

7/18 9:45 a.m. Lakeview, OR Department of Human Services

Ryan is a case worker for DHS and works with families and children who suffer from abuse or neglect.

Emily Riley: Okay, so this is Emily Riley with Ryan Davidson, and it is almost ten o'clock. And we are talking about you know, your job, and your kind of role in the community as well as the youth situation here. So first off, simple question, how long have you lived in Lakeview

Ryan Davidson: I was born and raised in Lakeview, other than college, I have been here my whole life. So I'm thirty-three now, so thirty-three years.

ER: Okay, great. And so you said you went away to college? You were at Western Oregon you said?

RD: Yep

ER: And what brought you back?

RD: Um, I'd say, probably family first, and security, and just I like it here, I like the geographics, the weather, I didn't really care for the valley or a lot of people. I was ready to come home

ER: Okay. When you, when you left, was it very, what was that like, you wanted to leave?

RD: Yeah, I think most kids in Lakeview are excited to leave, they want to get out to see new things. I think it's fifty-fifty you have some people who are so excited and intrigued about the big city and what's in the rest of the world and you see them get the heck out of here, unlike me where the umbilical cord was never completely cut and I couldn't wait to get back. I didn't really care for the other half of the state.

ER: Does it, you said, well I guess I heard from Toan that you are into hunting and fishing. Did that, was this a place that really fit that interest?

RD: I think so. I think our recreational and our outdoor activities are more accessible here. And I was born and raised doing those kinds of things so that was kind of something I really enjoyed. So I would say it was a little easier here.

ER: So, tell me a little bit about what it was like growing up here.

RD: I was fortunate, literally almost every member of my family, my extended family lived in Lakeview, grandmas, aunts, uncles, cousins

RD [02:43]: So, I had a pretty big security blanket around me all the time. Lakeview is pretty, relaxed would be a good one. I think people are pretty naïve to the rest of the world, because things are pretty. I grew up in the era here when it was pretty, there were lots of mills, there wasn't a high level of unemployment. The community was really tight. And right about the time I was getting out of high school was when things started to fall apart with the mills shutting down and economics going down, and that is when I went away to college. But in general, I don't want to say it was mayberry, but it was pretty close. It was real low key

ER: So, how have you in terms of youth especially, have you seen that decline in economic stability, have you seen, how does that effect the youth population?

RD: Well I know, its funny you brought that up, because we have been talking about that at my job child welfare. You know in the last ten years the, the student populations have almost been cut in half. I don't remember the numbers, I want to say 1400 stu-

dents to like 700 students. So the economics have definitely changed the students, in just mere numbers. That's the big piece. Lakeview is kind of turning into one of those retirement towns you see.

ER: Yeah, we have been seeing that, we've been looking at the kind of different you know stems in population.

RD: Definitely, we are seeing that, you will probably hear this over and over again, you are seeing a definite influx of like Californians coming up here, a lot of older folks. Property has I mean I can say this literally in the last ten years has doubled, and I think it's because of that. As far as the youth, you still have that, I think the situation as far as when I was growing up, there is not a whole heck of a lot for kids to do here. But there are just not as many kids. (!!!)

ER: And, how, what kind of affect do you think that has? When you were growing up you had kids around?

RD: Yeah. I think there was, you know your classes were bigger you had more friends, you had more people to hang out with. I just think reality is the classes aren't as big. I think the activities are all about the same, they are very limited, but they are still available I think.

ER: So you think, the problem of having as many playmates around is a big?

RD: No, I don't think so, I don't think so.

ER: So the decline in the youth, you know, half the size that it used to be, in the high school at least. Is it because their parents are moving away, or because they move?

RD: I think it's the economic piece and I think for the most part, you know those blue collars were once mill workers or ranch workers or loggers, and because of the mill shutting down and such, now you pretty much have the forest service, BLM, school district, state offices are your primary jobs. So I think a lot of people were forced to move, to be honest with you.

ER: Um, and do most um, so comparing when you were in high school did most kids graduate from high school?

RD: Yes, I think it's fair to say we had a pretty small what's the word,

ER: Drop out rate

RD: Drop out rate, yeah.

ER: What about now, what do you think?

RD: You, I don't know any statistics, but I think for the most part we have a pretty high graduation rate. I had a pretty small class back in my day and it was like 55 kids in my graduating class, and I don't know what they are now, but I think I can honestly say that everyone graduated.

ER: And, what do you see kids doing now after they graduate? Um, I think for the most part we still have a pretty strong rate of kids going to college. And you have probably heard all over town we have the special scholarships, the Daly fund

RD: Yeah, I have heard about it but?

ER: What is it? (Yeah) This is my short version of it. There was a, back in the early nineteen hundreds, there was a gentlemen by the name of Bernard Daly, he was the judge slash doctor, slash of the town, and he was never married and so on and so forth and he basically left a big pot of money and it has been invested well over the last century and there is a group of people that manage it. And basically the criteria is that you have went to school in Lakeview, I think its maniall four years of high school in Lake County.

And it's an academic they base it on the SAT scores and your GPA, so on and so far. Basically it's a pot of money, and I was fortunate, it put me basically through college. I mean I had no student loans, anything. I mean I had some other scholarships, but it's a huge pot of money and it's just for Lake county kids.

RD: There are not a lot of towns in Lake County

ER: And thinking about that, with the populations decreasing, and as your grades are up, I mean you don't have to be a four point student but as long as your grades are up. It is an opportunity that other kids in the state may not have. It is definitely, it helped me out

RD: It sounds like it

ER: So, um, where were we going with this question?

RD: Just what the kids are doing after?

ER: Yeah, I think kids in Lakeview may have an edge on some other communities on having an opportunity, or at least a funding source that maybe other kids don't, I think the rate of kids going to college is pretty high.

RD: That's nice to be able to depend on hard work to get to college, instead of that as well as economics, sources. That's great. So, moving to you know what you do here, what is your, tell me about your job.

RD [10:15]: I'm a child protective service worker so I investigate all allegations of child abuse or child neglect in the county. And that's the entire county from Deschutes county border all the way down here, all the way to Nevada all the way down to California.

ER: Do you travel a lot?

RD: Yeah, we do but luckily Lake County is a huge county but Lakeview is the county hub. And what is it 90% of the population lives in Lakeview. We have to go to Christmas Valley and some of the other outlining towns, but not as much as you would think.

ER: Um, so what do you kind of do, you know, during the day, and what are some of your responsibilities?

RD: Um, most of my day is paper work [laugh] it's a real complicated process. When an allegation of abuse or neglect on a kid. It has to be familiar abuse meaning it has to be family member. If someone is abusing or neglecting a kid and it's a stranger or something like that then its usual law enforcement, it's a criminal case. Or if a family member knows that family abuse is going then I might get involved. But basically I'm going to give you a scenario. You know if we get a call that, you know there are some kids that maybe, you know the epidemic in Oregon right now is meth, methamphetamines, maybe parents are using methamphetamines and due to their use their kids are being neglected, they are not getting food their shelter is inadequate, unsafe. So my job consists of going out and investigating that and interviewing family members and interviewing kids, making collateral contacts with you know doctors, dentists, teachers, other family members. That is a huge piece of my work and the other huge piece is documenting that. If there is a case that is so bad that we need to do immediate intervention, that is when you hear the word foster care. I'm the one that puts kids in foster care.

ER: So how does that work?

RD: How does that work? Well it's got to be pretty bad. (Okay) I think there is, belief in the state that we just take kids for nothing, put them in foster care, we get like a

commission on it, all that kind of stuff. Its getting, our rules and policies are getting really tight. It has got to be immediate risk that we, you know, a safety plan can't be created. Usually if it's bad we create a safety plan. Clean your house up, or grandma will come in and watch until you fix things. But foster care is the worst of the worst, the extreme, there is no other option. We have to put those kids somewhere else, until the family can alleviate the problem. And that is a legal process and its not just me making that decision, the courts are involved, we have to have a judge involved, everybody is assigned attorneys. So it's not just one person going in there making the call. Then if kids do have to enter foster care, and even if they don't, another big part of my job is providing services to family, families. And that is usually being, I call it the middle man, I'm making referrals for family. I am making referrals for families to get into drug and alcohol counseling. I'm providing help getting funding to clean their house up. Or, I might put someone up for a hotel for a couple of weeks while their house is getting fixed. And there is many types of abuse, there is, I would say in Lake County, this is a big piece, in Lake County, neglect is probably the biggest referral. And then of course you have the really terrible stuff like sex abuse, or there's physical abuse, those are the extreme cases. But I'd say in Lakeview the primary referrals we get are neglect. And I think the Meth epidemic is a big piece of that. I don't have any statistics on that but I would put it way up in the probably 80-90 plus percent of the cases where I have to get involved where there's substance abuse and its usually meth.

ER: So what was it like, when you were younger, you weren't, obviously not a case worker, but did you kind of notice that it was lower, that?

RD: I think so. Of course I was probably a little bit naïve, but Lakeview. This is my version, Lakeview was filled with ranchers and loggers and mill guys, big tough kind of guys, there used to be four or five bars here. So I think, I remember the bar fights, and I think drinking, I think alcohol was probably the big player in Lakeview, and I don't think its Lakeview specific, I think its everywhere. I think about, I don't know when to pinpoint it, it started switching to a little more hard core stuff. Unfortunately in my line of work, Lakeview is a very isolated county, I mean were a huge county but were pretty isolated. We are hundred miles from anything; you have to drive a hundred miles to buy underwear. Unfortunately because of that, in my line of work, I see an influx of people moving here probably for the wrong reasons. For example the Christmas Valley area, it's up there really in the middle of nowhere. For a long time you could buy and acre of land for a hundred bucks or something like that, in the sage brush. We had a huge clientele, I'm not stereotyping or picking one geographic or, but you had a lot of northern California people moving up here, we had a ton of people from Eugene, Springfield.

ER: Why do you think they are moving here?

RD: I think for the wrong reasons, I think they are really isolated, there are a lot of drug making I think, there are a lot of people growing weed out there.

ER: I did hear about the thing in the newspaper, they found a huge plot of land that was growing

RD: Like seventy five hundred plants.

ER: And I was sort of wondering how they didn't notice that before

RD: Like I said law enforcement is really limited here. Especially the county, I mean you really have to look at a on Oregon and see how big Lake county is, you know there is four sheriff deputies for the whole county. I mean you have local police, and guys

like that. That is what I'm trying to say, a lot of people that I run into that I might have to get involved, you might look at their criminal history there is a lot of drug making, manufacturing, possession, paraphernalia. Unfortunately my perceiving is that a lot of people move into Lakeview and especially Christmas because they can get away with it. It's not as, people aren't. Now to me I would think its backwards, you know small town people are going to be watching you, and I think that there is some truth to that, but out in those rural, out skirting areas, I think they can get out here and get away with it.

ER: Do you see that maybe families are moving away for that same reasons and people who have lived here a long time?

RD: Like people who are getting out of here, they're tired of it? (Yeah) No, I don't think so. There are some die-hards in this community, I mean if you really start looking at family trees and some of the old books, there are some families that have been here since the beginning of it, generation after generation I don't think they'll ever leave. But I don't think there are people moving out of Lakeview just because of the drugs, or the clientele moving in. I'm making it sound worse than it is. But I definitely think that there is a population moving here to get away from something. And to get out into the isolation, I really do. And I have seen it, I mean Christmas valley I can't tell you how many camp trailers or buses are parked out in the middle of nowhere. Where did you come from? Springfield. What for? We didn't like the city [laugh, laugh] You know, so I think that's a down fall that people are moving here for the wrong reasons. There is definitely a clientele moving here for the wrong reasons, there is definitely a clientele moving here because they like the area, they like the weather, they like the small town. That's where we are getting the influx of the retired folks and the Californians, you know they can for awhile there, my neighbor is an example, you could they could sell their three bedroom two bed house down in California and come up to Lakeview and buy a hundred acre ranch for what they just sold. Now the prices in the last few years have really increased. I mean I don't blame them.

ER: In Ashland it has been like that, my mom lives there. So many people from California are coming because they can sell their million dollar house and buy a really nice place in Ashland.

RD: With a view and maybe an acre or two. That's exactly how it was here, I think it still is. Anyway.

ER: Um, so I was wondering what you sort of see your personal role in the community as? If you, through your job, through being a local

RD: Um, through my job, I mean my, I take pride in thinking that I'm keeping kids safe in town. I'm helping kids be safe. And helping providing services to families that maybe need some help. Um, as far as personally I want my town to keep that reputation of being where good folks come from. You know we are not, we are probably naïve, but were not racist or anything like, it's just a good place to grow up, good place to live. So I try to be active in the community, and try, I like to see things keep going, like our fair every year or our Irish parade. I don't necessarily help out with that, but I, it means a lot to me to keep that stuff going. And unfortunately I kind of see it as being not as big of a deal as it used to be. You know that's kind of sad to me. That's my role. And I would be whole, we joke around because working for the state you never know when your jobs can be, you know, I've been here for ten years at this job. There are talks at the state right

now about cuts and stuff like that, I would be whole heartedly content if I could live here the rest of my life. But, so I hope I get to, I hope I can.

ER: What are some of the things that you know, drugs aside that you have seen change in the community, that you thought were either negative or positive?

RD: Changes in the community? Not to repeat, but definitely the different folks coming in. The one thing that I can say is that I have really noticed, in another population, not to stereotype on that either, but like Hispanics. Growing up in Lakeview, I could probably count four or five families that lived here, I could tell you where they all worked and they mainly worked at the certain ranches and so on and so forth. And when I came back from college I was really surprised to see the number of Hispanic families that moved to Lakeview and the single Hispanic males in this community.

ER: Oh, I wonder why that is?

RD: Um, I'm not sure. The jobs that were available for like the blue collar workin' folks, like we have a molding plant, they make wood molding and so on and so forth. I don't know, you know, it really, really surprised me, how many Hispanic families moved here. And I don't know why that is, I would think they would move to get employment, and there really aren't that many employment opportunities here. Um,

ER: It would be interesting to see what their attraction to Lakeview was?

RD: You know I think, I would be willing to be that there are instances of people taking advantage of that. They called the displaced mill workers, when the mill shut down here. You know they were making you know twelve, fourteen bucks an hour, and now the only opportunities is to work at wood grain. You know the families that are moving here, not necessarily Hispanic families. You know there are people that are willing to work for eight bucks an hour. I there were some proud displaced timber workers that weren't going to do that, you know work eight bucks an hour. So I think there may have been some job openings here for proud people that didn't want to go make eight bucks an hour any more. Does that make sense?

ER: Yeah. So what has the community's perception been of these Hispanic families coming in?

RD: I think for the most part it's fine. The only thing that I have noticed is that I mentioned the young Hispanic, single males. I'm not sure of the dynamics of the culture, if they're just working up here, sending money home. But I've noticed there has been a lot more, and I think this is a reality, there has been cultural issues, such as, with my line of work I've seen it in the last ten years, you know, in Mexico its normal for people to get married at thirteen, fourteen, fifteen. And, we've had a couple cases where you have thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, seventeen year old girls (Really?) hook up with these twenty some, thirty some year old Hispanic males, and you know culturally, in their culture, it happens that way, but the realization that it's against the law here?

ER: What has happened with that?

RD: They are usually treated, they don't usually take that into account, they say oh it's okay in Mexico so it's okay here. And they are prosecuted to the fullest.

ER: So you have had cases like that?

RD: Yeah, I have had cases like that. Usually, and I keep saying this, and not to stereotype, but most of these gentlemen, once they get caught and they really start looking into them, they are illegal, so usually they are just, INS is involved and they ship them back. But there have been some that have actually served time.

ER: Here at the local prison, or is that since

RD: Yeah, or wherever, yeah, or jail. Um, so I have seen, if you're talking specifically to that, the Hispanic families, or folks moving in, I have seen and noticed in ten years that there are more cases like that. I've seen, a little more southern Cal, gang kind of stuff. (Oh okay) My life growing up in Lakeview, the only gang kind of thing you'd ever hear about where little white kid wanna-be's, wearing the hat sideways and baggy pants, they were strictly acting on their cousin from Portland or L.A that was visiting, or movies they've watched. We never, we used to call them wanna-be's. But now with my work through with child welfare and I am heavily involved with law enforcement, and the court system, there actually is like a lot of Latino gang stuff going on in Lakeview. I mean not like in the other towns, (Like L.A.) but their legitimately is.

ER: Do they actually have clan names?

RD: They're usually are but associated with another, you know, like a California gang. They ties to them or.

ER: And, have you only seen that in the Hispanic population?

RD: No, I think it's everywhere. Oh, gang stuff I would say yes. But, you know, the I mean, you have, you have other ethnicities moving here, and they might have their links somewhere else.

ER: How many Hispanic families are here do you know?

RD: OH, I don't have a clue. There's a lot. In fact, I have even seen, and this will tie in, we were talking about the housing and stuff (Yeah) there is actually little (neighborhoods, yeah) yeah. Like now there is, where before you never saw that. Now there is the Pine Hall trailer park, it is almost extensively Hispanic families, or the I don't know what they call it, berries trailer park by the fairgrounds, it is almost strictly

ER: Yeah I have heard that they play soccer at the fairgrounds a lot.

RD: Yeah. So,

ER: That's interesting.

RD: But that is definitely, you know growing up, some of my classmates, I went to school. I'm serious there was only a handful of Hispanic families, and they had been here forever, you know, they'd ranched on ranches for years. And when I came back I was really surprised, because when I went to college I went to Western, so you had all the Polk, Marion county, all the Berry fields and the grass fields, and the produce, so I could see going to college, you would always see an influx of migrant workers coming in so I was used to that. But when I came back home I was really surprised how many had moved here, because I was trying to figure out what the heck they were doing here, there wasn't a lot of employment

ER: How long were you gone?

RD: Just college, you know four or five years.

ER: That's a big increase, I wonder. That's interesting.

RD: Yeah, the other population that is often missed, is and Joe here at my office would be a great guy to talk to about it, he is the self-sufficiency worker.

ER: What is that?

RD: The old term is the welfare office. I mean as for public assistance, the people that are getting food stamps and cash assistance and so on and so forth. I think that is another dynamic to Lakeview that's maybe dif, and it's changing. You used to be able to rent a house in Lakeview, I mean a house, it may have only been a two bedroom but for a

hundred fifty, two hundred bucks a month (Oh, so unfair) you know I think, you know, people you hear people saying that commercials, and you will hear Joe saying this, people can't live off the welfare system. They have to have something else, you can't live off of food stamps and cash assistance, but I can honestly say, this is my perception, a couple years ago, people could in Lakeview.

ER: Couple years, how many?

RD: I'd say, I don't know, six to ten years ago, I think a person can live on welfare. When you only have to pay a hundred and fifty to two hundred bucks for an apartment.

ER: How much is welfare usually?

RD: It's hard to say, it's kind of based on the number of people in your family, is someone working, previous income. If they lost their job. But, there's a lot of families who, there's a lot of families in Lakeview, this is my perception, Joe might think different, but there are a lot of families that live off the welfare system.

ER: Wow

RD: Problem in conjunction with other activities. Maybe, and I'm not stereotyping them either, but you know they get welfare and they do other stuff maybe it's making some drugs, or selling some drugs, I don't know. There's some, because I've seen it in my work and I've seen it generational, grandmas and kids and now grandkids who I don't think to this day have ever had a job, they're just, they're living off of their public assistance, or disability.

ER: Um, in conjunction with that, with child services cases, do you see a lot of them from families who are in welfare?

RD: No, oh gosh, we had some statistics somewhere that tied right into that. Don't quote me on this there was a statistic in Oregon, not just Lake County, that sixty percent of child welfare clients were also receiving public assistance. Also another one like so many percentage of them were involved in probation, some of them were involved in drug and alcohol. And I don't remember the exact statistics. In Lakeview that everybody, all different ethnic groups, income levels and jobs there is abuse and neglect, but because, as I told you before, most of our cases are in the neglect category, unfortunately you are talking about folks that are using methamphetamine or others drugs which also causes other family stressors and social problems. You know unemployment, dirty house. So, yes I would say those clientele are probably more susceptible to my involvement just because of the whole chain reaction of someone who's using causes. The chaos it causes in their life.

ER: Do you have kind of, this might be a tough question to answer, do you have kind of an average age range of kids that you, end up in foster homes.

RD: Yeah, I mean we are 0-18 but especially since the rules are getting tougher, and we really try to provide services before we have to take kids into care, I would say the focus is usually your younger kids. When you are talking teenagers, this doesn't sound very fair, but like neglect issues, a sixteen year old is old enough to make their old peanut butter and jelly sandwich, whereas a three year old when mom is sleepin' for five days after hitting meth real hard, they aren't able to feed themselves and take care. So, I would say ten and under has become a little more of a focus group.

ER: Okay.

RD: Especially in Lake county, ten and under is probably our biggest population.

ER: And do you have, in terms of foster parents, do you have people in the community, because I know Kenda it seems like she's been a regular foster mother. Do you have people in the community, that are really, if you have any foster kids, I really want to.

RD: Yeah, I used to be the foster home certifier for the county, but my coworker Rachel does it now. But in our huge county there is about twenty to twenty-five foster homes. And actually I don't think it's too bad, but you know in other counties it wouldn't cut it. But we are fortunate to have foster families that have been doing it for many years, like Kenda, or we have some other families that have been doing it for twenty some years. We do have resources here in town. The other thing with child welfare is that we are mandated to look into relatives, that's another reason why foster care is usually really the last ditch effort, because usually there is a grandma, and aunt, a cousin that can step up to the plate. We might have an open case but we might place the kids with relatives.

ER: And in that sense it's not really foster care?

RD: Not, it would still be foster, if we had a legal allegations where we had to file stuff in court, and that's where the court gets involved. We actually go to court and say mom and dad have a problem because of this, and the judge orders it, yes. And even if its with relative its considered foster care but its with a relative

ER: And you get sort of the sense from the community that people are really willing to help out with kids who are having a hard time or you know in terms of people volunteering to be foster families?

RD: Um, I think there is a definite want in the community to help kids. I wish there was a few more like voluntary stuff like mentor, big brother kind of programs. But, I think I don't know, I think funding is a big issue with a lot of places, there is not a lot of funding. I think people have written grants to death around here. To be honest with you. And then, I think I'm a minority, in my age group in Lakeview I think I'm kind of staring to be a minority, I mean I'm still fairly young, you have the old folks. But overall I think Lakeview is very proactive in helping kids.

ER: What kind of programs do they have for youth, you know like the big brother system, but?

RD: You know, there's not a lot that I know of. Um.

ER: Is it sort of, because Ginger was telling me that she felt like the community was really, she said because there wasn't a lot of social service in town that the community kind of creates their own social service. And I was wondering what she meant by that.

RD: I think that what she means, like, for example Paisley, the little town of Paisley it's 40 miles away, pretty much strictly ranching community, almost everybody works at the same ranch. We don't get a lot of child welfare referrals from Paisley, and I think Joe could tell you that they don't hardly have any food stamp or Welfare cases. And I think that there's reasons for that, that the community, and it's not a secret thing, they just take care of their own. If they have a family moved in and they are having a hard time, that's the kind of town that is probably going to open their doors and there's going to be a food basket or something like that. And I don't it's as formal in Lakeview, but there's a lot of that that happens. You have a lot of folks taking care of each other. Lakeview, I'm sure you'll, I'm sure you've seen what is there 25 churches in Lakeview, something like. And I dint really grow up thinking that Lakeview is like really a religious town, and I still don't, for some reason. But I really it surprises me how many churches when you start

looking. I think there's twenty five or something like that. So you have a lot of that, you have a lot of, in fact I can tell you examples here, where like my agency should have been called out on a family, but they weren't because I think the church tried to take care of it, and I think maybe they did. But that doesn't mean that they shouldn't have called us.

ER: Yeah, so how do you guys feel about that?

RD: Um, well, I like to see the support but you know some people are mandatory reporters, and they are supposed to be calling us. I don't think church counts. I don't know. I'm kind of mixed about that, because we like to see that to because if they can access other resources that is going to alleviate safety threats to their kids, then go for it you know. But I think there is a lot of that. There is a lot of church, pretty faith based kind of stuff. And even if it's not faith based, even if there are some clientele that are maybe honest with the law, I think they even take care of others. I think that's maybe what, that lady was talking about. As far as programs for kids, I know they've tried numerous times through grants to get like a big brother or a mentor program. And for some reason they just can't, I think they just die out because they can't get enough people to do it.

ER: People from this community?

RD: Couldn't get enough volunteers to mentor. And I don't know if it's the age thing. I mean I could never do that, I can't hardly, I hardly have enough time to see my own kids let alone/

ER: Do you think that's a big thing, that people are working so hard that?

RD: Mhm, I think just to survive, and in Lakeview if you don't have, if you don't have maybe a government job or a job at the school or something like that, I mean you have husbands and wives the one mill job and working the store, barely making more minimum wage they're working their tails off to survive, so I don't think they have time to do that. But you know special events like Thanksgiving and Christmas and so on and so forth, you really see, we have this thing called the tree of joy, I'm sure they have it everywhere in the state, it's basically where kids are identified or people can just volunteer that we are having a tough time at Christmas this year. And I am amazed at that thing every year. I mean there is, there's, they put kids' names on a giant Christmas tree, you just come in...

[Continues to describe how the charity of the tree works. First week every name is pulled off.]

RD: People in this community care, it might not be all year long, especially at special events, holidays, they really step up to the plate. Other activities for the kids, the only thin I can think of, when I grew up there was a thing called Fridays. It was Friday night, and I think it was kind of, I don't think it was church based, but the church volunteered this facility. While all the moms and dads were at the bar partying it up, the kids would go to this place called Fridays and it was alcohol free and it was chaperoned, and it was everything from card games to foosball to the dance, big dance floor. And back when I went, everybody went to Fridays, but I've heard now, I've heard now just the preppy, good, rich kids go to Fridays.

ER: So it's still running?

RD: I think so. I don't think it runs as much or as full time as it used to. But that actually kind of bummed me out, I'm serious, everybody, all different income levels, race, everybody went there. But now I've heard only a handful of kids go there.

ER: Okay. Um, well that was really great, if you have anything else.

RD: The only thing about adolescents and kids in Lakeview, and I think this is a big thing. There is not a lot for kids to do. And, I think, when you have nothing to do or options to do, and I was guilty of this growing up here. You tend to move towards things that probably weren't, you know there was a lot of partying around here when I, especially when you got to high school, and you still see it now. You see kids going out to Camp Crick and having a party, and drinking beer, a lot of alcohol use. So living in a small town I think, its not an excuse, you seem to see kids that's maybe stretching it a little bit, gives 'em something to do. Lakeview is also pretty conservative, so like the school district, you get caught with a can of Copenhagen at school and you get kicked off the football team for the year. (Oh wow) They have some pretty strict conservative rules in the school system, which is good, I mean some people appreciate that. But also I have seen that backfire, you know you have a kid that used to play football his whole life who got caught taking a pinch of Copenhagen and got kicked off the football team for the year, and guess what that kid goes and does because he can't play football? There's nothing else to do. So I'm going to go start, we have talked about that before, and people disagree with me on that a little bit.

[Tells a personal story about it from one of his friends who died]

ER: I think small town, that's a problem for adolescents is things to do. And the thing that worries me about little old Lakeview and its not just Lakeview, its not just beer and Copenhagen like it used to be, sneaking your dad's Copenhagen, or a six pack of beer. I mean I think alcohol can be just as dangerous as other drugs. Boy now you have meth and I'm really sad to see that, we didn't have that stuff, I mean I graduate in '92, I mean fifteen, twenty years ago. It's just sad to see that, now it's you see other stuff. I mean you see kids trying meth, you see kids having sex when they're nine, ten, eleven.

RD: So are there a lot of teen pregnancies?

ER: Boy, I don't remember if it's high or low. I could tell you a great person that would know. Mary Wilkie. Not only is pretty much a life long Lakeview resident she is the director of the Public Health [He gives me more of her information and what he wishes he had in terms of information] It has definitely changed, but I don't think it's Lakeview specific. There's different stuff, perceptions. Lakeview was one of those, logger, rancher, pretty much all white, I mean it really was. Kind of tough towns, took pride in being kind of conservative. Working off the land. You see more of those old Irish Catholic ranchers having a hard time with the drug problems. I think, I don't want to say racism, but I think you might see those kinds of families having a problem with some of the other families moving into town.

[Talks about Jeanette's comment on the slave sale. Describes it.]

RD: I don't think Lakeview is a racist town, I think people might perceive as that way, but that's really hard to explain for me, born and raised here.

ER: People coming into a town that was a certain way, that's hard.

RD: Do you have any food questions?

ER: Well we have a lot of, this big long questionnaire, what's your favorite food, I don't want to necessarily bother you with that. With food stamps, what's the age that you can start getting food stamps?

RD: Joe, oh, its family based. [Someone comes in I say hello] Food stamps in Lake county, well it's a state program, its based on eligibility, which once again is based on number of folks in your house, and employment or income levels, what else? So, I mean can start, kids, I should say their family can start getting food stamps as soon as they are born. But as far as them accessing them, it's usually the family. It's a card with a certain amount of money that they use.

ER: When they turn eighteen does that change?

Joe: Their income starts counting when they are eighteen, when they are under eighteen usually their income does not count, they can have summer jobs and it doesn't count.

RD: Well if they hit that eighteen they are basically an adult. You know like the other funny thing about Lakeview, you see a Subway here, a Subway here. It's just a year old, I think. We always thought, Lakeview is like the main artery to Reno, it really is. That's the one thing that saves Lakeview in a lot of ways, you have people driving through here all the time. It always cracked me up, we never, I've seen smaller towns that had like fast food. Come to find out, my understanding of it, town counsel for years, whatever you want to say, the county and city officials for a lot of years were held by a lot of the respected business men, the man who owned the grocery store, or owned the hardware store. They never would allow businesses to come in here because they thought it would take away from the little ma and pa local businesses. I think it's true, I'm convinced it's true. Then finally one of those folks or type of folks decided that maybe we should jump on this, and they did, and are doing very well with that franchise.

ER: So they own their own franchise.

RD: I think so. I'm curious to see if the future brings more to Lakeview. For years they wouldn't let them come here, they would, someone would say hey we are going to put in, I don't know the laws, I think you have to get permission from the town to open up a business. So food in Lakeview was always, growing up cafeterias were always actually pretty good.

ER: At school?

RD: Schools were usually always pretty good, a lot of kids ate at school

ER: What kind of food?

RD: What kind of food?

ER: Yeah I mean was it healthy kind of stuff or was it like chips and/

RD: It was more of your, I don't know. It was more healthy stuff, I think they were on a budget, but you always had your weekly, especially in grade school a variety of hamburgers all the way to spaghetti. And in high school you could get the meal of the day or you could always get a hamburger and fries, or the special it was. And then the trend was, once you hit that middle age, it was cool to go up town for lunch

ER: Oh yeah Corvallis too

RD: You'd go to the burger queen or the Polar Bear. That was the cool thing to do, once you hit

ER: Once you could drive, I guess it's not that far

RD: No you'd walk through the alley. That's where I usually ate. There was never vending machines when I went to school, like Toan and I were talking about this. I don't think there were any vending machines all the way up through high school. And now when I go to the high school for work I see vending machines, pop machines, and water. I'm not sure how the cafeteria is anymore.

ER: Did kids bring their own lunches a lot, or did they mainly eat at the school?

RD: There was a lot of kids that brought their own lunch too. Then you have like Westside, there's the Westside School

ER: What kind of school is it?

RD: It's an elementary it's like K through fifth. A lot of the ranching kids go, that's where I lived. I remember it, they had a cook and it was a like grandma kind of cooking, like a grandma figure cooking. It wasn't like what I call a government food in a can. And she made a lot of stuff from scratch. I know a lot of kids ate there.

ER: And you went to school there?

RD: Actually I didn't, my kids go to school there now, my wife went to school there, I went in Lakeview.

ER: What is it, is it the same now?

RD: Yeah, it's still kind of a grandma figure cooks. We are only talking, how many kids go there? Maybe like thirty five kids in the whole school or something like that.

ER: So she can do that

RD: She can cook like its kind of the grandma figure. I know a lot of the kids eat there?

ER: So you guys feel good about having your kids have a meal there?

RD: There I would.

ER: At the school?

RD: Yeah at the school. I don't know if I have enough of an opinion on that, I don't know the kind of food, the quality of school their serving in the Lakeview schools. Union, I know it's good out there.

ER: And your kids go there?

RD: Mmmhm.

ER: So that's sort of, you feel good that your kids are getting that meal?

RD: Yeah, for sure

ER: You got a lot of families that ranch around here. My wife's family, my family does. You have a lot of folks raising a steer, butchering it every year. You have a lot of hunters, I wouldn't say you could survive off of it. You have a lot of people eat what they kill.

RD: Do you guys do that?

ER: Yeah. [talks about hunting for the rest of the time] [52:27]

Notes by hand:

[Things that used to be available for people to do:] BLM, fighting fire, no employment

[In the past] ranchers hired kids. A lot of kids in school were ranchers [and therefore were in line to take over the ranch from their family and worked on it as well.] hired kids to hay.

Other, non-ranching kids fought fires, used to do a youth fire fighting program for kids as young as 16 [normally you had to be 18 to fight fires]

Now, forest service is not localized as much, kids from out of town places are hired on programs to come, [all the way from other states]

[So, if kids do not have families here, do they have an incentive to come and live and work in Lakeview?]

Kids now don't have an incentive reason to stay. But many go to college. Kids that are in line for a farm, but still go to college

A lot of kids want to see the world, can't wait to get the heck out.

There is frustration in rural Oregon. Probably with big populations [in Portland, Salem, Eugene] making decisions [in terms of ballots, laws and land management is a big one] about rural issues. [It seems like people are frustrated that they little say in some issues that really affect them, such as cougar hunting which has declined because larger populations thought it was bad, and the timber industry failing in this area because of someone else's vote. Ryan said that he thought the loggers should cut down the old trees that were either burned down or over populated to help out the logging workers and provide income for them. He says the rules have gotten a lot tighter and they basically cut all ties of logging in this area]

[I mentioned that it would be interesting to see what happened with this new fire that has spanned part of northern California, and southern Oregon because the jurisdiction will be different for both and it will be interesting to see if how the both governments handle it. He said that the reason the fire got so bad was because the Oregon fire crews had to wait until it crossed state border lines, and could not intervene or help before. Then when the fire did come to the Oregon side, it took off over the hill and spread]

[How does Lakeview do with outsiders coming in to live in the community?]
[Lakeview] Doesn't do very well with outsiders, majority of town was 20 core families, didn't like change. Now that the elder are dying it is changing.

First night at school [OSU] cousin in Corvallis had his stereo and CD's stolen because he didn't lock his doors [Ryan brought attention to this because when they moved to Corvallis for school, they were still very new to a different styled community and were naïve to leave their doors unlocked, which is what they do in Lakeview]

Likes to support community but \$80 for two bags of groceries at the Safeway in Lakeview as opposed to a whole grocery basket full of food for \$80 in Klamath Falls [it's hard to always support locally]