



ILLINOIS  
STATE  
MUSEUM



## Oral History of Illinois Agriculture

---

- Catalog Number:** ALPLM\_01\_BiehlLer
- Interviewee:** Leroy Biehl
- Interviewer:** Richard Hull
- Interview Date:** August 27, 2007
- Interview Location:** Urbana IL
- Recording Format:** .WAV Digital Audio
- Recording Length:** 46min
- Recording Engineer:** Mark Suszko & II Information Services
- Repositories:** Oral History Archive, Illinois State Museum, Springfield, Illinois; Oral History Archive, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois
- Transcript Length:** 11 pages
- Transcriber:** Tape Transcription Center, The Skill Bureau, Boston, Massachusetts
- Editor:** Michael Maniscalco and Amy Moore
- Indexer:** James S. Oliver
- Abstract:** Dr. Leroy Biehl was born in Michigan on June 30, 1934 and moved to Illinois when he was four years old. He was raised on a farm in the Salem, Illinois area, and attended the University of Illinois, graduating with a degree in veterinary medicine in the spring of 1958. He practiced veterinary medicine in the Olney and Albion area for many years, primarily in a large animal practice. He moved to Urbana, Illinois in 1972 and began work at the University of Illinois as the swine extension veterinarian. Dr. Biehl retired from the university in 1999.
- Keywords:** Farm life in Illinois; Veterinary medicine in Illinois; swine and hog operations; University of Illinois; changes in veterinary medicine; University of Illinois Swine Extension center
- Citation:** Oral History Archives, Illinois State Museum and Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, Springfield, Illinois
- Copyright:** © 2009, Illinois State Museum and Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois. Permission to quote from the transcript under the fair-use provision of the copyright law (Title 17, U.S. Code) is granted provided that this source is cited.



Interview with Leroy Biehl  
Interview # ALPLM\_01\_BiehlLer  
August 27, 2007  
Interviewer: Richard Hull, DVM

- Hull: This is a recording of Dr. Leroy Biehl in his home in Urbana, Illinois, on August 27, 2007. (long pause) Dr. Biehl, where were you born at?
- Biehl: I was actually born in Detroit, Michigan and spent the first four years of my life in Michigan and then my dad worked at Ford Motor Company and he was laid off and he moved back down to the original home farm in West Salem, near West Salem, Illinois.
- Hull: And you were raised on that farm then?
- Biehl: So then raised on that farm from about five on up through, well until I went to college, actually.
- Hull: Did you actually participate in farming while you were a youth?
- Biehl: Yes, I did. I was a regular farm boy, you know, and all the 4-H activities and showed some Guernsey cattle and we had kind of everything on the farm. Primarily dairy cattle when I was growing up and a mixture of different kinds of Guernseys and Holsteins and about everything. Milked there on the farm. This wasn't a large dairy farm; I think the most we ever milked was fourteen. Then farmed that farm and then Dad rented some other ground and farmed that also.
- Hull: And what inspired you to become a veterinarian? Were you in high school when you made that decision or –
- Biehl: I'd say it was about high school age, yes. It's kind of like I think a lot of veterinarians do. The veterinarian came out and treated some sick cows that we had and I kind of thought that looked like that would be a nice thing to do. And so I kind of wanted to be a veterinarian at that particular time. And then I went in to high school and actually, the high school counselor advised me not to be a veterinarian at that time (chuckles).
- Hull: Really.
- Biehl: I think one of the reasons was his son wanted to be and he came to the university and wasn't able to make the grade. So he said I couldn't make the grade. So I took his word for it. (chuckles) So I came up here and started ag school and a real small, realized that I didn't know much about except what was in Wabash County and I thought if you went to ag school the only thing you could be when you got out was either an ag teacher or a farm advisor. Because that was the only ag college graduates that I'd been exposed to. So I thought it was one or the other. So I came to the university and did pretty well in my first three semesters. I said, "Well, I believe I can try to get in to veterinary school," so I switched over after three semesters here then and then to Pre-Vet.
- Hull: And you got in to veterinary school after your sophomore year?
- Biehl: Actually, after my third year.
- Hull: After your third year.

Leroy Biehl

ALPLM\_01\_BiehlLer

- Biehl: Because I'd started out in ag school and it cost me about a year, which I think was good for me. I was had just turned seventeen when I came to the university. So I was still pretty young and it helped me to mature a little more, too.
- Hull: Why did you decide to apply for veterinary school at Illinois? Was there any other school you had in mind?
- Biehl: I really didn't. I applied only at Illinois so I had all my eggs in the one basket. At that particular time a lot of veterans were coming back from World War II and they got first choice in that. In my freshman class, I don't know what the percentage was, but I know over half of them, probably three-fourths of them, were veterans actually. So I felt very fortunate to get in at that particular time. I wanted to go back and treat cows and pigs and all that back in my home area.
- Hull: I see. What other siblings did you have when you were growing up?
- Biehl: I had a sister just two years younger than what I was, but she developed some sort of condition, they don't really know what it was at that particular time. She died when she was five actually.
- Hull: Sorry to hear that.
- Biehl: I had a brother then who was twelve years younger than I am. He was raised on the farm there, too.
- Hull: He didn't choose to be a veterinarian?
- Biehl: No. He was, actually went to Southern Illinois University and was in Ag Econ and now he's an ag banker.
- Hull: I see.
- Biehl: Right now he's with First Financial Bank there in Olney, Illinois.
- Hull: You say you wanted to go back to that particular home area and practice. Is that what you did?
- Biehl: Yes, that's what I did. I wanted to go back, if I could to, I'd say, southeastern Illinois and kind of that general area. I was fortunate enough to get a job with Arney Taft at Olney, which was only twenty-three miles from home and was pretty close. So it was an ideal situation for me at that particular time.
- Hull: At that point in time you were married, is that right?
- Biehl: I'd gotten married as a sophomore in veterinary school. So we were married and then when I got in to practice there with Dr. Taft in Olney then we had our first son in 1958. I graduated in, I guess, May or June of '58 and then our son was born in August in '58, right after that time.
- Hull: You have other children?
- Biehl: Yeah, we have another son. Mark was born in 1960, two years later than Mike and they're both veterinarians, too. So, it's kind of stayed in the family once it started, I guess. (chuckle)
- Hull: That's wonderful. They must have thought there was some reason to stay in that profession. You say your father went back to the home place. Was your mother from that area, too?
- Biehl: No. My mother is actually from Canada. She's a Canadian. Dad and her met in Detroit. She worked at the dime store in Detroit and he met her there and I think she lived in Windsor, which is just across the river from Detroit and that's how they met and married and then she came down with him to the home place there in –

Leroy Biehl

ALPLM\_01\_BiehlLer

Hull: You say you were married your sophomore year in vet school. Your wife, how did you meet her?

Biehl: Oh, that's a long story there. (laughs) A lot of people – I don't know whether I ought to tell that all or not! She was, we farmed just about a mile from where we were we were farming a farm and her sister lived just right there on the corner where we were farming. And she was visiting her sister when she was about ten years old. And I met her at that particular time and then we kind of dated off and on a little bit in high school. And then afterwards and finally in 1958 we got married. Excuse me '55. I said '58 in '55. So she was right from that, she was from West Salem, too.

Hull: Was she a student at the University of Illinois?

Biehl: No. She was not. She was working there at West Salem whenever we got married. And came up here and continued to do that and she worked in the practice then while we were in practice in Albion for nine years.

Hull: When did you leave the practice in Olney?

Biehl: We left the practice in Olney in '63. We were there five years, from '58 to '63, then we went down to Albion and started a practice on our own there. Then we were there from '63 to '72 and started that practice. Then I hired another fellow and then we came up here in '72.

Hull: What kind of a practice was it?

Biehl: It was a very general practice. I always said it was about a 50% cows and 50% pigs and 10% small animals (laughter) and maybe 10% equine. You know you do the small animals and others usually after hours. I guess I'd really say 40, 40, 10 and 10 probably is about what it was. A lot of pigs particular in that area and there was a lot of feeder cattle, too, in that particular area.

Hull: You left the practice there in Olney and decided to come to the University, hire on at the University.

Biehl: I left it in Albion.

Hull: In Albion, I'm sorry.

Biehl: Decided to hire on here. I always liked University and they had a position here that I could do working essentially about what I was doing there, it was in the Field Services area; they called it Ambulatory Service at that time. So I took students out on calls on farms around the Champaign-Urbana area. So I was doing about the same thing I did at practice in Albion except I had students with me at that particular time.

Hull: At what time did you change that, from Ambulatory Service to Extension?

Biehl: After five years in Ambulatory Service there was an Extension position opened up in Swine Extension here at the University. A Dr. Al Lamien, who had been there for quite a while and then he left and went to Minnesota and then that position was open and so they recruited me to come into the Extension area. So after some recruitment and time – at first I said, "No, I can't be in Extension because I can't write". Extension people always had to do a lot of writing and I said, "I'm not a good writer." One day why Dick Carlyle, who many people know in Illinois, he was recruiting me to come on and I said, "Dick, I can't write, I just can't do it." And he said, "Well what in the world do you think we have editors for." (laughter) And he said, "If

you can just kind of get your ideas on paper why we can get editors and make you look good". And so I did. I joined the Extension corps and sure enough, I started writing and usually when my pages came there was more red ink on them than what was mine. (laughs) But finally I kind of learned where I could write a little bit anyway.

Hull: Was that a good move for you?

Biehl: I think so. I really enjoyed it. I always feel like I had the best job in the world, really. I was a Swine Extension Veterinarian in the state of Illinois which is known for pigs and so, just right there it got a lot of respect all around the state and country and the world actually. Because Illinois is known for its large swine population. At that particular time, I think we were number two in the country in the number of pigs. Just behind Iowa. I really felt fortunate to have that and really enjoyed that and then the working with the farmers out in the field. I always said that the problem I had in practice was my clients became my friends. Now then, when I went out in the state and the Extension I had a lot of friends now all over the state. I always said I've talked in every county in Illinois but one.

Hull: And what was that one?

Biehl: That one was Macon.

Hull: Is that right? (laughter)

Biehl: I'm going there tomorrow. (laughter). But I don't think I'll be giving a presentation though, I'll be there at the Farm Progress Show. Maybe I ought to give a presentation, then I could say I've spoken in every county.

Hull: Yeah, you should.

Biehl: But that was fun and I like to travel and there was a lot of travelling with Extension.

Hull: Was it your choice to concentrate on swine, or was that dictated by the University?

Biehl: It was, well, it was the position that was open. The swine Extension position was open so I accepted that and I felt very comfortable with the swine area because I'd come from practice where I'd done a lot of pigs. Back in those days we did a lot of hog cholera vaccinations and \_\_\_\_\_ vaccinations and I've vaccinated about fifty thousand a year so I'd done a lot of work with pigs and the clients and all the problems they had. I felt very comfortable then talking with producers and veterinarians around the state about pigs. It worked out real well for me and I think I was able to do it.

Hull: Later on you developed a concentrated course for swine practitioners. What did you call that and what precipitated you going into that?

Biehl: It was called the Executive Veterinary Program. I felt like the swine industry was changing an awfully lot at that time. And veterinarians were being less likely to be just called out to treat sick pigs. In the past veterinarians sort of, I always said they stayed at home and then when pigs got sick the producers called them and so they come and they treat them and then they went back home. We felt like now that particularly some of the larger swine producers, some of the producers were developing in to much larger areas, swine units, so the veterinarians needed input in to these units. They could be involved in the management part of these units, it would be very helpful at that particular time. And probably do a lot more value to the client in preventing these diseases than it was in treating them after they'd already gotten here. We

developed this very comprehensive course for management and development of the person themselves and really not a whole lot about swine diseases because most practitioners knew about swine diseases. But a lot of courses about economics and, I'm trying to think, we had twelve different modules. One of them was engineering, housing and this sort of thing, a nutrition course, and they concentrated, the veterinarians would come in for three days and I'd try to get the very best person that I'd heard of in the United States as a teacher to teach this particular area and bring them in and teach the veterinarians. And a lot of these were courses and topics that they did not have in school. But they were very hungry for it and it worked out very well. It just did real well.

Hull: And courses, some not taught by veterinarians, is that right?

Biehl: Yes. Very few of the courses really were taught by veterinarians; they were taught by economists, psychologists, nutritionists, the ag engineers and that type. We did some also in statistics and things like this, along that line to show \_\_\_\_\_ (??) how they could go out and determine, set up a trial and this sort of thing on the farm that they could do. Epidemiology was another course that we taught. They came out with a rather comprehensive --- after two years, it took two years. It was every other month, three-day modules, every other month for two years. They came out with, we gave them a certificate at the end. And another thing, these courses could be used for graduate credit if they wanted to go on to graduate school. And several of the veterinarians actually took advantage of that. I developed a relationship with Iowa State where they would accept those credits, too. And so we had three or four that I can think of, that went on to Iowa State and got a Masters or PhD. at Iowa State. And we had about four here at Illinois that went on and got Masters or PhDs, using credits from the EVP program.

Hull: That's very good. How many course did you set up?

Biehl: We'd gone through, I think it's four now, that we have done. I'm pretty sure that's right. And we've had them from, the class was limited to forty-two and we've filled all the classes except the very last one which was about four years ago, I think. We've had them from, I don't know how many states, but something like thirty states and three or four foreign countries who have come in and taken this. Now then Dr. Perkins is starting the fifth one in October. So he's coming up with another one again now, because there has been a demand for it.

Hull: Now some other schools have tried to mimic that, but I don't think with too good success. Do you want to elaborate on that one?

Biehl: Well, some other schools have come up with a similar, well not the similar, I guess, they've tried a graduate school, trying to use practitioners but they don't seem like they, I guess, I don't know how to say it without sounding like I'm bragging about it. But we've had such good response back from everyone who took it. If anyone's interested in it I always tell them, "Just call anybody, any one of these two hundred veterinarians, I don't care which one it is, they're going to give you a good response back that it's a worthwhile thing to take". It's not inexpensive for them to take it. It's five thousand dollars for the cost of it, but we've provided everything for them, except, we didn't provide housing, but we did provide most of the meals. I was able to get sponsors to also help with meals and also help with some of the teaching, the teachers. It's expensive to bring someone from Washington, D.C., for three days. Particularly people that have been used to speaking for a General Motors, and Boeing and some of those people, those people kind of have a different perspective on costs than what we do here at our

Leroy Biehl

ALPLM\_01\_BiehlLer

College of Veterinary Medicine. In my particular group, you know, we kind of look at things differently. (laughter) I had a pretty tight budget that I was trying to work with.

Hull: And of course, their time away from practice, too is costly for them too.

Biehl: Yes. That's the big cost for the veterinarians. It's not the cost of the tuition itself because they're away from practice and each day they're away from practice probably is costing them you know roughly we can figure a thousand dollars a day, something like that that they have to be away. But they all feel like it was worthwhile and we had several people who were single practitioners, one man practice, that would come and, of course then all of their income stops while they're here at that particular time.

Hull: Since 1958 just how have you seen veterinary practice but farming in general change? How can you – I know that's a loaded question, but --

Biehl: Yeah, as you know it has changed tremendously from the time when we used to have a lot of farms and livestock on most of the farms and fences on most of the farms. Whereas now, we don't see many fences, livestock on very few of the farms, there's kind of the same number of livestock perhaps per county in a lot of cases, but not near the farms as what we had. For instance, my practice that I was at in Albion I had about two hundred swine clients at that particular practice. I've talked to the fellow that now owns my practice and he says he has about twenty clients. So that one practice went from two hundred down to twenty from the time I left in, well that would have been in '72 I guess and that was before '58 to now. But there are still the same number of pigs in that county. But we've got the very large farms now and maybe one veterinarian, a company veterinarian, or something like that takes care of that particular farm. So the local practitioner sometimes doesn't get the opportunity to take care of the big farms even in his county because there's a consultant that's may be several counties away that's really doing the work and they don't get to do much of that. When I first starting practice, like you said, in the '50s, there was a veterinarian, well depending on the part of the state you were in, but in my part of the state, there was a veterinarian about every ten miles. You could go ten miles and there was another veterinarian. Each veterinarian had about a ten mile radius or something like to practice, so I should say, so that would be over twenty miles, but a ten-mile radius. But whereas now, it's fifty miles to the nearest veterinarian. I've talked to several people, and they've said they just can get a veterinarian they've got fifty miles. So when you get that and the time that the veterinarian has to be on the road and the time it takes care of them. Now then we're talking about, the veterinarian is going to be gone two to three hours from his practice and it's a bad situation. It's a "Catch 22" situation because if we're looking at a cow, the charge the veterinarian has to do for the time it takes him to go there and back is going to be more than what the farmer can afford to pay to have the cow treated. It's a bad situation really right now for an individual sick animal and so many of those, they just can't be treated. It's just can't afford to do it.

Hull: These large livestock producing counties where we've seen these radical changes, do you think that is a positive thing or a negative thing?

Biehl: Oh, I don't know. You can look at it both ways. I don't think there is anybody that what doesn't hate to see the family farm go and the whole agricultural families that were out there and the whole way of life that they had at that particular time. But I think everyone realizes that today with producing food we just can't do it really that way and be competitive because the very large farm can produce a pound of pork or a pound of beef so much faster. This started

out with the poultry industry that they do that now. Then it transcended in to the pigs. We used to say, that would never happen to the pigs. The poultry industry the way they went, it'll never happen to the pigs because of management concerns. Well, that's not true. It did happen and it's happening right now to the dairy industry. They're getting bigger and bigger. The small dairies just can't produce milk at the same cost of production as what the large units do. So I think that's the way it's going to go and they tell us our consumers are demanding or they like the cheap products in the grocery store and that's probably the way we'll go.

Hull: With that excellent summation of what changes has happened down on the farm, what are the changes you think has happened academically, not only with the veterinary school but at the University in general.

Biehl: Oh, that's a (laughs). I don't know. There are changes there. In the veterinary school for one thing, just the changes in the gender. The people that's going in to veterinary school. My class had two girls in it and the class before me had two and the one after us had one, I think it was. Now then, about eighty percent, eighty, eighty-five percent of the classes are girls. So this is a big change there. And I don't know, no one really knows for sure, why that's happened the way it is, but there's not as many boys interested. It's tough to get in to veterinary schools, do the girls have a better chance to get in to veterinary school because that – I don't think so. There's more interested I think just from the word "go". Girls are interested in veterinary school. We have a lot of girls that are interested in pets, interested in horses, this sort of thing. And it's a good profession for a woman to get in to, really. And why not as many boys do, I really don't know the answer to that.

Hull: How many students graduated in your graduating class?

Biehl: Thirty.

Hull: And now they're graduating how many?

Biehl: I think, I'm not for sure on this, but I think 104. And I think they're increasing that to 120. Here at Illinois, I think then they're taking more out-of-state students and taking that up to about 120 students a year.

Hull: Is there that much demand for veterinarians out there from the way it was in '59.

Biehl: Yes. I think there is the demand. I think the demand is even higher today than what it was in '59. I'm saying part of this is because as you know, in the back of the AVMA Journal, they always have the list of, we call them want ads, jobs available. And at that time there were two or three pages of jobs around the United States that was available for veterinarians, jobs wanted, jobs that they were looking for veterinarians. And now then, that area there is twelve, fifteen pages long, and there may be three pages for Illinois. There is such a big demand, particularly in the small animal area, particularly the large cities, around those, it's just-- they seem to absorb a lot of those people. Veterinarians are going in to a lot more areas now than what they were I think in that time, too. It seems like there are so many opportunities out there that the veterinarians are used so much in management areas. Whereas, as I've said earlier, you know, it used to be, we veterinarians they told us you stay back there in the corner and we'll call you whenever we need you. Otherwise, we don't need you. And now then, the veterinarians are coming to the management table at the very beginning and they're utilizing them a lot, in a lot of different areas along that line. They're doing the management of a lot of swine, cattle areas.



Leroy Biehl

ALPLM\_01\_BiehlLer

Hull: There's also been quite an increase in the tuition, is that right?

Biehl: That's right. That's right. My tuition that I started out in '51 was forty dollars. That's the best -- (laughter) And, you know, I don't know what the tuition is right now because I don't have any kids going to college any more. I said when both boys graduated from veterinary school that's when I had the biggest raise I had at any time, because we didn't have to pay tuition any more. But, I don't know. I know it's around four or five thousand dollars that's required something like that. But from my forty dollars to then, it's been a pretty big jump. I was on a scholarship anyway. I was fortunate to get that; so I saved forty dollars. (laughs) But forty dollars was a lot in 1951. (laughs) It really was.

Hull: Yeah, certainly was. Have you seen a big change in the diseases we addressed back in '59 through the years up to now? Now can you kind of summarize those changes.

Biehl: Well, I think, yes, there's been tremendous change in diseases, recognizing diseases. You know, back in '59 most of them seemed to be bacterial-type diseases, and it was either -- we could name all of the different salmonellas and erysipelas and shipping fever in cows, pasteurellosis; but then the things we didn't know what they were, we just called them viruses. And viruses was just a pretty broad spread of about anything, you know, that we couldn't figure out what it was. Well, now then in all these years, now they've started to identify those viruses for us. And, so, now then, like today in pigs, for an example, we've got the PARS (?) virus and the influenza virus and the new circle virus that they've come out with, talked quite a bit and, at one time, it was the SMED(?) virus, which just meant small, if I can remember those words, small, mummified, early embryonic death (?), something like that.

Hull: I think that's right.

Biehl: And, now then, they found out that they've identified all those viruses that cause that. And so, they have developed fortunately vaccines for a lot of those. That's really helped us. We've been able to eliminate hog cholera. I used to see some hog cholera occasionally when I was in practice. I know one year I had, I think it was, fourteen or nineteen cases of hog cholera. And that was when they were eliminating hog cholera in the area and, in the state, I should say. But when I started in early practice there, antibiotics we did have penicillin and then a combination of streptomycin with penicillin and we had the tetracycline, but that was about it. And those weren't, it was difficult to really sometimes find a way to get those in to the animals. They seemed to be powerful drugs at that time, but now then, they've in some ways there's a lot more antibiotics out there, however, the practitioners today are unable to use them because there's so many antibiotics today now that you can't use because of the chance of contaminating the meat. So many of those are just, they can't use them that could have one time before.

Hull: I know I've heard you say more than once at some of these meetings that veterinary practice, particularly in swine anyway, is not about bugs.

Biehl: Yes, that's exactly right. We used to be a bugs and drugs group, we'd call us, you know, and now then, it's just not about that, we're trying to raise them now drug-free. And so, to raise them drug free, you've got to raise them bug-free. Management and cleanliness and all that has really come to the forefront and there's a lot of herds doing that. I talked to a large dairy operator, a veterinarian, just this past week and he said, we just have to get the antibiotics out of the dairy herds. He said I just don't want to use any antibiotics whatsoever in a dairy herd,

because of the chance that it may take and contaminate the milk. Like he said, he'd had to throw away something like forty-three thousand pounds of milk because one cow accidentally got in the milking line. They didn't intend for it to, but accidents happen, and so they just can't use them now. We're getting a much more drug-free than what we were back in—it used to be if you could kind of inject drugs into them and get them on the truck to go to market you did. That has completely changed; and that's good for the consumer, I think. It makes for safe meat now for our consumers.

Hull: Another major change in the swine industry has been the breeding. And you can maybe expound on that a little bit.

Biehl: Well, of course, several years ago, fat was the thing we wanted and so we had the big, fat hogs and sold them at market at three hundred pounds and fat as could be and we were looking for fat pigs and fat cows, too, and that sort of thing. And then, back, it was about the 60's when we kind of ended up with a land-raised pig and it was a thin pig and didn't have near the fat on it, didn't have much meat on it either at that time (laughs). Anyway, then we kind of got away from that somewhat, but then we did go to a pig that is really muscled, very little fat and just an extremely good pig and has changed to whole attitude toward the consumption of pork. Now then, it's always surprising to some people to realize that a good loin or something like that has less fat in it than what poultry does. Because so many of our nutritionists, human nutritionists well in the past have said eat chicken, eat chicken, eat poultry, because it's not fat. Now then a lean cut of pork has less fat in it than what poultry does; because they've just bred, essentially bred the fat out of these pigs and changed that. Now they've got a good quality strong pig that has made a big change in the swine industry.

Hull: What would you say was the biggest change in the veterinary profession since '58?

Biehl: Oh, my. I don't know (chuckles). I think, that's hard to come up with, the biggest change.

Hull: I know.

Biehl: The way practice is done. I think the biggest change is going from a, we used to call a fire-engine practice. Where we'd just wait for the phone to ring and went out and treated the sick animals to now, most of these people have got visitation on to the farm and doing prevention, setting up programs for the farmer to do. The veterinarians, whereas we used to go out and do most of the injecting ourselves, a lot of my producers didn't even own a syringe and needle; whereas now, most of them have got the automatic equipment to do that themselves. Some veterinarians don't even get back in to the building some times. The sanitation and security, bio-security, I think is another one of the big changes that has come up. Now then, we can't even get on the farm, can't even see pigs, I'm talking about swine here now particularly. And some of our cattle are going to that route, dairy are going to that route, too. You just can't get on the farm. And so, bio-security, cleanliness, and all that is what I think one of the biggest changes. Whereas, it used to be when I first went in to practice, say in '58 there, some veterinarians didn't wear boots and didn't wash boots between farms. I know that was one of the things they kind of preached to us as seniors in veterinary school, if you wear your boots and some farmers will ask you to come on the farm because you do wash your boots and that sort of thing. Well, that was a change at that particular time, but now then when you go to the farm, a veterinarian doesn't take his boots because the producer has already got boots and coveralls there for him. And he may have to take a shower – shower in, shower out there at the farm. I think the bio-security thing may be the big thing that has changed on that.

Leroy Biehl

ALPLM\_01\_BiehlLer

Hull: What advice would you give for someone that's thinking about pursuing veterinary profession? I know you probably get that quite often.

Biehl: I get that a lot from young people that's coming in and students and high school students and parents and that sort of thing. My advice to them would be well, I hope that you're a student that likes the science courses, particularly math. You think, well why do you say math. Well, you use math an awful lot all through school and if you get that pretty well down where it's just a common thing for you, it'll help you a lot. I always say if you know your math you get an extra five points about on all your exams (chuckles). But I think math and science and chemistry and that sort of thing, be pretty good in those and be diligent and in that you got to have good study habits and the desire to study long hours. I think that's the main thing there for them.

Hull: In summation of our interview here, what you would like to be remembered for?

Biehl: Oh, goodness, I don't know. (chuckles) I think everybody always wants to be remembered as a good guy (laughter). I guess, and it's always interesting now, students will come back and say I remember when you said this and that in class and that's always kind of a good feeling. Or I remember this or that or you said ... I had a small animal practitioner or big small animal practitioner said, "Your lecture was the best lecture I ever had in school." And I thought, what's this guy, you know. Here I was lecturing on pigs, what's this guy. And my lecture that I gave him was the ten commandments of good business.

Hull: Yeah?

Biehl: And you're probably familiar with that, but it's primarily be nice to your client that you have and pay attention to them and they'll take care of you. So I felt like that's what I kind of wanted to be as a guy that was good with the clients and known by producers and animal owners, I guess, around the state and students. What you do, you get to know a lot of students and people around the country that way.

Hull: Have we missed anything that you want to add?

Biehl: I can't think of – I guess, I've always been, I've been very fortunate in having the two boys that were in school and went through veterinary school and had a wife that was very supportive of me all the way through, I think. She was, when I was in practice, she was part of the practice, she was my secretary, receptionist, or whatever you want to know, and that part all the time. And here, since here, I always said that was the reason the boys went to veterinary school because she never complained any time in practice. As you know, some times, meals are not always at twelve and six. (laughter) And that sort of thing and she never complained about anything like that. I always thought I was fortunate along that line.

Hull: That's great.

Biehl: That's very helpful, too.

Hull: You bet.

Biehl: I travelled a lot when I was in Extension and gone from home a lot at that particular time, too. So that's a worthwhile thing.

Hull: (both talking)

Biehl: It really does, she's very understanding.

Leroy Biehl

ALPLM\_01\_BiehlLer

Hull: Okay, Mr. Biehl. I appreciate the time that we've taken here and we'll see how this works out.

Biehl: Okay. It's been fun.