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HISTORY 497 PROJECT: FARMING AND FARM FAMILIES IN DEKALB COUNTY

Oral History Interview
with
Judy Stark

November 11, 1986
Stark Farm, Malta, Il.

by Terry Kuhn

NORTHERN ILLINOIS REGIONAL HISTORY CENTER

Farming and Farm Families in DeKalb County

General topic of the interview: Farming on a moderate-sized farm with little diversification in the 1970s and 1980s. Also, social life of a farm family in DeKalb County, Illinois.

Narrator: Judy Stark
Date: November 11, 1986

Interviewer: Terry Kuhn
Place: Stark Farm on
Malta Rd., Malta, Il.

Personal Data

Judy Stark is 43 years old. She was born in Chicago, near the border of Oak Park, Il. She spent her teen-age years in suburban Wheaton, Il. As a very young woman she married Ron Stark, whose family had farmed north of Wheaton at Cloverdale for six generations. They have three children, ages 22, 20, and 15. The youngest is a daughter. The older boy farms with his father and the middle son is an electronics student. Ron and son Ken own four farms in the DeKalb area, totaling c. 500 acres. They moved to DeKalb in the mid-1970s when the farm in Cloverdale was sold for development. Ron's parents, grandmother, and an uncle and aunt moved to the area with them. For additional income, Ron hauls grain for other farmers. Judy works at a florist shop in DeKalb.

Interviewer's Comments

Judy has very strong feelings about farming and the tradition of farming in the Stark family. The years that she and Ron lived and farmed in the Cloverdale area were full of meaning for her, and despite the fact that she loves her life in Malta, it seemed that she had left something behind in Cloverdale. Additionally, Judy maintained that her involvement on the farm was minimal, which led to some insecurity in commenting about farming practices. However, her comments about family life both in Malta and in Cloverdale are valuable.

Interview with [redacted]
Date: [redacted]
Interviewer: [redacted]
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ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW WITH JUDY STARK

November 11, 1986

INTERVIEWER: TERRY KUHN

OH 3.18

Transcribed By Mary Lee Torrence

June, 1990

SIDE ONE

Terry: This is Terry Kuhn. I'm talking to Judy Stark. It's November 11, 1986. We're going to be talking about the family farm in DeKalb county. We're in Malta, Illinois. Do I have permission to do this tape, Judy?

Judy: Yes, you do.

Terry: Judy, before we start talking about farming right now....

(There is a long pause from 739 to 750)

Judy: We did have milk cows, pigs, and his mother raised chickens. Well, his grandmother raised chickens, and his mother took over the chickens.

Terry: In regards to the chickens, that's an interesting subject for me. What did they do with the chickens?

Judy: She raised them to sell the eggs. And she had all different kinds, several hundred. When we were married, I think she was down to probably like about three, four hundred, and then it got less and less. And when she became ill, then she did get rid of the chickens.

Terry: When you say, "she," is this...?

Judy: My mother-in-law. Her mother-in-law had the chickens first and then she took over from her.

Terry: Did you ever hear how they sold those eggs?

Judy: Just at their back door. They didn't take them anywhere. Just customers came right to the house. They, she, had a sign out in front of the house and people would come. You know, for years the same people would just keep coming all the time or they would send friends out and they had people that would come all the way from the city, from Chicago, and the different suburbs. They would come out for the fresh farm eggs.

Terry: Did they have cattle?

Judy: They had milk cows. But this was before my husband and I were born. I don't really know when they got rid of the cattle. It was probably before, well we were married in '63, so it would have been prior to that.

Terry: Do you ever remember hearing her talk about the cattle and what her role was with those cattle?

Judy: I don't think, as far as his mother, I don't really think she did much as far as milking. Now her mother-in-law, and this is way back, used to help with the milking. But I don't think my mother-in-law really did that much.

Terry: Did you ever hear your mother talk about her mother-in-law? Well, she milked the cows, did she have any other involvement with the process? For example, churning or how they handled...

Judy: I don't remember hearing them talk about anything like that.

Terry: Did your mother-in-law ever talk about any other work that she did on the farm besides the chickens?

Judy: Her work was mainly just the house, you know. I don't remember hearing her ever talk about doing any field work or anything like that. The only thing I ever saw her do was baling once in awhile and she would drive the tractor for that, but she never did planting or combine or anything like that. She didn't do any of the field work.

Terry: Do you ever remember talking about how she perceived herself as contributing to the farm?

Judy: I think that her main goal in life was to be a wife and mother. And like I say, she had her chickens and garden and that type of thing. But her job was the house and raising a family. They had four children, so I think that was really her life.

Terry: With the garden, did she do a lot of canning?

Judy: Yes she did a lot of canning.

Terry: Was that the main way that they preserved food in those days or did they also have freezers?

Judy: I suppose in the later years, like in the years when my husband and I were first married, she did freeze some. But shortly after we were married she had several illnesses, so as far as other than housework, a lot of other things just kind of slowed down because she wasn't able to do them anymore. But she worked hard with her chickens though, I remember that.

Terry: You said she might have had three or four hundred chickens?

Judy: At one time, at least that many.

Terry: How many houses do you need to keep that many chickens in?

Judy: Well, they had two houses - and I don't really remember, it's been so long ago - I don't really remember how many within each house. When I was first married she had them in two separate houses and then she got less and less, and so she just had them in the one house then. But she loved it. 'Cause we always thought, oh, when she became ill, we'd be so glad to get rid of those chickens. And I think she felt worse about getting rid of those chickens than anything because she just enjoyed doing it. And it got her outside even in the worse winter weather. She enjoyed going out and taking care of the chickens and gathering the eggs. I think it was, as far as like cleaning the eggs and grading them and that type of thing, it was relaxing for her. Because she did all that in the basement and she would just sit down there by herself, and I think it just gave her some time to be alone and think things over or whatever. But she really enjoyed it a lot.

Terry: When she cleaned the eggs, how did she do that and how did she grade them?

Judy: OK. She had, you know, one of those little graders where you just weigh the egg and then she knew if it was large or medium or small or whatever. And as far as cleaning them, most of them weren't that dirty. I mean she didn't put them in water. She had a wet rag and would just wipe them off and put them in the boxes.

Terry? So the eggs, then, were graded by weight?

Judy: I think, if I remember right, that's the little machine, I don't know what you call it, you put the egg on it and it would weigh it and she would box them according to the weight and that's how she sold them.

Terry: Did she do what was called candling?

Judy: She did. That's right, yeah, she did do that. I forgot about that.

Terry: Could you describe what that process is as you remember it?

Judy: I can't remember how the light was because there was some kind of light or something, and then you could see if there was blood or something in there, and then she'd set those aside. But I just can't remember, 'cause we're talking twenty years ago. You know, it's like I watched her, but it isn't something that has stuck with me because I never really did it myself.

Terry: Does this sound familiar? It was like a, well, my dad used to work for a grocery store, he did this. They had a little box with a hole in it that was probably about the size of a, oh, just so the end of the egg could go in, and a light was in the box, and....

Judy: No, that doesn't sound like what she had. I really don't remember. All I can remember was sitting there and she'd weigh them. I always remember every time she'd take the egg off it would clink, you know. And you could always tell if she was downstairs 'cause you could hear that noise.

Terry: Now, Judy, you said she had four children?

Judy: Yes.

Terry: Of those four, Ron farms. And what about the other three?

Judy: The other three were all girls, and none of them farmed. And they didn't marry farmers, so he was the only grandson. His dad only had one brother and he and his wife didn't have any children, so Ron is the only one that kept on farming.

Terry: How did it happen, then, that you and Ron came out to DeKalb County?

Judy: Originally, Ron's parents bought land out here, well, bought this farm. And then his parents built the new house that's right next door to us. But then his dad passed away, like, well, we moved out here in June, he passed away the April before we moved out here - rather suddenly he had a heart attack. And then his mother was ill, and she only lived here a year before she died.

So really his dad never got to live here. And Ron's grandparents, who also lived on the same farm in Cloverdale, they moved out here, but moved into town, in Malta. And then his grandfather, oh, they lived here about four years maybe before he passed away. But he was in and out of nursing homes before he passed away. And then his grandmother still lived in town up until three years ago and she fell and broke her shoulder. She's at Pine Acres now, a nursing home in DeKalb.

Terry: What year was it, then, that you and Ron came out here? I don't think we've quite established that.

Judy: '74, 1974.

Terry: What happened to the farm in Cloverdale?

Judy: The land - most of it - was sold long before we moved out here to to developers, which is what Stratford Square and their subdivisions and everything was there. And then, like I said before, his grandparents and his parents together bought the farm where we live now. Then when his father and mother both passed away, some of the farm was left to Ron and some to his sisters. And their home, which is next door to us, was left to his sisters.

Terry? And who lives in that house now?

Judy: Now, Ron's aunt and uncle. His father's brother. Well, other people lived in it. After his mother died, his sister sold the house to a newlywed couple and they lived there for several years. Then they were divorced. Ron's aunt and uncle lived in DeKalb. They moved out here about a year after we did. They also lived in Cloverdale. And when they heard that this was for sale again - his uncle still liked the country better than town, DeKalb was city to him - so when they heard the house was for sale again, they just decided they'd like to live in the house and still keep it in the Stark family, and this the Stark farm and everything. The woman who lived next door with her children decided she'd rather live in town, so it just worked out perfectly. They just traded houses. And so that's how they came to live next door to us.

Terry: When we're talking about the Stark farm, I think it would be good now to tell just exactly, or describe just exactly, where the land is located.

Judy: We're on Malta Road, and we're about seven miles west of DeKalb and about two miles north of Malta.

Terry: How many acres do you have here?

Judy: Here we have, it's close to one hundred and eighty, this farm.

Terry: Oh, on this farm? Do you work some other land?

Judy: Yes, we have - I knew you were going to ask me that 'cause I always tell my husband I never can remember how much we have all together. We have a farm in Esmond. And then we have another one that's on McQueen Road that I guess really is Malta. And then we have a farm in Shabbona that we, just, well, we're buying last year. And the one in Shabbona, part of it we're buying, and part of it our oldest son is buying. But now Ken, our oldest son, gosh let me think. He is, well, when we lived in Cloverdale, our boys, who are, I think, the sixth generation of Starks on the same farm. But when we moved out here, Ken was in fifth grade, so he never really farmed. But yet they still were, you know, our children were still Starks that lived on the same farm.

Terry: Did you tell me where, exactly to your recollection, that farm in Cloverdale is located?

Judy: In Cloverdale we were approximately five miles north of Wheaton. And the town at that time was Cloverdale, but there was like a grocery store and a tavern. And now they don't even call it Cloverdale anymore; they call it Bloomingdale. And it was right on Army Trail Road about two miles east of Gary Avenue.

Terry: Is any of the land that your running now, rented?

Judy: No.

Terry: So you own all of this land?

Judy: Well, we will some day. But, no, we don't rent any land.

Terry: The reason I was wondering that, is I was wondering what kind of rent you get for an acre up here.

Judy: I don't know 'cause we don't rent any, so I really have no idea.

Terry: With the homestead here, you've got the house. It's a beautiful house. It's beautifully decorated, really nice furniture and all well laid out and everything. And I couldn't tell, now, as I drove up, what do you have for buildings? You've got a big barn...

Judy: OK. We have a barn, and we have a corn crib that is right over here, and we have a machine shed over here, and we have another stone block building that is on the other side of the barn that we just keep machinery in, there. People that farmed here before us, I think they had hogs and they used to keep their hogs in there. We have hogs now which we've had about the last year, but we keep them in the barn. They just re-converted part of the barn and we keep them in there.

Terry: About how many pigs do you run a year?

Judy: Oh gosh, I don't really know how many we have now. 'Cause we've had them about a year. I don't know. I'd have to ask one of the help.

Terry: Is it a complete farrowing unit?

Judy: No, we don't have farrowing, just feeder pigs.

Terry: Well, then, do you buy them when they're a certain weight?

Judy: Uh-hum. When they're like forty pounds I think. Forty-fifty pounds is when we get them. The last couple times we've got them from some place up in Wisconsin. When we first started out, first couple times we bought them, we just got them from one of our neighbors, that farrow, and we bought them from them. But now I think the last few times we've got them from the same place in Wisconsin.

Terry: Why did you decide to get the pigs?

Judy: Just the extra money. It was a good time to get into it at the time, and then with our oldest son in farming it was just a way for him to earn extra money too. We did have cattle before that, but we would only get like five or six at a time, and we would just feed them, just for ourselves. And then my husband's sisters or friends or other members of the family would, you know, like one would take half a steer, and the other one would take a half or something like that. But now since we have the pigs we don't have steers anymore at all.

Terry: When you did have the steers, did you prefer any particular breed?

Judy: They were just mixed.

Terry: So right now you've got the pigs, no cattle. Any other livestock?

Judy: No.

Terry: And then what kind of crops does Ron grow?

Judy: Corn and beans. Mainly corn. The majority of it is corn.

Terry: What kind of yield does he get?

Judy: This year I have no idea. I feel terrible that I don't know.

Terry: Well, in years past, just roughly.

Judy: I don't know. This year I don't think it's as high as it's been other years. And of course the beans aren't, you know, everybody's beans are bad. Ours are too.

Terry: Why are they?

Judy: Because the mold, because we've had so much rain, you know, before they were ready to pick. So they are not as good as they've been other years.

Terry: We had a lot of rain, what's that, last month?

Judy: Uh-hum.

Terry: Right at the time they should be ripening.

Judy: So a lot of them -- well, I think all over they're like that.

Terry: Could you describe your land to me as far as how it lays?

Judy: Here at home, I think it's fairly level. The farm that we have on McQueen Road, which I guess it's still technically Malta, that's a little bit more hilly. And Esmond is more like at home; and Shabbona is about the same as it is at home.

Terry: I have, a little bit later, I have a few more questions about farming. But I'd like to ask you, Judy, in terms of your own work on the farm and running the house, how do you perceive that work?

Judy: What do you mean?

Terry: Well, what I mean is, what is your involvement in the farming operation, and then what's your involvement in your work in the house?

Judy: Well, OK. I do have an outside job, so I don't do any field work at all. I don't do much on the farm, really, especially now that our boys are older, and then since I work. I used to, like in the fall, when we'd run the dryer, I used to have to kind of take turns 'cause they don't really like to leave the farm when the dryer is going. But now with me working, there are some times when they have to just leave. So there can't be somebody there to watch it all the time. But I don't do any field work at all.

Terry: I'm real curious if nowadays, when it is harvest time and the combines are in the fields and several fellows are working on the combines, do the women ever prepare meals for the....

Judy: You mean to take it out?

Terry: To take out, or, how does that work?

Judy: Here, when I'm at home, they just come in. If they're away on another land, you know, kind of spread out, they usually just take something with them. And if I'm going to be gone, 'cause I don't work everyday, then most of the time I will make lunch for them, and they'll either take it with them when they go in the morning, or they'll - of course they're back and forth all day - so on one of the trips back then they'll take something with them. But as far as a hot meal, I don't ever do that. They don't ever take anything hot with them, mainly because, 'course now with my job, I'm just not here to do it, plus they don't really like to take the time. Most of the time they're eating in the truck or the combine, so they just have a sandwich or something like that. So I think that way is probably much different than years ago when they used to have hired hands and they would come in at noon and we'd have twelve or fifteen hired hands sitting around a table. I remember my husband's grandmother telling stories like that.

Terry: What kinds of things would she say?

Judy: She used to talk a lot about, well, just fixing these big meals during harvest and the busy times of the year, and they would have hired hands, and she would fix these big enormous meals at noon. And I remember, my mother-in-law during their busy times, she would have the big meal at noon. My husband and his dad worked the farm together and they would come in and would have a big meal at noon, and then at night they would have what we call lunch. They would just have something light at night. But it didn't seem to work out the same when I started doing it.

Terry: Is that the way that most of the women in the neighborhood here do it?

Judy: I think they do. The ones that are more like my age, the ones that I talk to, that's kind of the way they do it.

Terry: When you have to stay out by the dryer, what do you do when you're out there?

Judy: It's mainly just to keep an eye on it, that if something happens, that it wouldn't overflow or fire or something. But luckily nothing ever happened when I was in charge of it. If it would overflow you would have to shut everything down. If something would block up the auger or something, you would shut it down. It always made me kind of nervous. And I was always, I'd sit there and hope and pray that nothing would ever happen, because I guess it's just machinery, that type of thing, that always made me kind of nervous. And I thought, well, really, that's when something will happen, when you have someone who's not confident and is nervous about it. Like I say, luckily nothing ever happened when I was in charge of keeping an eye on things.

Terry: And then, how about around the house?

Judy: Well, just general housework. Now my daughter is getting older, and especially with me working, I'm giving her more and more responsibility taking over with the housework.

Terry: Why did you decide to go to work?

Judy: Mainly just for spending money. I really didn't go to work because we were desperate for the money. What I make doesn't really pay any bills. It's just extra. I

wanted new furniture when we first moved here, and so my husband said, "Ok, if you want furniture, why don't you get a job?" And I said, "Ok, I guess I will." So since we've moved here, just about everything we have is new compared to what we had before. And so it's just kind of independence, and it's just nice to work and know that I don't have to go. I shouldn't brag now, who knows, tomorrow I may need two jobs, you never know. But that's one of the best things about it - I just go because I want to, and I enjoy it most of the time, going to work.

Terry: In terms of handling your money, do you keep it separate and spend it yourself?

Judy: Yes. I do have a savings account that's in my name. Most of the time when I get my paycheck, I try to put some in my savings account and the rest I just spend. I don't really even keep track of it. I don't really have to answer for it. But I do try to save some of it. Which is like a lot of the furniture, new furniture that I bought. I just saved for it and when I had enough I decided what I wanted to go and buy, and then I just went and bought it.

Terry: In other words, all your new furniture is bought with money that you worked for?

Judy: Right. Uh-Hum.

Terry: And how does that make you feel?

Judy: It makes me feel good. I probably brag about it more than I should. But it just feels like I accomplished something. And eventually would have probably had new furniture anyway, but I just think I enjoy it because I went out earned it myself, so it makes it kind of nice.

Terry: Did you tell me what you're doing, Judy?

Judy: I work for a florist in DeKalb.

Terry: What's the name?

Judy: Glidden Florist.

Terry: Glidden. Is that located...?

Judy: Yeah, it's right on Lincoln Highway, just east of Annie Glidden. It's right next to Burger King. So if you go that way, you go right by there.

Terry: Now, Judy, in terms of your own friends, how did you get to know the women you consider to be your best friends?

Judy: All of our friends out here are all in farming. So when we first moved here we had a lady that lives down the road, Marsha Huber. This used to be a Huber farm. So when we first moved here, she was real friendly and outgoing and involved in a lot of community things, so so she just kind of took me under her wing and introduced me. And I joined the Home Extension, so I did meet a lot of women that way. Ann Anderson, who you interviewed, is a neighbor. Her in-laws live right across the road from us, and that's how I met her. Jack and Bev Kuhn we just met from Ann Anderson and Marla. We knew them first, and they introduced us. But then it turned out, it's kind of a coincidence because Jack's grandfather used to live across the road from my husband's grandmother years ago, in Wheaton. So it would have been Ed, and I don't know how many other brothers there were....

Terry: Oh, it was a big family.

Judy: Yeah, but Stella, her name was Armbrus at that time, at one time lived across the road from Kuhn. And so we had no idea it was even the same family until we started talking about the Kuhns. So it just turned out to be a coincidence that she knew Jack's grandfather from years and years ago, seventy, eighty years ago probably.

Terry: That is something. Yeah, in Wheaton that was a real big family. So now you've mentioned Ann and Bev and some other friends you've made through extension, the Farm Extension. What would be a typical get together? if you were going to get together with Bev or Ann, what would be some things you'd do?

Judy: A lot of times we just get together for dinner and we play cards. We do that a lot. There used to be five couples and we would have progressive dinner parties, that type of thing. One time we went to Las Vegas, which is the only time we took a trip together, all of us. With Jack and Bev we go on snowmobile trips with them quite a bit. And when we first met Jack and Bev, 'course all our kids were younger then, we used to spend a lot of time with them, although my kids are older than Jack and Bev's. We even took a couple of mini vacations together. We just had a lot in common. We still see a lot of Jack and Bev.

Terry: When you get together, is it mainly as couples?

Judy: I think with Ann and I, 'course Ann's quite a bit younger than I am, but we just have more in common with Ann.... I think we think a lot alike. 'Cause we've even gone shopping and we've picked out, like separately, we've picked out the same thing, and have come home and I'll go to her house...and its the same thing. One time, like that little wheat hanging I have over there on the wall. I bought that up in Milwaukee at the fair, and she came over when I first had it, and she said, "Where did you get that? I just bought one in Sycamore, the same identical thing. And we've bought clothes that are similar. And it's really fun, 'cause like I say, she's, oh, ten years younger than me.

Terry: With Ann and Bev and any of the other women, do you ever work together?

Judy: No, no not really.

Terry: What about any other women in the neighborhood, like your great aunt?

Judy: My husband's aunt? Yeah, well, Harry and Mary don't have any children, so my husband's always been very close to his uncle just because they never had any children. And they were just a close-knit family. So Harry comes over a lot, and my husband or Ken, my older son, he has a farm in Lee. He lives up right here, but he does farm in Lee.

Terry: Ken?

Judy: Harry. Harry does. So they help Harry out every once in awhile. So, we're really as close to Harry and Mary as we would be to my husband's parents, 'cause my husband's parents were both gone. And like I mentioned, Harry and Mary don't have any children, so I think Harry really considers Ron more of a son than just a nephew.

Terry: What kinds of things do you do with Harry and Mary?

Judy: Well, when we have family parties they're over here, they're always here for that. Mary and I, we haven't been shopping for a long time 'cause I work and she's so active in so many like senior citizens things, and she takes ceramics and calligraphy, and painting and whittling - I mean she's busy all the time.

Terry: How old is she?

Judy: Mary is seventy - don't tell her I said that! It's really good that she is so involved in everything. Really, Ron sees Harry much more than I see Mary, even though she lives right next door. But if she is around, I'm working, or whatever.

Terry: Does Mary drive herself?

Judy: Yes, she does. Of course, it's Harry's mother that's in the nursing home, so a lot of times if we see them together, it's Sunday when we're all at Pine Acres together.

Terry: Pine Acres is the nursing home?

Judy: Right, it's where grandma is.

Terry: In terms of Ron's friends, how do they meet each other?

Judy: Well, the ones that we have out here, they're all farmers, so we just met them, you know, since we moved here, and if you meet one then you just meet more of them. The majority of our friends are in farming.

Terry: How do they help each other? Do they work together?

Judy: Well, we don't. I know Andersons and Kuhns work together.

Terry: They do.

Judy: But, Ron, you know, Ken works with him, but he doesn't really work with anybody else. I mean they might borrow machinery or that type of thing, but they don't harvest or plant together or anything the way that Kuhns and Andersons do.

Terry: How old is your son Ken?

Judy: He's twenty-two, and then we have another son that's twenty. And our daughter is fifteen.

Terry: Let's see. Now, so you have land in four different places. And you don't share labor with anyone. Ron and Ken do everything.

Judy: Well, Dave helps some. Dave's in college, he goes to Kishwaukee College, so he does some. But the rest Ken and Ron do.

Terry: Does it seem like a lot of traveling?

Judy: It probably seems so to them. But when we lived in Cloverdale, well, it's been so many years, but Ron's dad, at one time they had a about a thousand acres. And it was spread all over, there would be, you know, fifty, sixty acres here. So they probably did more traveling then, especially the closer it got to when we left. It was so built up and busy, that they were driving tractors down busy roads, where here, wherever our land is, you're not really going into DeKalb. It's either north or south, so there isn't anything that's east. So as far as moving machinery and stuff, it isn't that time-consuming as it would be if it was a busier area.

Terry: What kind of machinery does Ron need? How many acres do you have total?

Judy: Gosh, I don't know.

Terry: Roughly.

Judy: About five, a little bit more than five hundred. Well, he has a combine, and he has five tractors. One is just an old one that he just bought. It's like an antique, so he does use it a little bit, but he bought it kind of for an antique. We have our own grain truck, and so we do some hauling for other people which now Ken does, a lot of that.

Terry: Before you go on, how does that work when you haul some grain for another farmer? How do you charge for that?

Judy: They go through the elevator in Creston. And then if he has some grain to haul, corn or beans or whatever, and he calls, and then Ron or Ken, whoever, takes it. Then they take it to the river and then they just get so much. I guess it's so much a bushel. I don't know. I feel so stupid sitting here - Ken's probably over there laughing at me. I can see him grinning.

Terry: What do you mean, they take it to the river?

Judy: He just.... He's laughing. He's having a good time over there. They haul it to the river.

Terry: What river is that?

Judy: To the Illinois River? (male voice, "Yep," in background).

Terry: How does that work? I'm real curious about that. Are there barges?

Judy: Yeah. They just haul it to the river, and then they load it on the barges and it goes to where ever. I don't know where it goes after it leaves there.

Terry: But is it sold before it goes to the river?

Judy: Right, yes, it's sold before. Yeah, there's just so much sold. And then, you know, they just haul so much of it, if it's ours, or if they haul for somebody else. And they just keep making how many trips it takes until they've sold.

Terry: Do they ever sell it on the ??

Judy: Uh-hum, my husband does sometimes. But really, this is the part I really feel stupid about. Because I really don't understand it. You know, I mean it's things we discuss, but I guess I just don't have a head for it. I keep telling my husband, "I just don't understand it." 'Cause like the bookkeeping, he keeps all the books. I don't do anything. And, I sit there and try to go through it, but I just don't have a head for it. So it's a good thing he does. And of course now that Ken's getting into it more...well, if you don't have a head for figures or that type of thing, you just don't.

Terry: Well, I can understand that. Now let's go back to the machinery. You have a combine, five tractors, a grain truck....

Judy: Grain truck. Well, wagons. Dryer, we have a dryer, you know, augers, plows, all that.

Terry: With regards to the plow, the plows, how many rows do they do at a time?

Judy: I have no idea. Five, he's holding up.

Terry: Five rows? Ok.

Judy: I ought to have him over here.

Terry: Well, as far as the seed corn goes, does he have any preference, or how does he decide on that?

Judy: He buys - I'm still looking over there for answers - he gets it from several different...he just knows from year to year which is better.

Terry: Does he decide on one particular variety, or does he have any way of spreading out the risk?

Judy: I think he just goes by what he knows what was good the previous year, the yields and that type of thing.

Terry: One more question about field work. Did they do chisel plowing or mill-board plowing?

Judy: Chisel.

Terry: Now, lets talk again about some family things. This will be a little bit more along our lines here. Could you describe a typical Sunday for me?

Judy: Well, Sundays we always go to church. And the majority of the time we go together. Once in a while, one of the boys will go separately, but I think the vast majority of the time the five of us go together. Most Sundays we go to the nursing home after church to visit with my husband's grandmother. Once in a while, if we do go to a later church, we might stop in DeKalb and have lunch at McDonald's or something like that. And then just spend the rest of the day at home. If we have family birthday parties, like with my husband's sisters there was twelve grandchildren all together, so we do get together for birthday parties up until the kids are out of high school. Of course now I only have one birthday party, where I used to have three of them a year. So we do get together with my husband's sisters for birthday parties. We trade off every year to a different one, you know, the four of us, for Christmas.

Terry: Do they live around here then?

Judy: Two of them live in Kingston. The one lives in Glen Ellyn.

Terry: Kingston. Where is Kingston?

Judy: Kingston is northeast of us, right by Genoa.

Terry: With regards to church, what church do you go to?

Judy: We go to St. Mary's in DeKalb.

Terry: Why did you decide to go into DeKalb to church?

Judy: Well, because there isn't a Catholic church in Malta. There's the Methodist and I think the other one is Congregational. So DeKalb was the closest Catholic

church. We're almost like right between DeKalb and Rochelle, but we're supposed to go to DeKalb. That's our parish, so that's where we go.

Terry: What kinds of things to you do at church besides go to Mass?

Judy: I don't belong to any outside organizations at all other than taking the kids to CCD, and I've helped out different times with that. But when we went to church in Cloverdale, I did belong to Council of Catholic Women. But it was a much smaller parish and most of the women were relatives. 'Cause it was all Starks and Hahns, Paulings. There was several families that had belonged to the church since the very beginning. Malta is a small community but Cloverdale was much smaller. And there was a grade school that our children, the boys, went to. Our daughter was too young; she never attended there. But it was the same grade school that my in-laws went to and my husband and his sisters. Plus when we lived right in that area, it was much easier to get to know people, and I just felt more involved and closer to the people. We moved to DeKalb, it was such a bigger church and bigger parish, and we didn't know anybody. And then living farther from it.... When we lived in Cloverdale, we were only like half a mile down the road from the church, and here we're much farther away. So I've never become involved in anything like that out here.

Terry: Did you say that in Cloverdale many of the families who were in the parish there were old families? They had known each other for a long time?

Judy: Right. Relatives with my husband's mother's family and his father's family. And so a lot of the people were cousins, aunts and uncles, or, you know. They were all intermarried, so no matter just about who you talked to was related to somebody else. It was a much smaller, tighter community than it is out here.

Terry: That would have been in the fifties?

Judy: Well, when I was first married, it was in '63. Yeah, but when St. Isadore, well, they had their fiftith anniversary before we moved out here. And so, my husband's family was the first family that went to that parish. They used to go to St. Michael's in Wheaton before that. And with the priest there, because it was a smaller community, everybody was much closer with him. I wasn't Catholic until I was married, and so I always got along very well with the priest. A lot of people

didn't; he was an old German and sometimes he was difficult to get along with. But I think because I was a convert and I took instructions from him, I was always real friendly with him. And my husband was an altar boy there, and then Ken, our oldest son, was altar boy.... So I just felt more, you know, comfortable - just knew everybody there - where out here it was much different.

SIDE TWO

Terry: At the church in Cloverdale, did it seem that...no, that's not what I want to know. How were the women involved in the church in Cloverdale?

Judy: Well, there was Catholic Daughters, which, of course, my mother-in-law and husband's grandmother and his aunt, and all the ones that were like a generation older than I - they all belonged to Catholic Daughters. I belonged to Council of Catholic Women, which my mother-in-law kind of talked me into. Now Catholic Daughters, they were mainly, like I say, older women. The Council of Catholic Women were both older women and women that were in my age group, which I think I felt more comfortable in. Plus I wasn't born and raised Catholic, so....

Terry: What did the Catholic Daughters do?

Judy: I really don't know because I never belonged to that.

Terry: OK.

Judy: Council of Catholic Women. I was the secretary for a year before we moved out here. They would just have fund raisers and they would clean the church, you know, that type of thing.

Terry: What kind of fund raiser do you remember?

Judy: They would always have a Christmas bazaar. Then a lot of times I...there was a grade school there, so I used to help out at the grade school too. I worked in the library, and I was sort of the gym teacher. They really didn't have a P.E. course, you know, like they do in public school. But I used to go down couple days a week and just take the kids outside and play games and that type of thing. I did that for a couple years. It was such a small school. They used to have like first and second grade together, third and fourth,

fifth and sixth, seventh and eighth, and I think in the whole room there was maybe ten or fifteen kids in the two classes. So it was a really small school, so you knew all the kids. Of course, even out here, there is in my daughter's class, I think there's only about thirty kids. So you still know all of them, but not as well as you did then, when there was only half that many.

Terry: A lot of the families, then, overlapped in the church? And this was a Catholic school?

Judy: Yes it was.

Terry: OK. So they did overlap?

Judy: Yes.

Terry: When you moved out here, then, in the 60s, your children started school...?

Judy: In '75. '74.

Terry: Oh, you moved out here in '74, so you lived in Cloverdale then for about ten years?

Judy: Yes.

Terry: When you moved out here, where did your children go to school?

Judy: They went to the public school in Malta. If there had been a parochial school in Malta, then we would have sent them there. We could have sent them to DeKalb, but then we just kind of decided, well, we would have had to drive them back and forth, 'cause there wouldn't have been any bus service. And so we decided it was just easier to just send them to the public school. So the boys, when we moved out here I think Ken started fifth grade out here and Dave started third grade, so they each had, you know, a couple years of parochial school. Our daughter was only two and a half when we moved out here, so she never attended a parochial school.

Terry: What was your involvement down here at the Malta school?

Judy: I've always, well, I've been room mother I think for each one of them at least one year that they were in grade school. I worked mainly with my daughter with the R.I.F. program.

Terry: What is that?

Judy: Reading is Fundamental. The kids would read so many books and then we would get free books from where ever, and then the kids would come and they would be able to pick out a free book. So I worked at that. It was like once a year they would do that; I think I did that two or three years. And when they would have, like selling T-shirts or candles or something like that at Christmas to make money, I would usually help out.

Terry: Did you feel a difference between the school in Cloverdale, which was a smaller school, and the school at Malta, which wasn't a very big school either?

Judy: Malta was still a very small school, but Cloverdale was even smaller. But I think, like at Cloverdale being a parochial school, it was the same people you would see at church all the time. So you got to know them much better, you know. And plus a lot of them, like I mentioned before, like half of them at least, were related or shirt-tail relatives or something. But of course with kids it doesn't take you very long to know people and get involved in things when you have kids in school. So I really have always felt very comfortable out here. It didn't take very long at all until I met a few people. And I never felt strange or like I wanted to go back home or anything like that. I always liked it here right away, which was easy, you know, much easier for everyone, and I think for the kids too. 'Course we felt we fit in, so I think it made it easier for the kids too.

Terry: As the kids were growing up, at the Malta school, what kinds of activities were they involved in?

Judy: Well, the boys were in 4-H. Ken more so than Dave. Dave was in a couple years, but Ken was in 4-H a lot. He used to show steers at the fairs and stuff like that. And they wre both in F.F.A. too. Ken showed steers in F.F.A. too, so he was always a little bit more involved than the younger boy.

Terry: Now, 4-H and F.F.A. - that's Future Farmers of America, right? Why would they choose one or the other?

Judy: Well, the 4-H, 'course you could be in 4-H through high school, but the F.F.A. is high school age. So most the time, I think kids would just go from 4-H into F.F.A. And of course, F.F.A., years ago it used to only be boys, but there's a lot of girls, even girls that didn't live on farms. You know, you didn't have to live on a farm to belong to it.

Terry: What kinds of things would the girls do in F.F.A.?

Judy: The same things as the boys. They could show animals or whatever. So it didn't really matter if you were a boy or a girl, you could do the same thing.

Terry: Were the programs mainly centered around animal raising, or were there other types of programs involved?

Judy: There were other programs, but the only one Ken was involved in was the steers. He used to show those every year. So we used to go - oh they always had the F.F.A. fair at Sandwich. And then sometimes he would go up to Belvidere. Which was it? Boone County. Yeah.

Terry: What about your daughter? What was her name?

Judy: Jenny. She did belong to 4-H for a couple years but, she just wasn't involved in it that much. She did go to 4-H camp one year. Neither of the boys ever went to 4-H camp.

Terry: What do they do at the 4-H camp?

Judy: They would just have swimming, that type of thing, and crafts. I think she went twice, but that was in grade school. That's been quite a while.

Terry: When she was in 4-H, what kinds of things did she choose to do?

Judy: Mainly it was cooking. She didn't get into sewing or anything like that, so it was mainly cooking projects that she would do. But I think one of the main reasons she belonged was because her best girlfriend's mother was one of the leaders, and she kind of talked her into joining. So she liked it, but she really wasn't overly interested in it. I think it was just the two years that she belonged.

Terry: What about other activities at the school, like sports?

Judy: OK. Ken was the only one that was involved in sports. He was on the soccer team just his senior year. But Dave and Jen aren't involved with sports at all.

Terry: Now, Dave and Jen are still in high school?

Judy: No. Dave's twenty; he's in college.

Terry: That's right. He goes to Kishwaukee.

Judy: Jen's fifteen, so she's a sophomore. She's the last one we have in school.

Terry: Is Jen dating yet?

Judy: Kind of. Yeah, a little bit. Just starting.

Terry: And when the boys were dating, going through school, what kinds of things did they do for fun?

Judy: I don't know. (Laughs) I want to know what they did.

Terry: You know, what did they do on a date?

Judy: Go to parties. Malta has a lot of parties, so I think Ken used to go to a lot of parties or movies, that type of thing. David does not date. David spends a lot of time at home; he's much quieter. Ken was always much more outgoing than Dave, and Jen is kind of in-between; she's quiet, but not as quiet as Dave, and not as outgoing as Ken.

Terry: Do you feel that the way that you direct Jen in her dating is different from the boys? Or is it the same?

Judy: Well, like I say, she hasn't really been dating. She has been out a couple times with a boy friend. Most the time she just spends more time with her girl friends, or she has a boy that she talks to on the phone once in a while. But she just isn't dating that much where I have to make that many decisions about how late she's going to stay out. We always said she wouldn't be able to car date until she was 16, so we did kind of give in a little bit on that. But it's just lucky that she doesn't have a steady boy friend that drives and wants to go out all the time, 'cause then, I think I would, you know, have to make a few more decisions than I've had to so far.

Terry: As they were growing up, what kinds of things would you teach them that were not acceptable?

Judy: Lying is never acceptable. 'Cause I remember, with my mother, it's always, you might as well come out with the truth right away, which is a lot easier. And I've always told my kids, too, eventually it's going to come out anyway, and it's much better before it's compounded. So no matter what you've done, you might

as well tell me the truth right away because I'll find out, you know, somehow. And really, no matter what you've done, lying is going to make it much worse. So I think just truthfulness in everything is most important to me. That's the way I was raised too.

Terry: When you'd have to discipline the kids, how would you discipline them?

Judy: Well, 'course with the boys, they're so much older, that I, we've, been really fortunate with our kids. We haven't had any trouble with any of them. I mean, minor little things, they would just not be able to go somewhere. So, you know, grounding them, that type of thing.

Terry: What does that mean, to "ground" somebody?

Judy: It just means they have to stay home. 'Cause now we just went through an episode recently with my daughter which wasn't all that bad, but yet you had to make a point. Say, well, you did this small thing, but you have to learn that you have to tell us where you're going to go, and you have to be there, or you have to come home when you're supposed to, or, you know, whatever it is. And at the time, it was just kind of non-communication. I guess it's what it was. But I just tried to explain to her that if I don't make a point with it and teach you the lesson now, then next time it might be something worse, and you might think: well it doesn't really matter if I come home when I'm supposed to or if I'm not really with who I said I was going to be with and it's not that important. And I tried to tell her it's very important that we know where you are and who you are with. So I think in general, when she is just starting to date, that you have to make that point very early. Like I say, we've been very lucky and haven't had any trouble. Nowadays with raising kids, we're very fortunate.

Terry: Do they have Saturday night functions down at the school for the kids?

Judy: They do every once in a while. They'll have dances or that type of thing where Jen does attend those. But there really isn't all that.... There's a lot of parties in Malta, but she doesn't, so far, hasn't attended any of those.

Terry: How do they do the parties? Is it by invitation?

Judy: I think a lot of times someone just has a party and kids just hear about it and they go to it.

Terry: What about, then, the parents whose house this is held at? Do they kind of supervise it for the most part?

Judy: Well, 'cause, see, since she's, the boys, are well beyond that, and Jenny hasn't really attended. It's a lot of just, you know, what I hear from other people. But I think there's a lot of times there are parties where the parents are in attendance.

Terry: What about drinking?

Judy: I think there's drinking that goes on. But you know, like I say, this is just what I hear. Because Jen has, she's just never been to any of them. But I know when Ken, 'course Ken's 22 now, when he was in high school and just a little bit beyond high school, there was parties that he attended that there was drinking, and there was, you know, high school kids that were there. But I know with Jen, I don't know if it just matters more or bothers me more because she's a girl or she's the youngest, 'cause she's so much younger than the boys. But I know I wouldn't allow her to go to a party, knowingly allow her. And if I did find out about it later, she would be in a lot of trouble.

Terry: A party where there was....

Judy: A party where there was drinking. Yes definitely.

Terry: This is a little change of subject, but was Ron involved in the Vietnamese conflict?

Judy: No, he was never in the service.

Terry: How did he happen not to go, to be drafted?

Judy: Well, 'cause we were married, and so he was just never called up. Now I don't know if it was because...see, we would have been married in '63 and so....He was registered for the draft and everything, but he was just never called.

Terry: Did you have Ken? Let's see, he may have had a deferment for that too.

Judy: Yeah. I don't remember, because Ken would have been born in '64, so I suppose at that time if you were married and had a child, that probably was the

difference. Like with our age and all my husband's friends, there isn't any of them that were in the service. But see, they were all married, you know, at 21 or 22, and most of us had children right away. So like I say, there wasn't any of them, our close friends back then, that were in the service.

Terry: What I was wondering is, if he's involved in any organizations. He wouldn't be involved in any of those veterans' organizations, but what about other organizations like farm organizations?

Judy: OK. Farm Bureau. We've always belonged to the Farm Bureau.

Terry: What functions does that perform?

Judy: Well, there's always different meetings and, you know, lessons and marketing....

Terry: What kind of lessons?

Judy: Well, there's marketing, that type of thing. He doesn't really go to that many. A lot of times you'll get some type of information in the mail, and there's always different classes or something to take. But he just isn't one to go to meetings and stuff like that. He just never cared for it. So he doesn't really go to too many things.

Terry: Do they, through the Farm Bureau, do they offer anything for women?

Judy: Yes, well, the Home Extension is through the Farm Bureau. And in the fall, in October, they always have craft day. And they have the big family picnic, it's in the summer. Most years we go to that. There's all kinds of things, but we just don't, we just don't do that much. I guess my husband...I probably would do more if he would do more. I guess I'm just more, you know, interested. I think if he was interested, I would do more than I do too. But his dad was the same way. He just wasn't, other than church. His dad was very involved in the church and his mother was. But his dad was that way and that's the way Ron is too.

Terry: Do many people in the neighborhood participate in the Farm Bureau functions? Educational programs?

Judy: Well, I think just about everybody we know belongs to the Farm Bureau. But the only ones I really know do a

lot with it are Harry and Mary, and especially Mary. Like I mentioned before, my husband's aunt, she's involved in so many things. And she just enjoys doing that type of thing, and going places and keeping active, and so she belongs to a lot of things.

Terry: Well, if people don't choose to go to many of the functions, why do they then belong? What are the benefits of belonging to it?

Judy: Well, with the Farm Bureau, 'cause we have Country Companies Insurance, and when you have Country Companies Insurance, you have to belong to the Farm Bureau. So I think that's really one of the main reasons that we do belong to it.

Terry: I see. Judy, how do you and Ron plan for your future?

Judy: You mean as far as savings or....?

Terry: That, and when you talk about your future, how do you plan? Do you have a long range plan?

Judy: I think we just both think that we're always going to be doing the same thing that we're doing right now. I don't think he ever considers the day when he'll retire. I think he's a lot like Harry, his uncle Harry. Gosh, his birthday is in December, he must be going to be seventy-four maybe, and he still farms. And really there's no end in sight. We always think every year, well maybe this will be the year Harry will retire. But then I guess Harry figures too, well what would I do if I didn't farm? And Ron, like he doesn't enjoy belonging to organizations. We go on trips now and then, but neither one of us are the type. Like we don't plan: someday, well, when we retire, we're going to travel to Europe or something like that. That doesn't interest either one of us, so we don't have any plans, you know, like that. I think we'll just stay right where we are and do what were doing now.

Terry: As far as what you feel, Judy, you need for your own life in the house and cars or transportation - what do you feel is real important to keeping your life style the way it is?

Judy: Well, I don't know. I don't know how to answer that. We have a new car. I don't really know....

Terry: Well, what about appliances?

Judy:

Well, we just bought a new stove and refrigerator and microwave oven last year. And we re-papered the kitchen and bought new appliances. We had had the same stove since we were married. We did have a different refrigerator. The refrigerator was about ready to go, the second one, 'cause when we bought the second one it was used. In fact, one we originally had, we had my mother here one year for dinner Christmas Eve, and just as I was going to put the dinner on the table the refrigerator - was like smoke, it started on fire. And it just was a coincidence that my mother for awhile lived in a mobile home on this farm (it was right over by the green shed, like right near where you parked), and she had just moved in a few days before that. Well, she had a refrigerator from her home before, plus there was one in the mobile home, and here we are ready to sit down for dinner and the refrigerator just blew up - whatever happened to it. So we brought in one of my mother's refrigerators, so it was another used one. Anyway, that was several years ago, and I just decided well, I'm going to buy a new refrigerator. The stove worked fine, but I wanted them to match. It wasn't important to my husband that they matched, but it was important to me. And we did have a microwave oven, but it was a large one that used to sit on the counter over here, and it took up so much room and I don't have that much counter space. So we decided to buy the new microwave oven and put it over the stove so I would get my counter space back. So other than a dishwasher... we put the dishwasher in when we moved here, so I suppose that one of these days that will go out. I would definitely get another dishwasher 'cause I didn't have one where we lived before. But now it's like I lived fine without it, but now that I've had it for twelve years, it would be very hard, you know, to be without that. So there wouldn't be more than a couple days would go by when I'd have to get a new dishwasher when that one goes.

Terry:

What about a freezer?

Judy:

We have two freezers. We have one in the basement and then we have one out in the garage. Now when we had raised our steers and we would have a steer butchered, we would keep a whole steer for ourselves, so we really needed two freezers. But now we really could get along with just one. We just had a hog butchered not too long ago and that doesn't take up near as much as a whole steer does. But yet we don't want to get rid of it. We keep it, so we do have two freezers running.

Terry: Do you have a garden yourself?

Judy: Very small, very small. Across here from the driveway I used to, every year when we first moved here, try to plant something different every year. But then, 'cause I've been working now almost five years in August, every year my garden would get smaller and smaller. So this year all I have is a couple tomato plants. But other years I would have zucchini and onions and green beans, and a couple of years we raised popcorn and sweet corn, that type of thing. Like I say, once I started working, I just kind of gave up on it. It seemed by the time I would work and come home, it would just kind of get away on me, so I figured.... I've never done any canning. I used to freeze green beans and sweet corn, but my mother never did any - of course she's in town, she never did any canning. So, you know, I never learned how to do it, so I've just never done any at all.

Terry: So when you go shopping, then, where do you do that?

Judy: In DeKalb.

Terry: What store do you shop at?

Judy: Most the time, Eagle. Usually when I'm working, a lot of the time I will stop on the way home and pick up a few things here and there. And then maybe once a week or maybe even once every two weeks I'll go shopping and really, you know, buy a lot of things. But I do a lot of shopping in-between times.

Terry: Can you, would you, make a just a stab in the dark at what your grocery bill for a week or two weeks would be?

Judy: Well, when I went the other day I spent - in fact Sunday we went after church - I think I spent \$88, so I suppose by the time.... We're still using the meat from the last steer we had, so except for hamburger, I've had to buy hamburger the last couple months, and we have the pork so I don't buy that much meat other than chicken. So that's a big chunk right there. Once that beef is gone.... I suppose probably roughly a hundred or hundred and ten, something like that. 'Cause I kind of forget all the little things I stop for on my way home, and that adds up too. But you don't really think about it at the time. Every ten or fifteen dollars or something, it adds up.

Terry: So that's about a hundred and ten dollars a week for a family of - well Dave is gone to school.

Judy: No, he's here, so it is a family of five. Five adult eaters.

Terry: Now, we know that a lot of farmers expanded when the prices were so good in the 1970's. Did you and Ron do any expanding during that time yourselves?

Judy: Well, see, when we first moved out here, when his parents and grandparents bought this farm, this is all we had. It's just a little bit under one hundred acres. And we still owned our home in Cloverdale which was on the Stark farm. When we were married, my husband's grandfather gave us an acre of land, and we built a new house first year we were married. So when we moved out here we still owned that house and that acre of land. The first farm that we bought was in Esmond, so we traded our house and an acre of land for the Esmond farm. And then we bought the farm.

Terry: When you were buying the farm in Esmond, do you remember what you paid per acre for that?

Judy: No, I'm trying to think. I think when they bought this farm, I'm thinking like \$1500 an acre for this. I don't know why that sticks in my mind more so than the three that we've bought more recently.

Terry: The Esmond farm you bought in '74?

Judy: No, it was after that. It was several years after that. I can't remember right now what it was.

Terry: But you traded the house and one acre in Cloverdale for....

Judy: But it was still, it was more.... It was like 80 acres, something like that. But the land in Esmond and on McQueen Road, it's just land, there's no house or buildings or anything. The farm in Shabbona does have a house and a lot of buildings, more buildings than we have here. My brother lives in the house in Shabbona, and he's in the process of buying the house and the garage and other small buildings that are right up by the road, and then the barn and the big machine shed and stuff down there. I think he's buying the house and five acres or something.

Terry: And does he farm?

Judy: No, he doesn't farm. No. He works in West Chicago. He works for an excavating.... He drives a big, what do you call it? Gravel truck, that type of thing. In fact he works for Harry Kuhn, that's who my brother works for.

Terry: Then in the 70's you bought the farm in Esmond and the one on McQueen Road?

Judy: Sometime in the.... Probably would have been the late, the late 70's. This is '86, we just bought the Shabbona farm a little over a year ago, so I don't really, my mind is a blank.

Terry: Do you remember what kind of interest rate you had to pay on those first loans in the middle of the 70's?

Judy: No, I really don't.

Terry: Did you tell me that Ron works with Harry?

Judy: No, he just helps him out once in awhile. 'Cause Harry farms by himself, he runs into a lot of problems it seems. But I think it's just, well, he's older and farms alone, so once in awhile Ron and Ken will go down and help him combine or do something. But they don't really work together. It's just, you know, helping a little bit on and off.

Terry: Ron has corn and soy beans and the pigs, and does he work off the land?

Judy: No, he doesn't, other than custom trucking, is all. He doesn't have an outside job.

Terry: OK, then. Judy, I have one final question for you. You've answered all my questions so beautifully. What would you like to tell the historians of 2086 about farming in DeKalb County in 1986?

Judy: Well, I don't know. As far as our life here on the farm, times aren't that good, but yet they could be a lot worse. As far as personally, our family right here, I think we're doing all right, and I wouldn't trade it for anything. I think it's been a good life for us and for our children. I just hope, like Ken, he's the one that's really interested in farming, Dave is more into, he's studying electronics, that's his field. But I just hope that things pick up so that Ken can stay in farming 'cause I think it's important that,

like I mentioned earlier, my husband's family has always been in farming. I think it's very important. It's just that family tradition that I would like to see carry on for as long as possible. I think it's a great life style. I wouldn't trade it. I wouldn't even want to go to DeKalb and live, you know, 'cause I go there just about every day to work, and it's like city, and I just can't wait until I get home and get back out into the country. So I think it's great.