

Saturday, July 21, 2007 11:03 a.m.

Debra was at the horse show to watch her granddaughter and, since her children were friends of the Staubs, allowed me an interview. She was a staunch Lakeview supporter and I think she felt a little confronted and suspicious, at first, of my motives but warmed up part way through. We were sitting in the center of the bleachers, down near the front, with her daughter and son-in-law. She was very involved in the goings on of the horse show so our interview was at its best for the first two thirds because her granddaughter was not riding.

Cole Enabnit: What is one of your favorite foods?

Debra: My favorite food's beef.

CE: And, any particular kind of beef?

D: Any. Really.

CE: How often do you get to eat it?

D: Daily.

CE: And how about a least favorite?

D: I don't really have any least favorites, you know.

CE: That must be nice. What'd you have for your evening meal yesterday?

D: A cheeseburger.

CE: Did you make it?

D: Yes.

CE: Did you have any side dishes with it?

D: We had a salad.

CE: What kinds of things did you have in the salad?

D: Had garbanzos, asparagus, lettuce, tomato.

CE: So, thinking of the food system in the community broadly, what are three of your favorite things about it, or three things that you appreciate about it here?

D: It's beef country, you know, we're in agriculture country and we raise our beef here. Our stores get in good vegetables.

CE: All right, are there three things that you don't like so much about the food system here?

D: No, not really.

CE: How does you're household get your food?

D: Well we raise our own meat, we raise all of our own meat. The rest of it we buy in the store.

CE: Okay, which store do you usually go to?

D: I use... Well, Wal-Mart, Sherms Thunderbird in Klamath Falls, Safeway here.

CE: And is the Wal-Mart in Klamath Falls?

D: Yes.

CE: And what was that ... Thunderbird?

D: Sherms.

CE: Sherms Thunderbird?

D: Yes.

CE: Do you ever go to Stewarts here?

D: Yes.

CE: So do you or your family face any challenges getting the food you want here?

D: No.

CE: So, can you tell me about your family's history in involvement with foods in the community?

D: Well, my family raises beef. I raise hogs, we're in the beef park, mostly.

CE: And how long has your family lived in this area?

D: My husband was born and raised here. I've been here 30 years.

CE: Do you have some stories connected with your family and raising food around these parts?

D: Just funny things that have happened, the kids you know we broke all of our calves to ride, we halter broke 'em. We're involved with the horses because of the cattle industry, just funny stories, I don't know.

CE: They don't have to be funny, just some story to illustrate how things fit together?

D: Well, it's like my granddaughter, you know, she shows but they work on the ranch and they've been doing it since they were just little kids. It's a family thing, we're able to do things as a family.

CE: Are there some family recipes you have?

D: Yes.

CE: Will you tell me about some of them...I don't want to steal your secrets or anything.

D: I don't have any secrets, I just get my recipes out but, I'm Bask so we're, uh, you know, family style, everything's family style. We eat a lot of soups, a lot of that type of thing.

CE: Could you give me an overview of the recipes, of the ingredients?

D: My soup I start with beef and cook it down, add potatoes, carrots, cabbage, everything but the kitchen sink really [laughs]

CE: Sometimes with soups it seems the more stuff that's in there the better.

D: I agree and the second day they're even better. We are big soup eaters, I love roast, I like to cook tri-tip. We cook around beef, if you took the beef away from us, it would be tough to cook.

CE: So, are any of your other family members involved in producing and processing food?

D: My mother has been involved in it for sixty years...

CE: Is she still doing it?

D: She is.

CE: That's impressive.

D: My brother in law and my niece are vets, so yes, everybody is pretty involved.

CE: That must be pretty fun.

D: It is.

CE: Do you belong to any community groups here?

D: I'm a stock growing.

CE: And do you eat together?

D: We have an annual meeting that's a dinner meeting but so, uh, my husband and I are kind of hermits we don't get out a lot.

CE: For that annual meeting what's the food usually like?

D: It's usually a steak, lots of times prime rib, with a potato, a salad, you know.

CE: How do you feel like farmers and ranchers are faring in the community?

D: It's been tough. With fuel prices and everything, it's really, it's hurting everybody.

CE: And how about socially?

D: I think socially everybody knows and everybody gets along and if your neighbor needs help you jump in and help them. It's a close knit community.

CE: Do you think that close knit community and that agricultural community kind of, really, go hand in hand?

D: I think so, people that are in agriculture are, basically, that type of people. You can really spot somebody that comes from someplace else because they're stand offish they're... different, they're really different people.

[Announced over the loudspeaker that her granddaughter won her second blue ribbon in the horse show and some dialogue about that ensues]

CE: What do you know about some of the lower income, disabled or elderly people and how they get they're food?

D: You know, I really feel for people. If I look at the beef prices in the store, it's really shocking, I don't know how people feed a family with the... We do have a senior center here that feeds the elderly about three meals a week and I think they get other meals too. But if we didn't have that a lot of people would just not have anything.

CE: Do you have any experiences or stories that could kind of illustrate that situation to somebody who it was pretty foreign to.

D: I really don't. You know, my father in law, his income was really low and he would go and play the piano at the senior center every once-in-a-while, that type of thing. It's just so crippling for them to, I think it's really healthy for the elderly to go. I think it's really helpful for them to be able to play cards or tell stories or whatever they do. I think it's a really important thing and I really like to see the older people have something cause when they sit home alone it's just not good.

CE: Especially when someone loses a spouse or something.

D: Yeah, when they're alone they just don't do things they should do.

CE: And so, obviously, you know about the beef because it comes from you but do you know about where some of the other foods that are eaten in the community come from.

D: I don't know, I think a lot of times, at the senior center there's a lot of wild game, if it's poached, if they get it that way, it's donated to the community center. Everything's trucked in.

CE: Do you know how far some of the stuff comes?

D: I don't, I've often wondered [chuckles] I've thought probably a lot of it comes from Portland but I don't know, you know, it's quite a ways here.

CE: It's tough to find out too, it's not like all the stuff says right on there. Do you eat any local food, including meat, although I kind of know the answer to that one, how about the other stuff?

D: You know, when we go out we'll eat Chinese food. My husband loves fish, we even go fishing, we have a lot of those types of things around, people can go do things along those lines.

CE: Do you know where the community could make more local food available to people?

D: I, I really don't know, because they can't buy the beef, it's got to be USDA inspected to be sold. So, it would be tough. I think our farming and our gardening is getting less, I think that people are going to have to go back to the old ways, I really do.

CE: Do you think that is going to be tough for people?

D: I do, really do, I think it would be really sad if people don't have a computer, it's really hard to make living today with things the way they are; everything is really expensive. [mhhh] Cut the prices I guess would be the best thing [laughs] but that isn't gonna happen.

CE: Are there ways you'd like to see the food system in the community change, other than cut the prices [laughs]

D: It's hard to say, I really don't know, I really don't know how they could change it.

CE: Have you heard about food systems changing in other communities?

D: I haven't.

CE: Does that kind of thing interest you?

D: Oh it does, we don't, you know, we're kind of isolated here, we get our news from Medford so, you do hear it. Medford's news. We don't hear a lot of that stuff.

CE: Do you think there is other stuff about the food system or community that you think I should know. I really find all this stuff interesting.

D: I think that Lake County is really lucky because we have so many different things. The meat industry is here, we have that, our stores seem to be well stocked, you can go to the store and get anything you want, so we're really fortunate here.

CE: What do you think the community will be like in 20 years or so?

D: I hope it's like it is right now but, you know, times are changing and changing fast. I really don't know.

CE: What are some of the changes, you say you've been here 30 years, what are some of the changes you've seen?

D: I've seen four mills go down, you know, the lumber industry go, this, the crime, we have it just like every place else. The whole world's changing I guess, ours is changing with it. I think people want more, they expect more, they, we all have to live within our means and it's tough to do so sometimes, with our wants.

CE: That's pretty much a universal issue, I think.

D: Mhhh.

CE: Do you have any questions for me?

D: Nope.

[End community questionnaire, begin hunting and fishing.]

CE: Do you hunt?

D: Mhhh.

CE: What do you hunt?

D: Deer and elk.
CE: And where do you go?
D: Just places in the hills.
CE: Like, the hills right around Lakeview?
D: Mhmm.
CE: About how often do you go?
D: Every fall, you know, during season.
CE: About how many times in the season?
D: Until I get something' [laughs]
CE: And do you stop after you get something or do you keep going.
D: No, no you get it you're done.
CE: You just put in for tags around this area then?
D: Mhmm.
CE: And what kind of equipment do you use?
D: A gun.
CE: Who do you hunt with?
D: My husband.
CE: Do you eat what you hunt?
D: Mhmm.
CE: And where do you go, do you stay someplace else?
D: No, we hunt from home.
CE: And so, do you have any hunting stories you could tell me?
D: No, not really.
CE: It doesn't have to be something real amazing...
D: It's just fun to go, you know, to be out in the fresh air and see what the country's doing. You're always looking to see what trees are doing, how dry it is, you know, weather conditions have a lot to do with it.
CE: So what would a day of hunting entail?
D: Well we get up about 4 in the morning, head out, and hunt until dark.
CE: And do you scout it out before hand?
D: Oh, we go out once in a while but not very often.
D: So do you fish too?
CE: Kind of the same sort of questions, what do you fish for?
D: We've been fishing for catfish.
CE: Oh yeah, how's the catfish here?
D: Up at Dog Lake it's really good.
CE: Do you eat it when you catch it?
D: Yep.
CE: How do you cook it?
D: I fry it, just roll it in salt and pepper then fry.
CE: Do you put it in wheat flower or corn flower?
D: Wheat flower.
CE: My mom usually does it with corn flower...
D: I've heard of that, I've just never, I never have it so, you know.
CE: How far is Dog Lake from where you live?
D: Oh, ??? miles.

CE: When you go do you go in a boat or do you stay on shore.

D: We stay on shore.

CE: And what kind of equipment do you use?

D: Just hooks, worms [laughs]

CE: Do you fly fish ever?

D: Never have.

CE: About how often do you go?

D: Oh, about as often as we can, we've been going about every other Sunday or so. It's grandma and grandpas day with the kids.

CE: Oh, okay, and then that was the next question, who do you go with? You and your husband and all the grandkids?

D: Mhmm.

CE: How many of your grandkids live in the area?

D: All but two, I've got eight.

CE: Wow, that must be fun.

D: Yep.

CE: That's a lot of hooks to keep track of.

D: It keeps ya busy.

CE: Do you have any fishing stories?

D: The kids are fun, they just love to get in there. My youngest granddaughter's two, just turned two and she just caught her first fish the last time we went. My husband'll hook it and then let the kids bring them in and she's always just stood around but this time it was her fish, that is *my* fish. It's fun.

CE: That's gotta be fun, too, seeing them progress, getting a little bolder with it.

D: It is, like these guys can do it themselves, we don't have to do anything for them.

CE: Yeah, I know, I went fishing with Gordon [her grandson who I had gone fishing with earlier in the week] and he knew a lot about it; more than I did. Have you got any questions for me?

D: No.