

Interview with:

JOHN GILDARD

Marist College

Poughkeepsie, NY

Transcribed by Lynn South

For the Marist College Archives and Special Collections

Transcript – John Gildard

Interviewee: John Gildard

Interviewer: Gus Nolan

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Topic: John Gildard discusses his life, his careers, and what led him to Marist security.

See Also: n/a

Subject Headings:

Summary: John Gildard discusses his beginnings as a student at Marist, his career as a police officer, and eventually, as the head of security at Marist.

Gus Nolan (00:05): Today is Wednesday, June 4th. We're having an interview with John Gildard, he is the director of Marist College Security. Good afternoon, John.

John Gildard (00:11): Hi, how are you, Gus?

GN (00:12): I'm good. John, we're going to do this in maybe five or six different areas, and the first is just to say something about your own background. Personal data, where you were born, location, things of that sort. Just speak freely about area, you don't have to give me dates. You can if you want, but you don't have to.

JG (00:35): I was born in Syracuse, New York. My parents moved there from Brooklyn when my father got a job with Carrier after World War II; he was in the navy. And then he went to school – it was a trade school back then. He got his...certificate, if you will, in air conditioning and heating, which probably be equivalent to a two year degree now, on the GI bill. So they moved to Syracuse to get out of New York City, and I was born there. I lived there until I was about five years old, and in that time, my sister was also born in Syracuse, she's three years younger than I am. And then we moved to Poughkeepsie when I was five years old, and I started in kindergarten...we lived on Franklin Street, temporarily in an apartment. We had a house built in Wappingers Falls on Liss Road, right off of Route Nine, right by the bowling alley. So then I went to St. Mary's school in Wappingers, and then I graduated from Saint Mary's. I actually went to high school at Eymard Seminary in Hyde Park, New York. And- -

GN (02:00): - -How many years were you there?

JG (02:02): Graduated from there in four years, in 1969, and then I went to...during the time we lived in Wappingers, my brother was born. He's ten years younger than I am, and he's currently out in Pittsburgh as a corrections officer. So I graduated from Eymard, and then I went up to Barre, Massachusetts. The Blessed Sacrament Fathers who ran Eymard had a post-high school

junior seminary type of thing, I went there for a year. And then I came back and I left there and returned home, and went to Marist. I started at Marist in 1970.

GN (02:45): You came to Marist College?

JG (02:46): Yes, I'm a graduate. Not Cum Laude, but I'm a graduate, so...I went to Marist from '70, graduated in '74, I was a psychology major. And I remember going to class with Dr. Summers for English, Dr....

GN (03:08): Schroeder for speech?

JG (03:09): Schroeder for English, and then I had Dr.

GN (03:13): - -Balch for history?

JG (03:15): Who?

GN (03:15): Balch?

JG (03:16): No, I never had Dr. Balch. I took Dr. Eidle—Dr.... Dr. O'Keefe and Dr. Zuccarello for a class they taught together. And had Dr. Menapace for chemistry. Stood on the long lines outside Adrian Hall, where the Registrar's office was years ago. And, like I said, I graduated in 1974, and I did have Doctor—there were only three psychology teachers, really: Dr. Kirk, Dr. Eidle, and Dr. Ed O'Keefe. And then we had a few adjuncts come in every now and then. So right after that I went to work for the City of Poughkeepsie Police Department, right after graduation. So I think the highlight of my career at Marist was the Bill O'Reilly was a senior when I was a freshman. I used to love his column in *The Circle*. So I went to work for the City of Poughkeepsie Police Department.

GN (04:19): While you were at the police station, was there a Doc Doherty- -

JG (04:21): - Yes there was! Doc Doherty, now he's Doctor Doherty. Yes, actually I met Doc probably on one of the first times I worked. We became friendly, and are still friendly, we see

each other all the time. He'd been on about four years or so prior to me coming to the police department. I got married, and had three children while I worked for the police department. I worked...went up the ranks, followed Doc, actually, I got promoted to detective. Then I got promoted to Sergeant- -

GN (05:03) : - -Oh, you jumped way ahead in the story, now! I had no idea you were a Marist...for some reason, I just...I thought you came from a different continent, or whatever!

JG (05:14): [laughs] No, I'm sorry, but...So anyway, the short version: I worked at the police department for twenty-three years, and retired, and came back to work at Marist.

GN (05:25): During that time, outside of going to school, what about other interests? Did you play baseball, basketball, football, soccer?

JG (05:35): No, I was a commuter student, lived in Wappingers, still at home. So I kind of went to classes, and then went home and went to work. I had a part time job in- -

GN (05:46): What kind of job did you have?

JG (05:48): I worked at Tom McCann shoe store in Wappingers, selling shoes. So I did that, and it kind of supported me. I hung out with a lot of commuter students. There used to be the Rathskeller downstairs in the student center

GN (06:02): Over in Champagnat?

JG (06:03): Yeah. I used to go there for lunch, and things, and meet with some of the other commuter students. We hung out there... I did have class with the venerable Robert Lynch, Bob Lynch from Student Activities. We took Dr. Bettencourt and Dr. Hooper. I think we had the fetal pig class together, and we were on a team. It was Paul [Dara], who went to school with me...Bob Lynch and I were on the team to dissect the fetal pig [laughs].

GN (06:35): Well, some of the questions I have here are not at all pertinent now, like “How did you ever learn about Marist?” It was in your neighborhood growing up, huh?

JG (06:45): Yes.

GN (06:46): It was just a part of the mix, in terms of that... What about law enforcement, though? How did that develop? You became a little more interested in that...

JG (06:53): I took the test—you have to take a test to get on the police department. And part of the getting the job was looking at different aspects. It was in '73 or '74, we had a downturn in the economy, and gas went from thirty-five cents to seventy-five cents a gallon. I wanted to be an industrial psychologist, take that route, but then those jobs dried up, so I took the police test. I scored fairly well, and the next thing you know, they're calling me for an interview, it's getting close to graduation. So, I said let me try it and see what happens. And I had a great career.

GN (07:37): How long were you on the force?

JG (07:38): Twenty-three years.

GN (07:39): Twenty-three years, okay.

JG (07:40): Did almost everything, saw just about everything.

GN (07:44): And you rose to detective?

JG (07:47): Detective, Lieutenant, Captain... It was interesting, actually, psychology as a major. They didn't have criminal justice here then, but psychology did help out to understand people, and what motivates them. You know, the social idiosyncrasies that go into crimes. So it was a good education for the job.

GN (08:08): Tell me this, how does...and it's one of the questions that come up here...I see by your shirt... the Northeast Colleges Universities security associations...Is security, how is security different than police?

JG (08:28): Well, here at Marist, we're not law enforcement officers, we're not police officers, we're private security. We're licensed by New York State as a security guard company, and all of our officers have to attend and meet certain requirements in order to become a security guard, which are certain classes, background checks, fingerprint checks. But we don't carry guns, we don't carry handcuffs, we're just private citizens keeping an eye on the people here at Marist, and Marist assets. You know, protecting the property.

GN (09:02): There must be different companies. Is IBM different from you? Is the hospital different from you? Is the railroad different from you?

JG (09:09): Yeah, all of those—IBM, Vassar Hospital, they all have their own security department. But really, they all have the same requirements as we do- -

GN (09:19): To be licensed

JG (09:20): To be licensed by the state, et cetera. But, they're employees of Vassar, they're employees of IBM, and we're employees of Marist. There's other colleges that have security, and what they do is contract with a company, and they bring in people- -

GN (09:39): A management company

JG (09:40): Yeah, and they supply all the people, but the people who actually work for the security company, like Allied Barton, Wells Fargo, there's a few big ones around. We like to have our own employees so that they get to know the campus, know the people- -

GN (09:57): Are you a Marist College employee, then?

JG (09:59): Yes.

GN (10:00): And all of security is?

JG (10:02): All of our security officers are Marist College employees, yes.

GN (10:04): Okay, now who organized the Marist security program the way it is? I don't know if it still holds, but you have entry offices, you have building offices, you have just security offices, you have dispatchers...Did that grow out of time?

JG (10:24): That did evolve, yes, and it evolved from, and I can only speak from when I was a student, when I graduated in 1970, there was a director of security, and

GN (10:34): A Student

JG (10:36): And one student worker. And that's all I remember about security. And then I remember after I left, graduated and worked for the police department. I still remained active with Marist, I adjunct, taught some criminal justice programs, and Doc and I both served on the board of directors for the Red Fox Club together. So we maintained that relationship with Marist, and the department eventually grew and added people. And what they, we used to do is...they used to have students working the dormitories as the entry people, and they would make sure the students had their ID, and then they decided that maybe they should have adults watching the students, as opposed to students letting their friends in, and other things, so that evolved before I became director, and where we had the entry officers. Then Marist, I think in its wisdom, decided that the academic buildings needed officers too. Where you take and you move forward quickly, like the Virginia Tech incident, in that building, academic building, where Cho shot those students and faculty members, there was no guard in the building. So, we had this long before Virginia Tech, but I think it was a wise move. And then we have our patrol officers, who are out walking around the whole campus and driving around in our cars, and then the dispatchers sit at the desk and answer the phone and make sure everybody gets to the calls.

GN (12:17): Is there an equal number on for twenty-four hours? Or more in the day, or more in the night?

JG (12:22): There's more in the evenings and the overnights, because we do have the dormitory officers on. But usually on a patrol shift, there's a supervisor, a dispatcher, and four to six officers. The campus is divided up—we call them “posts.” We run it almost like a police department or a quasi-military organization. So we divide the campus up into sections, and each officer is assigned just to a section.

GN (12:57): Okay. Do you have meetings? Can you bring most of your people together for a conference or a meeting? Is there a reason for that? Does it happen annually?

JG (13:09): We have an annual training, an eight-hour training block that's required by the state, where all officers go to the training. All three of our—myself and my assistants and directors are instructors. We have other instructors. We bring them all together to make sure they're up on all the policies and procedures- -

GN (13:29): It takes place on campus?

JG (13:30): Yes, we do it at the boathouse. Then we also meet...pretty much daily, with our supervisor. Each shift has a supervisor. And because our offices are all right in the same building in Donnelly, we meet daily with our supervisors, go over what's happening today, you know, what they need to know about...We use the email system, so if we have an event going on, I can email the supervisor on a particular shift. You know, “do this, do that, set up for this event,” or whatever. Our communication is important among the officers and the men.

GN (14:11): I counted sixty in the booklet that I have, is that about the number now, or is it much more?

JG (14:16): We have about seventy five officers total, which includes full time, part timers who work the weekends mostly, when the full timers are off. And then we have what we call “per diem” officers, they work on-call, like if we need them for a basketball game, or football, or

graduation, special events, we call them up and bring them in. So we have a total of seventy-four officers right now.

GN (14:49): Just by curiosity — where are the biggest problem areas? Is it the parking lot, is it the dorms, or the McCann center? Or is it a mix of them all, depending on the day?

JG (15:01): It depends. Every day is a different day. It's like working in a—we're a little city, or a little village. We have three thousand residents, we have a thousand commuter students coming and going all day, we have almost a thousand employees, we have carpenters, plumbers, groundskeepers, and security is kind of the law enforcement. Days...parking is the big issue, every college campus has a minimum of parking, and more people than they can stuff in

GN (15:32): They're further away, want to be closer to the building-

JG (15:35): Right, and everybody wants to be close to the building. So that's a problem. In the evenings and nights, we have to deal with students who either try to sneak alcohol or contraband into the dorm, or they come back from the bar and they're inebriated, and we have to make sure that medically we observe that and take care of them, and that they're safe. And that's the thing, we try to stress customer service, that all of our officers are like moms, dads, aunts and uncles, and we're trying to do the best we can for the students, just as they would do for their own family members.

GN (16:15): There seems to be a huge taxi service here on evenings in the...good season...Well, I guess every season is a good season.

JG (16:25): [laughs] yup

GN (16:26): [laughs] I don't know if October is a better one than the spring. But none the less, you can see them lined up there...I guess I only see them going out. Eventually they come back, I suppose.

JG (16:36): [laughs] Yes they do! You and I are probably in bed by then and long asleep. The students are on a different clock than us!

GN (16:45): Going out at ten...it's time for me to go to bed!

JG (16:47): Yes! It's better that the students take the cabs and come back in the cabs rather than trying to drive themselves or walk themselves. I talk to the parents at orientation, and at the end of my speech, I leave them with three things. I tell them, "Look, you've told your children this since they've been little kids, but it's worth repeating once more before they get here." The first one is: don't take a ride with strangers. Stay with your group, know who you're with, take a cab. You know, don't get in a car with just anybody to go, or come back to campus. Don't touch a hot stove... There's going to be things where their gut is going to tell them it's wrong, so don't do it. And then: look both ways before you cross." I tell them that means they should all weigh the decisions they're going to make, look at the pros and cons, and make an informed decision before they get themselves in trouble. So those are the things I tell the parents when they drop them off here in September.

GN (17:53): I went to one of the orientation sessions not this year, but last year or the year before. One of the scenes has to do with "Oh, come on, we're all going out. No, no I have a test tomorrow. Come on, No, no it's costing forty thousand dollars...But it's not *your* forty thousand dollars." [laughs] So the kids start arguing with each other, as to why it's not important to study now, there's always tomorrow morning. But tomorrow morning they won't be in very good shape.

JG (18:24): No, no.

GN (18:26): Is there any...Do you...Security here ever meet with IBM, or ever meet with any other organization? Or are you...I mean, are there conferences you go to?

JG (18:36): Well, we brought up the Northeast College and University Association; I'm on the board of that. It's an organization, it's over sixty years old, put together by a few college security directors back in the '50's. Each year now, we have a conference in a different city, and we're hosting the conference this year. That conference brings in directors, our group goes from Maine to Maryland, and all the way out to Ohio. So we'll bring in about a hundred security directors this year to the Grand Hotel, and have educational programs for them. We also have a little group here. We get together periodically with the directors from Bard, Vassar, Mount Saint Marys, Dutchess and New Paltz and we'll have a lunch meeting—oh, and the Culinary, at different colleges, to go over what's new in our area, the Dutchess County area. We always tell the director of security at the Culinary that it's his turn to host lunch, and he falls for it! [laughs] No, it's a very good group, and we get a lot done.

GN (19:48): Numerically, the bigger group would be sixty? Eighty? How many in the northeast colleges?

JG (19:53): There's... We probably... Well over two hundred members.

GN (19:55): Oh!

JG (19:56): And from those different colleges, big and small.

GN (20:02): Yeah, okay...moving on, personal experience... you've been here for eighteen years, or more- -

JG (20:09): Eighteen years, eighteen and a half years, yes. I actually started out—I got hired by Bruce Wagner as the assistant director of Human Resources, worked with Bruce and Carol Ling. Because I had gotten my MPA from Marist also, and when I went they had concentrations you would take, you take the core courses, and then they had Health Services Administration, Criminal Justice Administration, and Labor Relations and Negotiations. I was always interested

in that, so I took that track to kind of broaden my field. So I had also served as secretary of the PBA, you know, the representative of the officers. So I applied for the position of Assistant Director, I got hired by Bruce and Carol, to that and then when Joe Leary, the previous director, retired, I applied for the position. There's a funny story to that, they hired a gentleman, Scott Brown, and he was from the state police and he came on Martin Luther King Day, that was his first day of work, and by President's day, he left and went back to the state police because the job just wasn't for him. So I guess I got called from the bull pen, and I'm still here! That first graduation I worked, 2002 when it snowed...

GN (21:40): Oh! Oh, oh, oh...

JG (21:42): You know, we had a lot of glitches that day, and I was very impressed with the way that Dr. Merolli, who was my boss then, had handled that. I said I'm staying in this job, and working for him, he's a good man. And Bruce was too! Good promotion

GN (22:01): That wasn't bad we picked up pieces from that

JG (22:03): So, I've been director for a little over twelve years now.

GN (22:08): What's the key to success in security? What would you say is the...I mean, you have to give them some rope, you can't...But on the other hand, you have to draw lines, otherwise...What is your philosophy, or, what do you try to pass onto your group about an attitude, maybe?

JG (22:30): Sure, good, very good question. Not all, but some of our members of the department come from law enforcement, like me. And the first thing I tell people that come from law enforcement when we hire them is: this is not an enforcement job. It's a customer service position. We work, in essence, to make sure the students are safe. And while we do give out parking tickets and confiscate the beer, our first job is to be customer service oriented. If the

student needs something, we help them. We're not, we don't want to be the enemy. The older philosophy was that we were an enforcement agency, and over the years I've been able to, through hiring and continued classes and customer service programs that we do... Get the group to move to that customer service philosophy. We use what we call "The Home Depot Model," where, if somebody comes and asks the security guard "how do I get to the chapel?" Well, the guard's not just to say, "Well just follow that road around, go to the stop sign and take a left," the guard is supposed to say "follow me." If you're in a building, we want the officer to... "Where's Room 201?", we want the officer to walk them to that office. You know, other things...we had a presentation, we had a consultant come in, and he was from Notre Dame and he talked about customer service in the Notre Dame security. And we adopted their "Welcome to Notre Dame..." Every time we see somebody, we want our officers to say "Welcome to Marist." So we try to do that. Our customer service rating for the last ten years, based on the student satisfaction survey has gone from about a sixty-something percent up to a ninety-two, ninety-three percent. So we're making inroads to...you know, we're here to serve the customers.

GN (24:40): We sent Paul Brown to Notre Dame, you know. He's a Marist- -

JG (24:44): - -Yeah, yeah, that's right.

GN (24:45): He's there now...But on the other hand, when I had sabbaticals in various organizations, like IBM, and I noticed their security...you're helpful up to a point, but you don't do the work light. If somebody's battery is dead, you won't jump that...or will you?

JG (25:05): Yes, yes we'll unlock cars for people; we have mechanisms for when they lock their keys in the car. We have...our patrol vehicles are hooked up with a battery jump system.

GN (25:17): You hand jump them?

JG (25:19): Yes, we do that. Students lock themselves out of their rooms, and we'll go their room and unlock them. We've even had some officers change tires, shovel their cars out of piles of snow...So we try to do what we can to help the students out.

GN (25:35): But you've also put shoes on tires! (laughs)

JG (25:38): Yes we do! We call it "the boot." We do it if students get a certain amount of tickets, and fail to obey the rules. We ticket them, and our ticket system keeps track of everything now, it's automated, and after four or five tickets, we get the feeling they just don't get it. So we put the boot on them, we clamp the tire, and then it inconveniences them, hoping that maybe they'll remember to park appropriately at times. It works. We have our frequent fliers that keep getting booted, but it's interesting, with the students.

GN (26:20): It's important...Now, I don't know how...as director, I suppose, you could absolve tickets. But when tickets are given and the bill is passed on, it stays in line, and it has to be paid. You know, we've had one or two incidents on the academic side of it, where somebody dropped a course without...just walked away, as it were, and decided they wouldn't pay for it. So...time moved ahead, and when they eventually apply for a job, and what came up on it was that he was unfaithful to a bill, and then they come back and try to pay the bill. And like, well, sure, they tried to pay the bill, it happened, and we can't try to say it didn't happen.

JG (27:02): I try to work...We have a little leeway with the fines, and the tickets and things, and I'll try to work with parents. You know, some have financial hardships; others...the students just don't get it. So what I do is...I call it...We have what I call "The Filene's Sale." I've had, just for instance, a parent called me up at Thanksgiving, a mother, and their son had seven hundred and fifty dollars' worth of parking tickets already in the first semester. The mother had no clue, the bill came, she was in shock...and she said "I have two other students in college, it's very

tight for us.” I said, “I’ll tell you what to do.” I said, “You send me two checks, three hundred and seventy-five each, one’s going to pay for the tickets, and the other is going to go into my drawer. And if your son doesn’t get any more tickets for the rest of the year, I’m going to mail you that back. If he gets another ticket, the deal is off.” You work with the parent, they’re happy, and the next call they’re making is to junior, saying “Look, you better not screw up because it’s costing me money.” So it works. You help everybody out.

GN (28:22): You kind of really covered this. So far as to provide safety, security is to provide safety, and so on. So the problem areas are more than likely going to be the parking lot, for one. I suppose McCann occasionally has some disorder, probably a minimum on the long range of things...Looking back, what were some of the more difficult problems you’ve had? Are they dealing with students? Faculty? Personal?

JG (28:58): We do a little bit of everything. We’ve had some...most of our investigations are student-involved. We seem to be having more marijuana on campus over the last few years. The students come and think they’re in Colorado or California [laughs]. You know, and it’s been- -

GN (29:19): - -Well, we’re getting a wide range of students too- -

JG (29:21): - -Too, and students come in. We’ve had some thefts, some things...and we do some internal work with human resources on an employee; investigation issues, like you said. It’s like in every community, there’s the good folks and the not so good folks. So we have to look into some allegations of impropriety sometimes with faculty and staff, so we’re pretty well-rounded. We have a good team...we do have police backgrounds, we’re familiar with investigative techniques. It’s a busy day...We’re event driven, you know, opening day, we have a lot of people coming in, the students coming in, we move right into football season. So we do the parking, and the crowd control at football, other events that are held around campus...alumni

weekend, etc. So then we roll right into basketball season, spring events for the seniors, and graduation is our big show. We put out...we have over one hundred people work with us, including police departments for graduation.

GN (30:35): Even for the special events, sometimes there are not police at the exits...Traffic going out at nights, or after a basketball game, are police...are county or town police involved?

JG (30:54): Yes, we work with them. What they do is: they'll be at the traffic lights, at the end of the big events to override the light and to push the people out of the campus so we can clear the lots fairly quickly. We can get...we can empty out the McCann Center and Donnelly lots after a basketball game in probably fifteen, twenty minutes. And we work with them; we work with the police a lot. We talk to them about emergency preparedness, should we have a big emergency, or some problem on the campus, we have plans with them on what to do, and things like that. So we get excellent cooperation from the police. Each summer I have a picnic, a security department picnic, and I invite the local police department and fire department to come. Every winter, we call it the police and fire department appreciation basketball game- -

GN (31:48): The fire department doesn't come as often as it used to.

JG (31:51): They're pretty steady, they're about the same number. I'm home sleeping when they show up at night. Burnt popcorn is our biggest problem.

GN (31:59): Oh, yeah.

JG (32:00): You know, they come for those kinds of things

GN (32:03): - -The house alarms go off

JG (32:04): - -Yeah, false alarms. But they're very gracious. So I host a basketball game, invite them and their families, give them free tickets. So we have a great relationship with the police and fire department. The chief of police of the town is a Marist graduate, and so are his two

captains. One captain in the city of Poughkeepsie is a graduate of Marist, the second in command, the under-sheriff, Kirk Imperati at the sheriff's office is a graduate, so we have them well-placed in the law enforcement community.

GN (32:35): Where do you get your recruits to join? Or do they apply?

JG (32:40): They apply. We get...we're well-rounded. We have people who have been in hotel security, one of our officers at a big hotel in New York City, but lives up here, applied. We get some retired law enforcement, and we have some career people. We have Chris Murray, young guy who's been here since right after high school, probably, been here fourteen, fifteen years. Jim Harkins, our day supervisor, started at Marist very young, and now he's a supervisor. So we get them from all different areas, not just law enforcement.

GN (33:23): If you had a chance to go to the board of trustees, what would you say? Something you need, or something you...what would you think would be your...would improve your logic, or the operations here? More cars? More people?

JG (33:41): No, no. I think we're well-staffed, over time is not a problem. You know, if we need people for events, we put them out there. But I think we need some place to call home. We don't have a security...office, if you will.

GN (34:00): Lost in Donnelly! [laughs]

JG (34:01): We have seventy four people; we're in the corner of Donnelly Hall. And I was always looking at the bank building, at the north end as a little security station. Because our offices don't have a locker room, you know, to put stuff. I mean, you need a rain coat, it's got to be in the trunk of your car. You know, there's no place to change if you get dirty doing something, you know, helping somebody fix or change a tire. So...and we don't have room to

have, like you see in police shows, have a lineup, where the supervisor gets in front of the group and talks about what's going on today for the whole group. So, I could use some kind of station.

GN (34:48): The boathouse is too far away, though.

JG (34:50): Right. But now they're going to build new dorms, at the bank, so there's not space.

Like what Vassar did is, at Vassar they have a guard at the gate there, and that's where their dispatcher is. And the dispatcher stayed, the rest of the security department moved, they bought Poughkeepsie Day School on 376, right around the corner. So if I could have something like that, that would be my first wish. And my second wish would be a big parking deck.

GN (35:23): Oh, okay.

JG (35:25): So we could put everybody there, and not have to worry about- -

GN (35:29): - -Where would you put it?

JG (35:30): Well there's been

GN (35:31): Donnelly?

JG (35:32): We've actually looked at, our architects and master planners have thought about it too...In the bowl where the Sheahan and McCann lot is, it's surrounded by the hills, you go up the steep stairs towards Leo and Sheahan. So you could tuck it into there- -

GN (35:50): - -Oh, oh, oh, right by...yeah.

JG (35:51): And you'd have the height on one side to make it a two, three story...

GN (35:58): Wouldn't be too obvious, either.

JG (36:00): No, it would be tucked in nicely so that it would look good. But that's an expensive proposition.

GN (36:06): What would you think of Porsche? I'll see if I can get it! [laughs]

JG (36:09): [laughs] They're waiting for me to open my check book! It's actually fifteen to twenty thousand dollars per car.

GN (36:16): Is that so?

JG (36:17): Yes. So, if you have a hundred car deck- -

GN (36:22): That's a two to three million dollars

JG (36:24): A two to three million dollar proposition. But a little...a nicer office space would be my first wish, for my people. I have an office, but my officers need a little place to spread out.

GN (36:36): A little more room!

JG (36:38): A little kitchen- -

GN (36:39): I just never saw that as a problem. I mean, I'm not there. If I were one of your crew, I'd say...you know... "Where can we do this?" In fact, just accidentally...I do work at Vassar Hospital, as a Eucharistic minister, and I...one of the reasons we had is so...We don't have a place to leave your coat when you come in. We're only in the chapel, you know. So I said...It's not safe there! [laughs] Ironically, now that I see it, I've got a much better view of it... Well, what were some of the good things that you've experienced in security? Something that didn't happen, that might've happened, or something that happened and it worked out well?

JG (37:28): The thing I like best is...we get complaints about different things...I've had students write me thank you notes, I've had parents call and thank me for different things I've done for their sons or daughters, and that makes me feel good because it shows that we're getting our customer service message across. There's—fortunately, we haven't had any major incidents, I mean, the most tragic things was the fire over on Fairview Avenue, but we all came together and worked through that, and that was off-campus.

GN (38:15): We've had one murder on campus.

JG (38:17): Yes, I remember that. I was working for the city of Poughkeepsie police department that day. And we did not respond, the state sheriff and the state police came, but I do remember the incident.

GN (38:31): ...Coming from Peach Lake, or some place over in Brewster, and the girlfriend here...I was on the faculty and...

JG (38:39): It was sad thing.

GN (38:40): And then we had a death in the dormitory of some disease, or rare

JG (38:45): Meningitis. That was before I became director. I was here, but it was before I became director. We did have a student who passed away, and that was an unfortunate medical circumstance. But other than that, there's really nothing major that I can think of that has really been a bad thing. Like I said, I think the 'thank you's', even from the faculty and staff, we'll help them out, do things...It makes us feel good that we can be of service to the community.

GN (39:24): It's interesting...I did have something I wanted to say...Oh! You mentioned before that you can...My question has to do with communication among yourselves. Does everyone have a cell phone, or is there a need for it? Are your officers in touch with the dispatcher? Can they call the officer in Lowell Thomas?

JG (39:54): We have a two-way radio system. In fact, one of the major things when I first came as director in 2002 was...I noticed each group had different...athletics had radios, student activities had radios, housing had radios, physical plant and security. So we got together, and we put together one system so that we can each talk among ourselves, alone, each department, but we've also increased the capability, where we can change a channel and all talk together. So if there was a major campus crisis, everyone can be on the same radio frequency. So our officers have radios, we call them, and the dispatcher calls on the radio, they respond, so it's

instantaneous. It's still old-school police work. Most of the officers have cell phones, if we need to get them privately, we can give them the message that way. But the radio system...the individuals carry the small ones, and they're in the cars.

GN (41:06): Any other codes... "Ten-four," or...

JG (41:07): Yeah, we have different codes for different things, but...

GN (41:14): This is a whole other area now, but... I think you can respond in a rather intelligent way. Either we've been lucky, or it's just not been brought to our attention, but I think the campus has been rather safe in regards to certain things as major theft, rape, violence, and shootings and so on...to what do you think that might be attributed? Is it the presence of security?

JG (41:50): Yeah, we have a big presence, like I said, we have seventy-four people all around. The students see that, and I think visitors and potential problem people see the visibility that we have. And the other thing that we've done, and we admit we stole the slogan from the MTA, but as you've seen in some of my emails, I always put at the bottom: "If you see something, say something." We have a lot of students, a lot of staff that call in. You know, "there's somebody walking through campus, they don't look right." You know, "there's a package left here," so... I think it's our vigilance that has helped keep the campus safe. We do also have what we call a "Radar Committee," and its health services, housing, student affairs, security, counseling... And if a faculty member, or a staff member, or another student says, look, my roommate is acting a little funny lately; or, they're very depressed lately; or, faculty says they're not coming to class; or, they used to be fairly neat and now they're all disheveled... We'll get that radar committee together and discuss that person. We're trying to head off any potential student meltdowns, where violence ensues, by using that committee and keeping an eye, we're still small enough

here at Marist to watch everybody. Our classes are twenty, twenty-five, thirty. We're not using big five hundred people lecture halls and things like that. So we get to know the faculty, get to know everybody, and know what's... that there's the potential that something's wrong. So I think that's a combination of things that help keep us safe.

GN (43:48): The security seems to be one of the things...to make things secure is just the presence of it, including the tunnel. I guess that could be another source of...transfer from one part of campus to the other. And we're open twenty four-seven, really the campus; there's somebody around all the time.

JG (44:12): We actually have an officer posted there every night of the week, from eight at night until four in the morning; they walk that area.

GN (44:20): Is that so?

JG (44:21): They walk; they go underneath the underpass, over the foot bridge. So we've adapted our patrol routines to meet the growing needs of the campus. Like, we have...in addition to that, every shift there's one officer that's just dedicated to the East campus patrol. They go across the street and they stay there the whole shift. We don't call them for a call over here, so they—and they get to know...it's the same officer every shift, so they get to know the students. It's a little different because they're upper classmen, and they develop a better rapport with them, and Littlefield is the officer that works three to eleven. The kids call her “mom” over there, you know, because she keeps an eye on them, and she tells them when they're messing up. And they like that, they appreciate her. So we do, you know, adapt as new buildings and things go online.

GN (45:20): Yeah. Well, we're getting to the end of the hour here that I thought we might take, and for some reason, it's kind of flown by...Is there something I didn't ask you about that you would like to put into this? This goes into the whole series of tapes that we have, half for

historical purpose, and they're also for someone else coming along and saying, "Well, this is what John..." you know? It can be used- -

JG (45:45): - -This is a nice project! You know, I enjoy working at Marist, I enjoy dealing with the students. There's a few knuckleheads that we deal with; they come to the office and they're all fired up and mad about something, and parents too... We try to calm them down. I think one of the things that helps... I get both students and parents telling me, "I pay forty thousand dollars, and my kid should or I should be able to do what I want. Park where I want, do what I want..." And what I tell them is: "Look, Marist philosophy is that the forty thousand dollars you pay for the education is not only for what they get in the classroom. It's for how they learn to live in a community and live in society, and just like your town, your city or village, there's rules and laws and parking regulations, and there are consequences. And that's what we're trying to teach the well-rounded person; that you should be able to live in a society, not only just get an education in the classroom." And they're kind of astounded, like, "Oh... maybe that's true." So it backs them off a little bit.

GN (46:56): And that's another area I suppose where not only do you need a bigger house, but even to have that kind of conference with somebody in your office, it's a small

JG (47:05): It's tight.

GN (47:07): Elizabeth, my Elizabeth can't hold... not too many people standing in front of her desk at the same time, she's able to move them in and out. But, even that, to be able to deal with that in that way... Well, I thank you very much. I thank you in a special way, for what you've done for our own group, the retired faculty, and the faculty, with giving us the parking here, and the other things that the president has given us: the access to the computers and the library, and privileges and things of this sort so that... we... we simply just fade over time [laughs].

JG (47:42): You know, I remember you...were the foundation. You and some of the other professors I had are the foundation of Marist, and I think a parking pass is just a small token of appreciation for what everybody's done to make Marist go from the little, small college that it was, to the national institution that it is today. And I am proud to be a part of that, and someday I'll be retired, and I hope somebody sends me a parking pass! [laughs]

GN (48:14): Very good.

JG (48:15): Thank you.

GN (48:16): Okay, and you've made part of this as a student, and now as the chief officer here at security. Keep us secure, and I hope that we have many more years of it! Thank you, John.

JG (48:28): Thank you.