

Reflections from WT with Dr. Lance Kieth

- Randy Ray: All right. Welcome to Reflections from WT. This is episode number 33, and I am Randy Ray. I'm your host. I'm the Director of Broadcast Engineering on campus. And I'm joined today by two of my favorite people in the world. Dr. Walter Wendler and Dr. Lance Kieth, good morning.
- Dr. Lance Kieth: Good morning, Randy.
- President Walter Wendler: Good morning, Randy. How are you doing?
- Randy Ray: Let me just start out by saying how much I have looked forward to this particular episode. Lance, since we've been doing this... We've been doing the podcast for two years now.
- Dr. Lance Kieth: Oh, wow.
- Randy Ray: And I have been begging to have you on from the beginning.
- Dr. Lance Kieth: That's nice.
- Randy Ray: So I think we'll have a lot of talk [crosstalk].
- Dr. Lance Kieth: So you finally ran out of content.
- Randy Ray: It's good to have you on here. Let's just jump right in. Tell me what you do on campus and tell me how long you've been here at WT.
- Dr. Lance Kieth: You bet. I'll just start with that background. I'll be 20 years, January 1, here at WT. I actually had the opportunity to come in and start the Ag Education Program, which led to Ag Communication. So, my background is in teacher ed. So, I'm on the social side of agriculture. There's a hard science side. And then there's a social side, which is interesting in our department. Anyway, I spent many years in that role in the Ag Education Program. And then Dean Hawkins, while Dean was with us, he moved up to a dean and asked me to... I was actually filling in as assistant department head and then this move was made and I became the department head. I'm in my sixth year. And so now I'm the Department Head of Agricultural Sciences. And of course, do those things of a department head. Basically, a principal of the school, per se. So, that's been good.
- Randy Ray: What's your favorite part of your job?
- Dr. Lance Kieth: The people. It's definitely the people and students.
- Randy Ray: You've done the students or the faculty?
- Dr. Lance Kieth: Both. Our ag faculty are actually world-class, and our culture in the department is very healthy. We do care about each other. It's a neat place

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to work, and being one Department of Agriculture with all these different disciplines, there's not this internal competition amongst faculty. It's people working together to accomplish the common mission of our university and our 125 Strategic Plan. And the people, they're here for something bigger than themselves. And that's what I noticed most about our department. So the faculty side, they're all essentially pulling on the same end of the rope. Students first, research, community, those things in that order. And our students, we still attract a student that comes in with the work ethic. I would say that's number one, and sense of [crosstalk]-

Randy Ray: It's interesting that you say that, you're talking about your students having a work ethic. I have told people this story before. When I came to WT, back about the same time you did, I was really surprised at how the people in my department and the people in your department connected.

Dr. Lance Kieth: Yes.

Randy Ray: I think a lot of that goes back to what you said, work ethic, don't you?

Dr. Lance Kieth: Yes. Totally.

Randy Ray: I think it's hands on and we like getting dirty and we like doing things. So I think that's a big part of it.

Dr. Lance Kieth: I do, too. And so, those are the things I love about WT. The 20 years, it's been fun to be part of and the growth we've had and just to watch the students perform. But it's really been fun to watch this morphine of WT is. When you and I got here, you brought in the fine arts building. This building we're in is awesome. And just getting to watch that over the years, this growth and expansion and not losing our identity in the process, that's been so cool.

Randy Ray: Dr. Wendler, what year did you come to WT?

President Walter Wendler: '16.

Randy Ray: '16.

President Walter Wendler: I'm starting my fifth year right now.

Randy Ray: Did you deal with ag in other schools that you either led or taught at?

President Walter Wendler: Every school I've been at-

Randy Ray: Has an ag department.

President Walter Wendler: ... has an ag department. Of course, I spent 20 years at Texas A&M. I was

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at LSU and, of course, the other land-grant. They have some areas like a sugar cane and some other areas that they're world leaders in. Southern Illinois had a strong ag department. In many ways, just like this one, it looked like a land-grant university but it wasn't. U of I was the land-grant in Illinois, but SIU was a close second in some areas. In terms of corn and bean production, row crops, they were world-class.

Randy Ray: In those schools, did ag play as a prominent role as it does here? Because [crosstalk]-

President Walter Wendler: Well, of course, A&M and LSU, yes.

Randy Ray: Yes.

President Walter Wendler: Although, I mean there's a lot of other areas of excellence at those schools, just like there are here and there was at SIU. But I think ag played a strong role because in every place I've been agriculture was deemed to be important to economic development in this state and for us. Statewide, yes. But really, regionally here. Especially with beef production and now milk and dairy production, the ag is an important discipline up here. You know what I mean?

Randy Ray: That's huge, yeah.

President Walter Wendler: Yeah, it's huge. I mean we grow... Within 100 miles, we produce 30% roughly of the beef that's consumed in America. That makes a beef production a topic of significant concern and consideration and attention. Ag is an important discipline. We are what we eat to some extent, and that's the way it works.

Randy Ray: That's true.

President Walter Wendler: I'm thankful for it. And the work ethic, ag does bring that. Because a lot of these young people, and it's not all young people, more and more, but our demographics are changing, but ag still holds onto a fairly traditional demographic of recent high school graduates that come to school. But even ag is going to change. We're going to see more people come in with associate's degrees and so on and so forth because the world has changed. People can't afford what they used to afford at public universities, but they bring that work ethic with them. But you brought it, too. And we've got people in business and nursing and education and engineering, they bring that work ethic.

Everybody I talk to talks about the fact that we have a very strong work ethic in our students here. I know a businessman, I'm not going to say his name, but I know a businessman who hired somebody to be a vice president. This is a significant international company that's headquartered

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in our region. And he hired a guy that was coming off of the west coast to help lead the organization. And this guy said, "I have never seen graduates that have the work ethic that the WT graduates have." And this is primarily in business because it's a business enterprise that I'm talking about. This is a [crosstalk]-

- Randy Ray: I think a lot of that comes from just the Texas Panhandle culture, regardless of what the disciplines go to.
- President Walter Wendler: Yeah, couldn't agree more. It's in the soil. It's in the people. I think it's in family life. Some of these things people don't talk as much about as they used to, but I think it comes from strong families. They expect young people in the families to contribute to work and so on, especially on farms and ranches. I mean, they're the next generation. If a farm or a ranch is going to turn a generational corner, you can have kids that are willing to work. You have to have people that help the enterprise move forward. Anyway.
- Randy Ray: Dr. Keith.
- Dr. Lance Kieth: Yes.
- Randy Ray: This is not really new news, but I think it's still a big deal. Talk about your new building over there for people who don't know about that.
- Dr. Lance Kieth: Sure.
- Randy Ray: I mean, when did we open that? Two years ago?
- Dr. Lance Kieth: In '18, that was when we moved in. Fall of '18 was the first semester in the building.
- Randy Ray: It's a beautiful building. It's an amazing building, really.
- Dr. Lance Kieth: Well, thank you. Do I have the leeway to give some back history and how we got to where we're at, or you just want to hear about the building?
- Randy Ray: We need to ask the boss over there.
- President Walter Wendler: Sure, sure. Yeah, go. Run with it. I will tell you though, when you talk about it being a beautiful building, the two architects that designed that building were in third-year design with me at Texas A&M. I was the faculty-
- Randy Ray: So you know them, they were your students.
- President Walter Wendler: Yeah. I told Sharp at the groundbreaking, I said, "These kids are Wendler trained." That's how we used to refer to it in the architectural profession,

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because they were in our design studios. Steve Durham and Wes Good, I told Sharp they're Wendler trained, and Sharp says, "Well, that's good. If they screw anything up, we'll know who to blame it on." But they were great students. The only thing that me was Wes Durham, who I thought would be the lead of the group, was actually worked for Wes Good. Those were the two guys are with Kirksey. It was a great firm. By the way, I think these guys are doing the tech vet school, too. I don't know if those two guys are doing it, but Kirksey is.

Anyway, they did a great job and it is a beautiful building. I actually think this is great building. There's a lot of good buildings on the campus, but I said... I can't help, I'm an architect. So I look at that as a piece of architecture. It's first rate, and no, it's not perfect. There's been hiccups. There's all kinds of stuff that goes on. It's complicated.

Randy Ray: That happens in construction.

President Walter Wendler: Because I can't build them a car. They got about as many moving parts. And trying to handle the car, I mean it's complicated. How many people work on the building and how many commands go back and forth and change orders and memos and people that could talk to. And somebody says, "Yeah, I'll do that." And they never do it so on and so forth. But by and large, it's an excellent building. Excellent facility. Okay. Lance, sorry. Go.

Dr. Lance Kieth: Yeah. Thanks. And it is, and those guys did a great job. Very pleased with it. But a little background and history and ag, at one point through university, went through some struggling times. Anyway, not to get into the depth of that, but the regrowth of ag, as we've called it, started back in the late '90s. And right people, right place. And over the time, it just had this mission to get back and to make ag strong and the WT community, as well as the Texas Panhandle. And because of the work the faculty primarily has done, attracting good students, quality education back to the work ethic, those things, and turning out a good graduate, this growth has been... Annually, have experienced growth. We, in 20 years, haven't really had a setback. There's one year in there we were down like 1%, but for 20 years, we've had a positive growth.

And so when you have that kind of growth, it lends itself to that kind of building. And right people, right time, we needed a meat slab, being a meat country. The old one was a little bit... Needed to be revamped. And so the discussion was let's have a meat slab. And back to the right people, right time, somebody suggested why don't we bid on that complex? And so through a tuition revenue bond, that was the state, they let us do. The monies were put forth for that. And we had to raise 20% of it. And we are essentially paid off. We've got some change that we've got to finish up on some interest that's occurred. But in less than a year, we essentially paid

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the thing off. And that's from local donations, essentially. People believe in what we're doing. They support what we're doing. We've got world-class programs. So, that's been fun to be part of. And then the building itself, like Dr. Wendler said, when a parent and or student steps on our building, we got them.

Randy Ray: Yeah. Yeah.

Dr. Lance Kieth: It's just getting them to the panhandle is the problem sometimes but-

Randy Ray: We have the same problem here.

Dr. Lance Kieth: Yeah. And so, the building itself has become an entity so much so that I've had to hire a facilities manager and an event coordinator. In 2019, we had 312 events.

Randy Ray: Wow.

Dr. Lance Kieth: We are going to exceed that this year already. We have not had a day in this summer that some event is not taking place in that building. And this is why we built it, we wanted outside groups, not just our academics.

Randy Ray: And you got an excellent facility to do it.

Dr. Lance Kieth: Yeah, absolutely. So anyway, it's been wonderful.

President Walter Wendler: Two things I'd tag onto that. First, and Lance indicated it, but I want to just reinforce it. The lay leadership in ag has been fantastic. I'm not going to start naming people, but industry leadership has been very supportive and that has helped with things like tuition, revenue, bonds, and so on. So it's a partnership. It's in many ways a public-private partnership. The university is public, but the private enterprises, the meat packers and beef producers and others, ranchers, cow-calf people, they've all kind of helped out. And that combination of influence and I'll say force, not with a cap, not forceful, but well, forceful leadership has been very helpful. The other thing that makes the ag, and Lance did mention this, and I just want to put a kind of an exclamation point on it. And that is that the building itself, what came basically 80% from state funds and another 20% from private funding.

Whenever you can do that, that's very, very helpful. It serves as a model for us. As a matter of fact, when you go down, and we haven't yet talked about... We've probably mentioned bureau and TVMDL, but when you go down the street from the football stadium, here's what happens. The football stadium is funded by student fees, predominantly. A little bit of other revenue, but the predominant funding source is student fees and some gifts. Ag is a split 80%, 20% between tuition, revenue, bonds, and

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donations. Then you get to TVMDL, which is money that comes from the permanent university fund at Texas A&M, at the Texas A&M university system. That's hard money to get for a regional campus, but we did it. And then down the road, one more step is the Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Labs. And that comes from a direct, not so much a state appropriation, but the approval to be able to borrow money from itself. And that's how TVMDL was funded.

So every one of those buildings has a different funding source. And as I tell people, that row of buildings from the football stadium to TVMDL is essentially a museum of how to fund buildings on a public university. It's a museum. We got one more we want to do out there. I'll think to myself, I'll stick in my thumb and pull out a plum and say, what a good boy am I. And that's what I'm waiting for. I'm waiting the last little link. I have confidence that it's going to happen. Chancellor's leadership has been powerful, powerful in all this. And the board has been very, very helpful. And to the point of getting people on the campus, I just want to mention, we've talked about this before, but the cultural foundation of the Texas Panhandle, which links together the play and the museum, which articulate carefully our history and how important it is to the state of Texas, and it is. That is a come on to get people. And I don't mean that in a negative way, but it's a way to broadcast to a large audience what we have here in the Texas Panhandle.

And Lance is spot on. When you get them on campus, they're going to come. If you get them to agree, they're seeing a brand new building. But even in some of the older facilities, they find a campus here, people tell me all the time, "I'm shocked at how nice this campus is." I try to figure out one day how many university campuses I've been on. Dozens and dozens, maybe 100 different camps. I've been all over the country going to workshops and giving talks and doing... And I mean, great universities. I'm not going to compare us to Harvard or MIT, but I've been to those places. This is a beautiful campus. And I almost said little campus because it's small compared to some. Not small compared to Harvard and MIT. They're not large either.

Dr. Lance Kieth:

Not that big.

President Walter Wendler:

No, they're not that big. And Caltech, which is probably the best engineering school on the planet, only got 3,000 students. It's tiny. So size is not it, but it's the location and the way we care for it and the sense of belonging that the physical campus helps create. It's very powerful.

Randy Ray:

I would say, WT is an oasis in more ways than just one.

President Walter Wendler:

Yes. That's right, Randy. That's exactly right.

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Randy Ray: We're going to take a break. And when we come back, I want to talk about Ag Day, okay?

Dr. Lance Kieth: Perfect.

Randy Ray: Yeah, we'll be back in one minute.

Speaker 4: West Texas A&M University is proud to call the Texas Panhandle home, and providing the top 26 counties with opportunity and qualified graduates is an important WT mission. From their first experience on campus to graduation date, the WT experience is a challenging series of steps that will embolden our students reach their full potential. And then in turn, go out into the panhandle and make a difference. Quality education with a big local return is one thing you can find here at WT. For more information about West Texas A&M University, visit our website at wtamu.edu.

Speaker 5: West Texas A&M University is a student body that learns by doing and is always seeking opportunity. Talented and accomplished faculty that teach both in and out of the classroom. Programs that provide timeless information and meet the challenges of today's world. Facilities rich in technology as well as WT history. Now is the time to strengthen connections and open doors for tomorrow's leaders. Share your experience. Share your heritage. Share your pride.

Randy Ray: Welcome back to episode number 33. This is part 2 of Reflections from WT. Dr. Kieth, tell me all about Ag Day. It's coming up pretty soon, isn't it?

Dr. Lance Kieth: Yes, sir. It's coming up September 11th, which happens to be the 20th anniversary of September 11th as we call the tragedy. And so that day, a little quick background about Ag Day, what I'd mentioned before about the growth of ag and that was once again some of these alumni. Dr. Wendler spoke to some of our industry folks and alumni that have helped. They were wise enough to know that a department at a university needs unrestricted funds, and so they started this Ag Day celebration as a chance to get together as alumni to do some barbecuing. And they had a little auction raised a little bit money.

Well, each year has just kind of evolved. And the records show that our growth is correlated almost directly to how much money's raised from this organization. So the money raised, there's two rules per se, is that it's to be spent at the discretion of the department head for recruiting or sponsorship of WTA, and not outside that. The other is I have to spend every penny or they will not raise it the next year. And so that model, when I first heard it, especially when you're looking at this money box, like, man, if we put some of that back, we do this wisdom prevailed. Bob Robinson being one of the pushers of all this things at WTA.

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- Randy Ray: Dr. Bob, yeah.
- Dr. Lance Kieth: We all know Dr. Bob. And actually, he's probably the biggest driver and has been for the last 30 years, continues to be. That's why I'm at WT is because of Dr. Bob. But anyway, because when people have money, that's when fighting and discussions and what are we going to spend it. When you're broke, you're hungry. You go get it. So, anyway, each semester we used that and we recruit, but we also have a fun day. And back to the industry, they have just blessed us with unrealistic funds the first year we're in this new building, which that fund had been growing. They raised 263 grand from one auction in two hours. And they turn around. We asked for a request for how much monies we need. So we budget to them each year. But the last few years running, they've done over 200,000 that comes directly back to us, and we use that for recruiting,
- Randy Ray: And you get to spend it.
- Dr. Lance Kieth: And I have to spend it.
- Randy Ray: And you have to spend it.
- Dr. Lance Kieth: And you have to spend it.
- Randy Ray: Is that hard to do?
- Dr. Lance Kieth: Not really in the sense we've learned to-
- President Walter Wendler: I was going to say, you better not say it is because I will say, well, somebody will take its place.
- Dr. Lance Kieth: Exactly. Somebody will get it. You'll be surprised. You've got to kind of budget and watch. But we get a large program, and now our other programs are wanting to recruit. And that's great. So it's not centralized, always centralized computing or recruiting in our department or other programs where we were getting into it further. So we spread those funds that way and things. The problem is, is spending it too quick and then waiting till next year, because it's an unknown. I'll worry a little bit from year to year.
- President Walter Wendler: I have an expression. I just said it to somebody yesterday that when you're chasing excellence, there's never enough money. I mean, when you're trying to be excellent, you can always use... Like when John Rockefeller, John D. Rockefeller was asked how much money... He was the richest man in the world. How much money is enough?
- Randy Ray: Just a little more.

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President Walter Wendler: Just a little more. And it's that way when you're chasing excellence. There's a group of three people in Cambridge, Massachusetts from Harvard University who's got more money than God. Today, right now saying, "Gosh, if we had a little bit more money, we could do X, Y, or Z." If you're chasing excellence, and the ag school is, the ag programs are, and there's many ways to use it.

Randy Ray: Yeah. I'll be the first to admit, Lance, that from my perspective, the department of communication, you guys are excellent. And in a lot of ways, we try to emulate you.

Dr. Lance Kieth: That's nice. Yeah, that is nice.

Randy Ray: I mean, we talk about that a lot of times. We need an Ag Day kind of thing. It's a bigger challenge for us because this is not an ag part of the... I mean, this is not a communication part of the country. It's an ag part of the country. So we face a bigger uphill battle, but still, we look at you guys and go, "Yeah, we need to do more things like that."

Dr. Lance Kieth: I'll give you the secret, and you have it. And everybody's involved with communication, but every... Why it's worked so well is the passion and the vision of what we want to do and what we're selling to our industry, people and thing is about teaching students about providing applicable research and meeting their needs. In other words, the mission of the university, and we stay true to that. We don't get offline. We don't get to bicker with these other things and that. And they see that outcome. And when you provide that... You can't push people across street, but you can lead them off a cliff. Not that we're leading people off a cliff, but back to any program that's out there. If you're dedicating your faculty have this common golden mission and it's focused on once again, the student, it's not our program we're focused on, it's our outputs. And they know that and they see that.

Anybody can replicate this. People want to champion, excellence or things that are moving. So that's it, and our industry is part of that. We spoke of that and we can't praise them enough. Our faculty right for the brand and in a selfless way. It's not about building their careers, it's about what I do, and in the process, their career is built. And I didn't experience that at some other universities I've worked at. It's pretty much I had to build my island. And when I went for that PNT, I had to check all the boxes here. Here, it's almost organic in a sense. You work hard here, the rest takes care of itself. And we see that in this Ag Day, which is just an expression. Actually, it's a great one day event. It's actually the wind beneath our wings as I say because without those dollars, we wouldn't have the numbers.

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And we recruit all over. Most people don't realize the extent of our recruiting out of state, in state, the amount of miles to travel. 250 grand spent a year. And we go to the ends of the earth almost, not out of country, but our kids travel. We pay recruiters. They're grad students. They're full-time grad students. But anyway, there's a magnet. We'd love to speak with anyone and share the plan. It's not complicated to replicate, but at the end of the day, you got to be ready to work and go the step. And it's weekends. Sometimes, it's late hours. It's going to Wyoming or all those things related to-

Randy Ray: I know how much you're gone.

Dr. Lance Kieth: Yeah, you know it. You don't see me at church.

Randy Ray: Yeah. I miss you a lot. So what you're saying is, and I think that the word of the day is stay focused on your mission.

Dr. Lance Kieth: Focus on the mission, yeah. And Dr. Wendler's outlined a great mission for us through the 125.

Randy Ray: The NWT 125 is that mission statement that we all cling to.

Dr. Lance Kieth: And when you have that guide, it's not rocket science at that point. Now there, how you get there is always a... But it's those things that come together. And I think we have that now in our programs across campus, but it does take a champion and a faculty and then even the industry support. And you guys here in this program would, to me, could get it easier than some others because I hear the support for our mass comm and we preach it, too. When we go to recruit, we do not just recruit for WTA. Matter of fact, we recruit for the university to the point to where I heard one of our recruiters at the FFA convention tell a kid, "Yeah. We got marine biology, best one in the state." And I'm like, "Dude, that's going a little far." But...

President Walter Wendler: [inaudible] how many water [inaudible].

Dr. Lance Kieth: Yes. All right. So yeah, we'll help. And man, it's just a blessing to be here and thank you guys. And hopefully raise a lot of money this year and about people that's listening to come out and just celebrate. You're don't have to spend any money. Just to be part of the excitement and that. And we-

President Walter Wendler: There's always good food there.

Dr. Lance Kieth: And there's good food, that's right. And entertainment, and just a good time to fellowship. And the other we need to raise some money because I had a little accident when I pulled into the parking lot, I ran smack, happened to a red Jeep and I got to fix that. And so...

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- Randy Ray: That's a problem. That's a big problem.
- President Walter Wendler: Oh, he's got a red Jeep. Okay. I was thinking, what's that?
- Randy Ray: Okay, okay. I knew we'd go along, but I want to do this anyway. Lance, every time we have a guest, I throw them a curve ball. I throw them a curve ball. I throw Dr. Wendler a curve ball.
- Dr. Lance Kieth: Okay.
- Randy Ray: So here's what it is today. I don't know how great it is. When I teach my media management class, we always do... I walk them through creating a business. And one of the things you do as you guys know, when you do business, you have to periodically do a SWOT analysis,-
- Dr. Lance Kieth: Sure.
- Randy Ray: ... strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. I'm not going to ask you two about opportunities and threats, but I would like to hear from both of you, what you think your strength is, what you think your weakness is. You need a minute to think about it. Dr. Wendler is ready to go over there.
- President Walter Wendler: Not really, but I'll go first to give Lance a minute to think about it.
- Dr. Lance Kieth: Yeah. I mean, I've got to narrow it down tomorrow. I got a lot of weaknesses.
- Randy Ray: Now, can you think of a string, for example?
- President Walter Wendler: Now, are you talking about institutional strengths and weaknesses or personal?
- Randy Ray: Personal.
- Dr. Lance Kieth: Personal.
- President Walter Wendler: Oh, that is interesting. Well, I'll say I got the same thing we want our students to have, hard work. I'm here at six o'clock in the morning every day. Now I leave at 4:00, but that's 10 hours. And I do that six days a week. I'm not bragging or asking anybody to do what I do.
- Dr. Lance Kieth: Do you really? Even on Saturdays?
- President Walter Wendler: Even on Saturdays. Saturdays, I ride all day. I used to play golf. Could never hit a golf ball like Lance, but I used to play golf on... You know, I played

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plenty. Now I've taken up writing again as a hobby. So I do that. And I think my strength is persistence and hard work. I think my weakness is sometimes I try to do too much and don't allow people around me to do what they're good at. And I have to be very careful. Lee Iacocca said one time, "If I'm hiring somebody and I'm the smartest guy in the room, I'm about ready to make a mistake." And I need to try to remember that he didn't say it quite like that, but that was the intention. You need to hire good people and let them run. I don't think of myself as a micromanager, although sometimes I do get into the details of the weeds. So, strength is hard work. A weakness is trying to do too much and sometimes control too much.

Randy Ray: Dr. Kieth, what about you?

Dr. Lance Kieth: Yeah, I'll start off with strength and I will say-

Randy Ray: I'm going to say this. I think one of your strengths is-

Dr. Lance Kieth: Thank you.

Randy Ray: I think you're-

Dr. Lance Kieth: You're making it too easy on me.

Randy Ray: You're very likable. You're very likable, and you're very personable.

Dr. Lance Kieth: And back to the university, we do the strength finder and I'm a Woo. It's like my number one, which is winning others over. And it's that part that drives me to meet people. But to get to the more personal side, the strength that I have is I couldn't decide between the ability to watch TV for endless hours or drive a golf ball, as Dr. Wendler said. That is a unique skill that I have, especially for a 55 year old man. I love that I have those young flat bellies and they just swing harder, and this old man just walk. Weakness, honestly-

President Walter Wendler: 300 yards. By the way, 300 yards and change.

Dr. Lance Kieth: Yeah, now the rest goes downhill after that. But anyway, my weakness, honestly, I think is saying thank you enough to people.

Randy Ray: Is what?

Dr. Lance Kieth: Saying thank you enough to our staff or our industry or our upper administration. You guys. Just that acknowledgement of people's efforts. And as an educator in the realm, all our favorite topics are ourselves. And I think what I see in academia a lot of times is sometimes we don't tell those people are doing all this hard work thank you. And they don't seem like

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they need it sometimes and all, but everybody needs it. So I would say that's a weakness. So thank you guys for what you do. I'll say it on air, and we appreciate you guys. And thanks for letting me be here and talk about agriculture, and love being at WT. Love what we do. Love the people here. And we have our struggles in and out, but at the end of the day, what a good place to be.

Randy Ray: Right. I totally agree with you. I tell people often I have it good all the way to the top.

Dr. Lance Kieth: Yes, we do.

President Walter Wendler: And by the way, I tell people all the time and it's the truth.

Dr. Lance Kieth: Got it good all the way to the bottom. Welcome, Randy.

President Walter Wendler: No, my turn of phrase is this is the best job I've ever had in the best place I've ever lived. I've had a few jobs and lived in a few places. I mean, I'm an across the country guy. Looks like I can't hold a job. But anyway, it's a good place.

Randy Ray: It is a good place to be. It's a good place to go to school. It's a good place to work. I can't say enough about this institution. I can't say enough about you, the listener. We thank you for listening to Reflections from WT. Again, this was episode number 33. We've been doing this over two years, and I enjoy every one of them. We appreciate you guys listening and we look forward to you listening. Next time. We'll see you then.