Jim Capshew: Shares home with unique roommate

Herman B Wells and Jim Capshew (left) relax after dinner. Capshew cleans and cooks for Wells. A psychology major, Capshew hopes to enter clinical or academic work. He has been on the dean’s list every semester.

"I always knew Dr. Wells was an important man, but I don’t think I understood how well-respected and well-loved he was," said Capshew. Once, at the Brown County Playhouse, Wells stood up to speak at a dedication. The whole crowd burst into applause. "I thought they wouldn’t stop," Capshew remembered.

"This (Wells’ home) is a more academic atmosphere than I’ve ever been in before, I mean, he’s not going to offer me some beers or ask me to get high like someone might in another situation," said Capshew. But then he added, "Dr. Wells is a liberal person. He doesn’t care when I come in at nights... It’s more like two bachelors living together."

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had been living down by optometry (School) in a dive, a rooming house, and I needed another job," said Jim Capshew, a senior psychology student. "So I went to Student Services, and looked through the job descriptions." He chose one that read: Houseperson wanted. "It didn’t say who it was for," said Capshew. But he soon learned that the job involved working for one of the most prestigious men at IU — Herman B Wells, chancellor and former president.

Some of Capshew’s duties included serving and eating dinner with Wells, preparing breakfast and working dinner parties. In general Capshew said, "I just have to be there." All of this work was in exchange for full room and board in Wells’ home.

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