

Mon wore a dark pair of jeans and a light yellow and pink shirt with decorations of flowers. Her nails are well cared for. Her hair was short and curly; they hide almost all of her ears. She puts on her rectangular glasses from time to time, mostly to read and write. She wears a smooth silver wedding band on her left hand. Behind her is the computer where she works at; being idle, it displays pictures of her family, mostly the very small and cute grandkids.

Mon's husband, Kevin (PSEUD.), is a rancher. Mon helps part time. The couple met each other in high school in California. Kevin eventually went to Cal Poly with the help of Mon who put him through school. The two moved to Lakeview in 1974 when their two kids were 3 and 4. They'll be married 40 years next month. Kevin was raised by an old ranching family. The family has also been in the butcher business. He's had a few cows when he was in high school, working on a "smaller scale." Kevin and Mon now raise cattle and hay. They have been ranching together now for 34 years.

Recently, Mon has been getting up at around 4 in the morning each day to rake the hay since it's the only time of day when she's still home that the temperature outside is still cool enough. By 8 a.m. she comes to the office to work.

It's been a poor year with the draught. Luckily, there's not much for her to rake. The land's been dry, so they could only get one cutting of hay and the season also came earlier than usual. Because they can't get much hay off of their fields, they don't have the capacity to feed many of their cattle, so they had to sell 40 replacement heifers. The couple own 1,900 acres and lease another amount comparable to what they have.

The family's field is quite dry; they have no sprinklers and no irrigation system. The reason being that the well in their field has boron on the water, which kills the alfalfa and "won't leech out of ground real fast." Unfortunately, if they were to get this problem fixed, the cost would not be less than the return they'd get back on the production of the field.

The cattle they raise are sold to whomever. They have been working with a video-sale system for at least the past 16 years. They have had buyers from as far as the Midwest to more local areas like California and Oregon. They also have a friend, who works for Superior, who's a regular buyer and they've kept up with him for a while.

Kevin and Mon like using the video system because they "can plan better," especially for things like taxes and income predictions. It's pretty much a "planning tool." Plus, by doing this, they have a bigger market on hand, as opposed to going to Madras, OR and getting only about 30 buyers. The way she puts it, they are "at the mercy of the buyer." In fact, the couple is planning on putting some more cattle on sale next Thursday (August 2nd). These won't be shipped until November.

Because cattle that are sold months ahead of time would not look the same upon the time of delivery as they do when first captured on video, there exists a system to calculate the difference that will be most beneficial to the buyer, called the slide. For exam-

ple, if the rancher were to estimate that the calf will be 625 lbs at the time of delivery and it is actually 640 lbs, then the buyer will get a discount per pound (most likely just several cents less). If the calf comes up short (say 615 lbs), then the buyer would often pay the same amount of dollar per pound. It is often better for the rancher to underestimate the weight of his or her calves.

Mon likes Lakeview for its location. It's a "nice spot." There's "not a lot of [close] neighbors." The "lifestyle is nice." She was born and raised in California and this is just a world apart. She also enjoys "working outside." However, being a rancher, she dislikes "the uncertainty of the market," it's pretty much a "buyer's market." There's "not much freedom." She confesses that she can't see much of her family even though they live so close just because she can't get enough time away from her work to be free.

At home, Mon grows several variety of fruits, including apple, blackberry, plums, and apricots (but those have not fared well this year because they froze during the winter). She and her husband don't eat out a lot since they don't live in town. Besides, she complains, there's not a lot of variety anyway.

Mon used to really like to cook for her family. But now there's not much time any more. She enjoyed cooking for her family when the kids were there. Her mother-in-law used to make ravioli and filling from scratch. It was her husband's absolute favorite and they made it every Thanksgiving and Christmas. It is, however, a "big undertaking." Since her family eats meat a lot, they now do lots of prime rib (especially for Christmas). Mon's personal favorite is beef enchiladas. Mon also enjoys cakes. Her son's favorite is a Kahlua type cake that she makes.