beginning of Side B of Tape) So the professor then chassed down the two students and it was quite clear that they had taken the document.

P: But I decided that I didn't want to serve on the committee. It was something I didn't want to continue on.

D: Was there an ROTC program or presence on campus? Could you describe that?

P: There was and they wore their uniforms one day a week. They also would rappel down Ward Beecher. I don't remember any animosity towards them. It was the Vietnam War, but I don't remember anything negative towards them at all. One of the big things that happened was in my senior year, in May of 1970, the Kent State incident. We really related to Kent State. It's a comparable school. Again, lots of children of steel workers were going there too, the middle class. It scared us because if students could be shot there, they could be shot anywhere. There were demonstrations on campus, which for our little school was very shocking. We had one where we all sat in front of the President's

house. President Pugsley was in there we thought at the time, but I don't think he came out. We were just protesting the National Guard actions at Kent State.

D: And you did take part in those demonstrations?

P: I was out there sitting on the front yard with all the rest of them. Then a group of students stopped traffic on Wick Avenue. This was quite daring for Youngstown State, and they did it in a manner that they couldn't be arrested; there was a crosswalk there. So they just kept walking across the crosswalk and stopped traffic for a while. There was a group that marched in downtown Youngstown, but I didn't, I think I had a math class and it was one of those things you couldn't miss. But I was there in front of the President's house.

D: So were there tensions between the individuals such as yourself who were protesting something as compared to maybe students who were pro-Vietnam War or anything like that?

P: I don't know that there were major protests against the war. I mean there was an attitude where most people wanted it to be over. But the thing with Kent State that I think really shocked us: it was something you might have expected at Berkley. You did not expect it to happen at Kent State, and it made things very real to us. If it could happen at Kent, could it happen at Youngstown?

D: We talked earlier about influential teachers in middle school and high school. Was there an influential faculty member? You mentioned some others earlier that connected. What was the gentleman's name in Arts and Sciences, the Dean?

P: Dean Gillespie. He was a wonderful, wonderful man. My advisor was Dr. Yozwiak, the Chairman of the Math department. He happened to be the instructor of my...let me think, you had to take a class, and I lost the word...freshman had to take this one-hour class in the beginning, and it met a couple of days before...

D: Orientation?

P: Orientation, that's it, I couldn't think of the word. And I really liked his presentation, and he advised us that we should get an advisor immediately, that was one of his suggestions. I liked his style and he was the Chairman, and I figured go to the top. The first time I met with him he asked me what my plans were, and I told him I was going to major in math and be a teacher, and I said I wanted to graduate in four years. So he wrote me a four-year plan and said that some math courses are only offered once a year and you will take them at certain times, and the plan was there and I knew what I had to do.

D: Very good. Could we talk about graduation? You have your pin. We've talked about some of these things before. Could you maybe expand on that a little bit?

P: This is my This is my YSU pin. Only five are awarded to graduating seniors each spring. They were formally YU pins (Youngstown University) and YC pins (Youngstown College). Four of the five recipients in 1970 were Student Government members. Pete Isgro, Patty Richards, Mike Foley and I had been good friends for three years. YSU pins were awarded based on a combination of campus activities and grades. It was a wonderful tradition. I graduated at the end of summer, and it was at Stambaugh Auditorium. There was no rehearsal before hand, we just walked in and sat down. I was seated with a bunch of engineers because I had a lot of classes with engineering students, so it was me and a whole bunch of guys around me. I remember it was a very nice ceremony, but of course there were over five hundred of us that graduated that summer. They did not call us up individually, but they announced each school, "Those receiving the Business degree please stand," and they said now you have a business degree. I was getting a Bachelor of Arts, and so I was the only one in my group who stood to receive my degree. Just as I sat down they were going to award Engineering degrees next, and the guy next to me said, "Penny, do you want an Engineering degree?" As they stood up they grabbed my arms and pulled me up so I guess I got an Engineering degree that day too!

D: You taught at Fitch. You then said you taught at Lordstown High School?

P: Yes.

D: Okay. Of course we're in here in Leetonia High School, and Ms. Pavelko was my high school math teacher. When did you come to Leetonia?

P: I stayed at Lordstown for four years, and then that's when I had my children, so I stayed home for five years. The older one is Matt, the younger one is Clint. When the younger one was about three and the older one was just starting kindergarten, and I wanted to do something. I didn't know what. I knew I didn't want to work full-time because I still wanted to be home with my children. My teaching certificate was going to expire. So I had to take a course. So of course I was going to go back to Youngstown State. I went through registration, and I had my form to fill out and I left it blank because I was there on the last final day to re-enroll. I knew from experience the classes were going to be closed. So I got up there to sign up for a class, and it didn't matter what I took, I'd be getting my certificate. The woman wouldn't let me in the door because I didn't have an advisor's signature. She would not let me in the door because I had been out of school for more than a year or some argument. She asked me what my major was and I said I didn't have a major I was here just to take a course. So I had to ask where the math department was, and it was in the summer, it would have been mid to late August when I was there. I found the math department. There was only one professor there, Dr. Kline. So I went to see him and I had not known of him before. I knocked on the door, and he looked up and asked if he could help me. I said, "Yes I'm here and I need you to sign something." And this is a quote, he said, "Oh hell, I'll sign anything." I handed him the paper and it wasn't filled out, and he said, "Well this is blank." And I said, "Yes it's blank. I want to take a course." I explained my dilemma, and I said, "You know and I know everything's closed and I don't fill out forms twice in triplicate." And he said, "I like your attitude." So he said, "What do you teach?" And I said, "Well, I was a math

teacher.” And he said, “Was? Do you have a job?” And I said, “No.” And he said, “Do you want a job?”

D: And this is Dr. Kline you said?

P: Yes. And I thought that he knew of a high school opening. And I thought, “I really don’t want a full-time job right now.” I just wasn’t sure. And here he had an opening and he was the person in charge of hiring the adjunct faculty members. I was at the right place at the right time. The man liked my attitude, and he said, “Go over to the math office and get an application.” He asked, “Is there anybody on campus who would recommend you?” and I said, “Well, Dr. Mavrigen,” he was one of my professors and was still there. And he said, “Have Gus get in touch with me.” So I applied and I was hired.

D: And that’s 1980?

P: Yes, that was 1980.

D: And it was part-time adjunct in the evenings?

P: No I taught during the day.

D: Okay but it was adjunct so it was very minimal workload for you.

P: I taught two math classes per quarter.

D: And you were there until ’87?

P: Until ’87, right.

D: And then is that when...?

P: That’s when I was hired at Leetonia.

D: And I probably want to make note that this is your last year at Leetonia.

R: Yes I am retiring at the end of May.

D: So Ms. Pavelko you’ve obviously had an influential role here at Leetonia. Of course you had that spark of impact there at YSU with the campus. Your involvement in the campus during the mid to late sixties is just simply incredible. Do you have anything to add to the interview?

R: Well, I’m a lifetime member of the Alumni Association.

D: And I want to make note as well that as I attended here at Leetonia Ms. Pavelko was always wearing her YSU garb and promoting YSU, and she of course today has the YSU

colors on as well. Here's a quick question for you: Einstein. You're always about Albert Einstein. Of course influential in math and of course the direction of a lot of things that occurred in the United States in the twentieth century. Why Einstein?

P: I have been an Einstein fan since I was a little girl. I started first grade in '54. That was the year of Brown v. Board of Education. That was the year, I think, that Einstein died. There was big news about him in the newspaper, and I remember my parents saying that he was the most intelligent man in the world. I was very impressed, if he was the most intelligent man in the world, then that should be somebody I should look up to. I have just admired him. He's a person I wish I could have met. And my classroom has always been decorated with at least one picture of Einstein. I've read about him, the human side of him, and I think he would have been a wonderful person to know.

D: So definitely another person that inspired you then later on.

P: Yes, even though he was no longer living. But that was what I first heard about him, was he was the most intelligent man in the world. I was impressed by that, I thought, "Well, I want to be like him."

D: The other thing you asked me about, I wanted to get it on tape so that I could remember, and those down the line that hear this will get involved or make note of it. The Alumni...the card's coming up for the centennial, remember? You noted something about...?

P: Oh, the U.S. Postal Service makes post cards for either the centennial or bicentennial of college campuses. And I just purchased one for Ohio University for Laura Nappi, the other math teacher, because she graduated from Ohio University. When I showed it to her she said, "Oh, that's (I don't remember the name of it) hall." That's their oldest building on campus. Ours would probably feature Jones Hall.

D: So this is something you probably want to think about.

P: 2008. And I would hope that somebody would get in contact with the U.S. Postal Service. It seems like it's just a sure thing. I don't think we're your average campus. National Football Champs four years! I went to Chattanooga twice. Get that on there.

D: Everyone in the offices and stuff, they still have their Tressel posters up with the schedules and all that stuff. It's still very present on campus, that's for sure. So again Ms. Pavelko, I want to thank you very much for doing this interview. I learned a lot, and I'm extremely glad that I had you as a teacher and got to know a little bit more about you. I'm very pleased. Thank you very much.

P: Thank you. This was fun.