

Roger Linton is a newcomer to Lakeview. He and his wife, now live here with their two children. This interview was conducted on a picnic table in between his old house and a house that's currently being built. In the background are chickens, birds, as well as several deer. Accompanying me and listening in on the interview with me were Joan Gross, Nancy Rosenberger, and Ashly Stone.

Toan Ngo [00:00]: This is Toan interviewing Roger Linton at... on July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2007. It is 5:45 p.m.

TN: Well, Roger... I understand that you're a rancher.

Roger Linton: That's right.

TN: Could tell me how long you've been ranching?

RL: Well, I've... been a rancher I guess... for... maybe fifty years or so if you wanna go back... I started working on a ranch when I was in high school, and... been involved with ranching oh about time until now... except for maybe four years, I was involved in the retail business.

TN: So you started fifty years ago. Did you work for your dad or anything?

RL: No I... worked on a ranch in... Siskiyou County in California. My folks lived... were urbanites... but I didn't care for that... that lifestyle, so I found my way to a ranch and... and I've been on one ever since, basically.

TN: What about your brothers or sisters?

RL: Oh I have one brother that's... involved in ranching, he's also... he's a Ph.D. and he's taught in several colleges, over the years and then... he ended up in... in... Washington State extension service... and now he's retired and moved in Nebraska with a small ranch, maybe somewhere in size to this one, probably. And I have two other brothers, one is semi-retired from the State Department... and... well the youngest brother is... an educator in a criminal system back East and I'm not... he's... I couldn't tell ya exactly what he does but... he's been involved in that most of his life. He's worked his way up to where he's a... you know, supervisor or management position, if you wanna call it that. But he did, he's always dealt with education and prisons. My father was a chemical engineer.

Nancy Rosenberger: You were a rebel then, huh?

RL: Well sort of, yeah... I didn't quite fit in the mold. [laughs]

TN: Could I ask how long you've been here, in Lake County?

RL: Well, we been in Lake County for five years... and prior to that we... I was in Deschutes County... oh... for probably twenty-five years. And about twenty of that I owned a ranch, just a small ranch there and we built it up. Louise [wife] and I bought a small, run-down ranch and kept adding to it and building it up and... luckily for us the real estate value became... pretty good and we were able to, kinda... we wanted to get away from the crowded populations that was becoming... you know it was getting there and so we moved down here. And... exchanged that ranch with this one, basically.

TN: Now... out of all the counties, why Lake County? I mean... I'm sure there are other counties that were less populated too.

RL: Oh, we just happened to... find this ranch and like the area and... and the kind of place it was. Didn't look any farther.

Joan Gross: It's gorgeous.

NR: Hm hmm.

RL: We had plans to... we were gonna go back and... look in Wyoming and Montana but we found this place... stopped looking. [laughs]

TN: So I understand you raise cattle.

RL: That's correct, yes.

TN: Could I ask, are they around here? Or...

RL: Not very many... No... there's only maybe a half a dozen or so here right now. We have what they call a Forest Service permit, where we graze in the summer on the forest. Under the control of the Forest Service. And all our cows are up on that area right now. It's... it's actually right above, behind us bluff here... it's... you know, it's more mountainous and meadows and timber ground.

TN: Is there a name for that area?

RL: Well it's in the Warner Mountains.

TN: Okay. (Hm hmm.)

TN: And... is your wife a rancher too? Does she help?

RL: Yeah, she does a lot of work, yeah.

TN: And... could I ask how big your ranch is? How many acres?

RL: I... believe we have 3,300 deed to acres, so...

TN: That's really, really big... yeah... And... could you explain more about the forest renting it out here?

RL: Well... let me kinda explain our operation to ya, the cattle operation. It's... first of all it's what we call a cow-calf operation. In other words, we maintain a herd of cows, mature cows, and they... every year they have a new calf and then we keep... the calves stay on their mother 'til they're approximately nine months old, and then we wean them and sell them after that. So we sell weaned calves every year, that's our income is from them. And... here we have, you know, somewhat, not real severe, but we can have, we have a long winter here so we have to feed hay to the cows in the winter time. And then about February or March they start to have their babies, their new calves. And by middle of April or first of May, the grass is coming and so the cows go out and they're on pasture and then we run 'em in this area here. We also rent another 2,800 acres that's a little bit to the west which is... be part of this operation and the cattle, they run all on this ground until... about the first of July is when we go up to the forest. And so now they're up in the forest and they'll stay there until the first of October. And then they come home, we wean the calves, and... we... what we call process the cows. You know, we give any shots that they get on an annual basis, preg. test them... any open cows will general sell and then... they're just grazing on these meadows and... until the snow flies and... we gotta start feedin' them hay. And then the cycle starts all over again.

JG: When you say they're open, that means they're not pregnant?

RL: That's right, yes. Hm hmm. Yeah you can't... You know, it costs a certain amount of money to run a cow, so... it's like having a... I can, you know, look at 'em like a factory, you know, they all gotta workin' and if they're not... producing, you can't afford to keep 'em. So we... they go to town and they... if they're good and fat, and not too old they can bring a pretty good price and they end up like in hamburger or processed meats and that type of thing.

TN: Now... I'd imagine that you have a lot of cows [inaudible] cuz of the area that you have. Can you truck 'em or do you drive 'em on horse?

RL: No we don't have to truck any of these cows because... all the properties are more or less... contiguous. And... we can drive them up to the forest in about two or three hours.

TN: Wow... that is quick...

NR: You mean drive by horses?

RL: Yeah we do. Yeah drive the whole heard of 'em and then... when it's time to come home... they... We just get 'em started and... push them out... there's what they call drift benches up there and they keep 'em in so they don't wander off before they're supposed to but... And when it's time to bring 'em home we open the gates and... give 'em a shove and say "See ya later!" and a lot of times... well... sometimes by the time we drive home the horses and the trailer that a few of the cows are here already, but you know they all come straggling in all fall and the weather 'course will get, they'll get into the... be snowy and cold and... they wanna come home anyways so... it works real nice, see. Pretty much come home on their own.

TN: So do you ever have any problems regarding weather, that stops the cows from moving?

RL: No... actually, you know... if we get a storm or... that'll bring the cows out of the mountains. They'll wanna come home, get fed...

N: So you don't drive them down? They just come?

RL: Well... we... we... yeah... The first year or two we did drive 'em and now they know their home is and... you know, you just kinda... actually we had a problem this year, some of 'em went up before they were supposed to. [laughs] This... this ranch doesn't have too many fences on the back, it's basically unfenced on this end... and... so... And it's a pretty dry year and the feed is short, and I had 'em, the whole heard was in the pasture up in this way... So... it's... it was time to gather 'em and get 'em ready to go up there again, I knew we didn't have all the cows... we can just, you know... we were short, and... about a week before we were gonna go up... I had to take some salts with a pack horse up one area, most of the places you can drive to, but I... this one place we couldn't drive, we had to pack the salt and there were cow tracks coming up, going up ahead of me, you know... so they were all... some of 'em were going on up there before they were supposed to. But that was... I think, because of such a dry year and the feed got little short here.

N: How often do you check on 'em?

RL: Well... once a week or twice a week, kinda depending on... you know we get pretty busy here sometimes it's hard to get away but... Monday we just, we have three pastures basically on this range and... and we just moved out on one of 'em, Monday and went in there and got all the cows that were still around, pushed them into another field. They kinda move themselves a little bit... You know it's not a hundred percent management, it's kinda keepin' track of where the cows are... but... but... But anyway it's a good, healthy situation, you know and it's... it's cooler there and there's lotta water a lotta cricks [creeks], lots of shade for 'em and, you know, it's forest with... with meadows and... and they do real good.

TN: Can I ask... how many bulls you have in comparison to cows?

RL: Well... we run about one bull for every twenty-five cows.

N: And... you have to keep 'em separate? Or no, you keep 'em together?

RL: Well... they... mostly... they're together now... In the winter time we keep 'em separate, the bulls...

JG: Now how long does a cow stay productive?

RL: Oh... that'll vary quite a bit... We've got a few cows that are probably in their teens, you know that are... they're getting pretty old... and that's kinda pushing it a little bit... But longevity is... something that... it's good to breed for and select for in your replacement heifers, because... you know some cattle fall apart and just kinda... you know, like people... You'll find some people that go on and on and... others... that fall... you know, that quit at younger age. But... oh I think most people like to get eight to ten years out of a cow and then that's about all they can figure on 'em. But you know, we... I don't know if you wanna put this in your interview but... this... there's a sitch... a condition now on this ranch... that's called foot hill abortion. Which is common... oh... in more in California and it's, it's kind of a foot hill, in the foot hills where there's brush and stuff but it's... there's a tick that lives here and it'll bite the cattle... and... if it bites the cow and it depends on which stage of pregnant she's in but they'll abort. The calf will be born premature and probably be dead. Well... we didn't have that where we came from and so the cows who came here were all... had no immunity to it, and you generally, they... they... claim that one say... have been bitten by this tick and they'll build up an immunity to it... and then after that, they won't abort anymore and so we knew we'd probably have a little problem when we first came here... so... And we did, we had quite a few cows abort but I think kinda getting'... we've been here long enough, we lived through the worst of it... and... We... we haven't been cowing [inaudible] open cow just because of that. Because of, you know... we got well [inaudible] maybe she aborted because of that so we gave her a second chance and... but now we're getting to the point where we're past that and plus, the younger heifers that we raise here... are more... you know, they're raised right in the conditions so all the time, so hopefully they get... maybe get immunity before we... we're askin' 'em to be a mother. It doesn't always happen but anyway that's... it's a condi... it's a situation that we have to live with in this... on this ranch. There are ways around it... if the cow's past five months in her pregnancy, and she gets bitten it doesn't seem to affect her too much, it's just the early pregnancies that are... And of course you're breedin'... say you're breedin' in May and June, July and the ticks are active when it's hot so... they're... they're biting these cows in the early part of the pregnancies but... And I know that... it's been around for years and University of California has been working on it for a long time... but they've never come up with a vaccine to prevent it yet... So it's... just a... somethin' you gotta manage around.

TN: That's... that's the first time I've heard of that... Well, thank you.

TN [14:42]: What do you feed the cattle here?

RL: Well, they... this ranch is pretty much all natural we don't fertilize... we feed what use see these meadows... are where we raise our hay in there. And... we put that up as... just grass hay, native grass hay. And... so the cows eat that in the winter time. Sometimes, this year we're gonna have to buy a little hay because of... been a dry year and our hay production was not as... much as normal. And we'll probably buy alfalfa hay to supplement them with. But that's, except for salt and mineral that's the only... thing we supplement 'em by, you know? So they just... they're converting grass to beef is what they're doing. And it's... it's all... everything is pretty natural.

TN: Where do you go to sell them?

RL: Well, there's several ways of selling... there are auction markets... I'd say... 15 or 20 years ago there were buyers that would probably go to the country and buy the cattle off right at the ranches. And now... there's also a... one system that's become quite popular... in the last few years is... what they call video auctions. And... we're gonna partake in one of those this year. Representative from the sale came here with his video camera and... and he took a picture of the cattle... and then... Let's see, it'll be in about two more weeks... actually it's a... they have the sale and the buyers just gather in a room and they have a big... TV screen and they show these tapes. And then an auctioneer'll sell the cattle right there. There... you know, the conditions of the sale are... are all listed on a paper for instance, these cattle'll... they'll be sold at that date but they won't be delivered 'til November 15<sup>th</sup>... and we have to specify that they'll weigh... we have to put a weight down, you know... they're gonna weigh so many pounds, and... For instance we're just gonna sell our steer-calves, we won't sell any heifers so... we'll have one big truck load of... semi-truck full of steers and steer-calves... and they have to weigh 630 pounds and... they'll... they'll go on... November 15<sup>th</sup>, so then... then the... the buyers sit there and... they see what the cattle look like on the picture and they bid on 'em just like they were...

NR: Individually... is this?

RL: Yes...

NR: Yeah.

RL: I mean, just my cattle'll sell and then another guy and then they sell...

NR: But I mean, is it each of your...

RL: No, the whole truck load...

NR: The whole...

RL: Yeah, they'll buy the whole truck load.

TN: Now, is this done in order to... expand the market, to get customers from far away? Is that... is that why?

RL: Well... ya see, it's pretty convenient for... it's a good way for the buyers... because they go to this... this is in Winnemucca, Nevada... this [inaudible] sale but they have 'em around different places. They all gather there for a couple... three days... and... I think I've heard the figure that there'll be about half a million cattle sold at this sale. That they're all just on... just pictures, so you just... And... so, you know... and the breeding is described if you get to see what they look like... We tell 'em where our bulls come from, what the breed is... and that type of thing... and... and the weights will be so they know what kinda... what they gettin'. So they sit there and they can buy a lotta cattle in one day. And they're not drivin' around all over the country and... then... the people... that put this sale on... they have to come... they'll send a representative here the day we ship 'em and they'll weigh 'em. They'll actually give me check right that day. And... it's... it's a good system. Works real well.

N: Then they go to feedlots?

RL: Well... these cattle are... be a little light for a feedlot. And... they'll probably, they're kinda in between, you see... you have what the... cow-calf operation, and you have... what I call a stocker... Classify 'em as stocker-cattle and that'd be in between the cow-calf and the feedlot, and then... the feedlot... one thing it's really changed a lot... this ethanol thing... is really put a... a big deal on the corn market, it's... it's pushed the price of corn way, way up... So... the feedlots, you know they... corn was a

major feed for feedin' the feedlots, and... Now the price is gotten pretty high and it's gonna make... the feedin' more expensive, so... There's... this stocker deal... what I... we're... yearling or whatever you wanna call 'em, some people don't sell calves, they keep 'em and they'll run 'em over in then sell 'em... like right now, and they're... they're weighing seven, eight hundred pounds, maybe even nine hundred pounds. They're gonna... they're going to the feedlot... and the feedlots like those big cattle now because they can take 'em and they'll gain fast or... and they'll only have to feed 'em for... maybe 90 days... possibly 120 days. But they won't have to feed them so long now... cuz they bought my calves at 630 pounds and put them on... right in the feedlot, they're gonna have to be in there a long time. And... you know, it's fairly expensive to... they gotta, they gotta find ways to cheapen up that... that gains so... like these younger cattle, if they got some... they could go to California on the grass, you know... cuz they got a different season down there... And they have what they call growing lots... which take those younger cattle and they... they don't feed as much grain but they... they maybe have some cheaper roughage and... maybe some byproducts, anything that... you know... that... that they can, a cattle can utilize, but... You gotta... anyway you got those three stages... and then, once they leave the feedlot, there's... go to the slaughter house... they're ready to be killed.

TN: And do you know what kinda prices you'll be getting on your cows this year?

RL: No... not s... you don't know for sure. I... the price has been up pretty good, but... again this corn thing... the calves... like our calves... aren't quite as strong as they have been. The yearlings are much strong this year than they normally are because, based on this change in the corn price... what I... looking at all maybe a dollar a pound or a dollar fifteen a pound, on the steer-calves. That's... that's per pound.

NR: Is that good? Or is that bad? I mean I don't... no idea... Compared to five years ago...

RL: Yeah... it's... it's... it's up...

NR: It's up?

RL: But... And it sounds pretty good... Oh, a year or two ago it was even better, the calves, yeah... But the... the thing is it's just like... oh... Every... you know, the expenses just keep getting... higher higher... and I mean look at our fuel, you know... every day I drive that tractor up to the field tank and... and... fill it up, you know. But it's... it's expensive... The... the cattle business... it can be profitable but it's not... you don't make a lot of money in it...

TN: What would you say is your biggest obstacle right now, in running a ranch?

RL: Oh... let's see... biggest obstacle... My ranch is probably a little too small... and I don't run enough, you know you need to... I need to have a little bigger operation to make a really make a good living on this place... We're not... we're not really living on... the ranch as a support... particularly. But... you know if that was our only means of support, we'd probably have to be twice as big as what I've... I have to run twice as many cows... as I do... in order to make it... sustain a family.

TN: Now... if it were... twice as big... you think you alone can handle it?

RL: No, then I'd have to hire help. [laughter]

TN: Likewise though... what do you think is the biggest opportunity for you right now?

RL: Oh... I'm getting about... the point where I'm not looking for opportunities... I'm old enough that it... I'm thinkin' about... well what am I gonna do here another year or two or three or four or five, you know? I'm seventy years old, so how long you wanna keep workin'? I enjoy it, I'm pretty healthy, I... And that's one reason we... we bought this ranch... it's... it's a fairly easy ranch to run... in relation to the... the one we sold, we're... had a lot of irrigation and... it was more intense, you know... you had to be out there every day doing this at the same time, moving pipe and irrigate them, fertilize them. This one is... a little more... easy goin', kinda... you know... if you go away from this place a week... and don't do a thing... you come back it's just in the same shape... nothing's falling apart... everything's still going...

N: That's nice... so you don't have to irrigate here?

RL: Well, we do irrigate... but not... we only irrigate in the spring when we have water. See... the... the way this ranch works... we... we like... a lotta snow in the winter time, so we get some good snow packs and all these little draws up here... we get big old drift of snow... And then about March 15<sup>th</sup> or... April 1<sup>st</sup>... somewhere there... and it's warming up, the snow starts melting and then... the cricks start runnin' good and then we have diversions... and then we flood these meadows. So... you... we do... we flood irrigate, but it's pretty haphazard, you know, it's... just kinda what you call wild flooding and... You gotta get out there and work at it a little bit but it's... you don't have to be... to intense on it. Whereas if you had... you know, if you have a ranch where you're... runnin' pumps... and... and buyin' a lotta fertilizer... and your... you gotta lot expense and you gotta get a lot more production to... pay for all that expense. You see... all the fertilizers all petroleum based... and it's, you know... the one this [inaudible]... this... all these fuel prices went up... fertilizers just went out of sight... same way... gasoline and diesel and... so the only thing we buy here is... chemical for... weeds. That's about all... only thing we really... except for fuel for our equipment...

TN: Well... according to the food system here... on that list, what... do you like about the food system here... in... the community?

RL: Well... we're a part of the food system... I like eatin' food... there ya go. That's...

JG: What's your favorite?

RL: That's the favorite... favorite one... eatin'...

JG: Now what's your favorite food?

RL: What's my favorite food? Well I like a lotta things... You see what that... and you know this country is kinda going the wrong way... It's places like this you know that... we're taking care of the land... you know we're... we're trying to keep the weeds off... we're conscientious about... conservation... You can see, oh it's hard to see but there's a... over there we been cuttin' juniper trees... Which are kind of a weed, you could look at this hill over here, you see those all... almost all juniper trees, and all they do is suck water outta ground and they don't give you anything back. Nothing eats juniper... There's... Oh I've seen the robins drink... get drunk on the juniper berries in the fall... Except for... there are just no... they don't have a... any practical... applications for anything! So... to us they're a weed so we been cuttin' 'em down. And they make good firewood. But other than that... they... they don't have much value... we... we are hoping, they're supposed be a biomass plant...

NR: Yeah we heard about that...

RL: Put in... at the end of town here... and we hope it comes because they're... if they do I'll try to get 'em to come clean up all this juniper we've been cuttin' down. But... you know if you look at the politics of the country... who was it... Al Gore was sayin'... weren't he the guy that was tryin' to say that pretty soon that... we wouldn't have... need any farmers here or... weren't too many years ago somebody was sayin' we didn't... we wouldn't worry about any food being produced here because we could get it other places cheaper than we can raise but... what happens is just like the fuel... I mean... what happens if... all those countries that... that are sending us oil all of a sudden say "Hey, we're not sending any oil anymore" we'd be in trouble here, wouldn't we. Well, then all these countries that are sending us food... they say "We're not sending you food anymore" there'd be a lotta hungry people in this country. And look at the... a good example of what's happened lately is that... food that's come from China... look at that stuff that happen with the pet food... China has been terrible on their... they been throwin' all kinds of junk into the... just tryin' get more... you know, they been cheatin' like crazy... and nobody's really been all over it and they should have been all over these guys and shut 'em down years ago! But... cuz they been sendin' a lotta stuff in here... you know, if you keep up on the... in... in the toothpaste... weren't there... toothpaste deal... and this... this... but... but... so anyway... what I'm... what my point is... it's... I think... our government is... stupid not to encourage more farming and... and... keep your farmer on a better economic situation than he is... because they'll be comin'... we have more people here all the time... and... if we're gonna rely on these foreign countries to feed us... some day... you know, they're gonna say "Hey! We got those Americans where we want 'em now! We'll just quit send 'em food... and they're all gonna throw up their hands say what do you want! We'll give you anything we got or we'll do what whatever you want!" you know? They'll come take our country away from us. Because you gotta have food, that's... the food system is number one! You gotta have that... and... so we need to take better care of it.

TN [29:37]: So...

RL: I think...

TN: When you buy food here... or when you get food, do you try to get as much local food as possible?

RL: See ya Doug (PSEUD.)! [saying good-bye to his house-builder]

RL: Well... yeah, pretty much... we... if we're in Bend we go to Costco and spend three or four hundred dollars. [laughs] But... we don't go to Bend too often... and... we got good stores here... they've got just about everything you want. And the prices aren't bad, we got two... two good markets here... We raise our own beef... so we don't buy any meat particularly, we usually buy maybe a... a... 4H lamb or a pig at the fair and... things like that... but... I think on this place, if we ever got a situation where you couldn't buy food, we could raise just about everything we want just right here.

NR: Cuz it's right... well we talked to your wife, she's a gardener, right?

RL: Yeah, she likes to garden.

NR: Afterwards, I like to see her garden...

RL: Well, I don't know she...

NR: Oh did she...

RL: A deer got into it the other day [laughs]... she was pretty unhappy about the garden...

NR: She said she was trying to get an 8-foot fence around it but it hadn't been...

RL: Yeah well... yeah we haven't been workin' on that but...

TN: So... is the garden big enough... to provide for the kitchen?

RL: Well... no... we don't necessarily try to provide all our own food. That's... what I'm saying... if... if... we... this... if... we got into a situation where you didn't... food was short we could produce our own. We could live here pretty well, I think.

TN: Do you... hunt or fish or anything like that?

RL: Oh... we like to fish... we don't hunt much anymore... We like to look at the wildlife more than... shoot it... [all laugh]

TN: When do you go to fish?

RL: Well... we haven't been doin' much fishin', we've been working too much... And actually, the fishin' is not that great in this area... But there is some fishin' around... up in the mountains or some little cricks an'... there's Toucan river down here's pretty good... up by Paisley... But we... Louise is the best fisherman... she likes to fly fish but we haven't done much fishin' since we've lived here... and... We've gotten in the habit of working too much probably... This house deal has been keepin' her real busy...

NR: It's beautiful...

TN: Now... do you... and Louise... do you guys have any family recipes that you guys enjoy?

RL: Oh, I make good enchiladas... And, let's see... what's Louise get... she's a good cook... She can just look at... open her fridgerator and start throwin' stuff together and it... always turn out good... [laughs] I wouldn't say we have any specialties particularly though...

TN [32:40]: Well... Is there anything else about the community that you'd like to tell us about? That we haven't asked yet?

RL: Well... it... to me... say... you know it's an old... or... it's the small community... and it's been real friendly to us... When we moved here you know... we were well accepted and... I think maybe that's... because we were ranchers and... the people... and we also had... kids in school... in the high school, which, you know... you get to meet people that way... And we've... felt real... real well accepted here... and... and there's a lotta nice people... It's a small community, we don't have too many... problems... you have with, you know... you... in your... more urban areas... I'm sure there's a little drug problem, but... it's not too bad... I know... when we came here I... we got a boy that goes to he's... well, let's see... he'll be a junior next year at Oregon State... but when he... we moved down here... he was... tryin' to think... was he a sophomore or a junior in high school... I think... he... he was startin' his junior year here and he didn't wanna move... He said "No I'm not movin'" ya know... he weren't, you know, come here and... I've got an older son that lives in Redmond and he was gonna just stay there and finish high school there, you know... So... we came down and... that little house right there used to sit right here [behind him is a house that used to be where the new house is being constructed] that... that was the main house... Anyway, we came down... it was the weeken' we... actually signed the papers first to buy the ranch so we're... and the people that owned it at that time... that we bought it from had a boy who's... he'll be a senior next year in high school... and then, they had... they had two girls that were older and in college, but anyway... the kids were there and they... they were sittin' in the livin' room talkin' while all the adults were in the kitchen at the table

signin' papers and stuff... and they kept tellin' David, our son, he says "Boy" and he's a big, tall kid, he's 6'1" or so, he said "Boy, you better to school here we need ya on the football" [all laugh] Well he played football in Redmond as a freshman... and a great big big team you know and he hardly got to play very much... and he didn't even go out the next year, he says "It's not worth going out! I never get to play." And... so... you know... he gave up on football... and... he says "Oh man... come down here... we need ya..." you know... so... he came... [laughs] and that was the first year we were here... we still had our other ranch and we were back and forth, you know and runnin' two ranches and he had to come down... and... you have to... you know they have a rule about... eligibility... you had to practice... for two weeks, I think, before the first game to be eligible so he came and stayed here by himself cuz nobody else was here and he went to practice, you know... everyday and... and... he just... Well... he weren't a star, but I mean... they played the heck outta 'im... I'd say he played 95% of the time... and the second year he got a... when he was a senior, he got a concussion in the first game... and so he didn't get to play quite so much but... they kinda... held him back just a little bit... he just loved it... And then he... he was on the wrestling team too... So anyway... he's... his first year here and he was askin' some of these ranch kids, he says "Well what do you guys do for fun around here...?" and they said "Oh, we brand..." [laughter] "calves" and... if you... if you ever been to a calf-brandin'... it's... you gotta go to one because it's a lot of fun... You put all the cows an' the calves in the corral and you gotta, they gotta castrate the steers and give 'em vaccinations and... ear-mark 'em and all the things they do... So they rope the calves and that's... it's... it's a lot of fun...

NR: When does that happen...

RL: The cowboys just doing... Generally in the... the spring or... early summer...

TN: Okay...

JG: What... what does your brand look like?

RL: Oh... ours is a... like this... [draws his brand on paper]

JG: Oh... put it here on this... [Joan hands him her notebook] that way if I see any of your cows I'll know who they belong to... [laughs]

RL: We call it two L... it looks kinda like a running two...

NR: Yeah it does...

JG: Oh yeah...

NR: That's neat, and you brought that with you down?

RL: Yes. Hm hmm.

NR: How'd you get all your cows down here?

RL: Well you put 'em in trucks and haul 'em down...

JG: How do you come up with the brand? Have... have you... always that and...

RL: Well... no... you have apply for one... see the... Oregon Department of Agriculture and... if you have a... particular idea, you know... that you want... you send it in and... tell 'em... this is... you know I think they give you three choices and... and the... the location also of the brand... there's... the hip... the ribs and then the shoulder would be the three places you'd brand... and... the hip is the most desirable... so... And I think that actually... if I remember right... we... we didn't get any of our choices... and... somebody from the... brand department kinda suggested that one and said

“Well... why don't you try this...” [laughs] it looked pretty good so we went ahead and used it.

NR: And then... do you have the hip? Or...

RL: Yeah... we're on the left hip...

NR: And then what are your ears like? We learn that ears are also...

RL: Yeah... we don't ear-mark ours.

NR: Oh you don't...

RL: We... we start out with pure-bred cattle in... in... Terrebonne and... and you have to tattoo their ears... so you... and you don't ear-mark the pure-breds so we... we never have a... had a ear-mark... we... we put an ear-tag in 'em... a yellow tag with numbers on it and so...

JG: What breed are they?

RL: Well... I... we start out with Simmental... and... then we introduce Angus into that... cross them with Angus and... I call 'em now... Simangus... It's not... it's not a hybrid, they don't call 'em hybrid but... It's... it's a... combination breed...

JG: What... what do you like about the combination?

RL: Well... see... the Angus became very popular here in the last 10 or so years... because they're... they're a real... good cattle to feed... they feed well... they have... they mar... get marbling easy... they get... in other words fat... you know, they get... they just became real popular because of the demand with... from the packers... and... you know, they... they were the right kinda cattle so... the thing I like about the Simmental, they're more... of a maternal breed... And actually, if you go way back... see Simmental came from... Europe... and they were imported in about... I think the early '60's, they started bringin' in... these European breeds... and they re... they were several of... not just Simmental... they was Simmental and Gelbvieh, Charolais, Limousin, and maybe... probably some others... if I think for awhile... They... they refer to them as continental breeds... and most of them were big... Real big cattle... in fact... you know, some of those cattle were used way back when as work animals... in Europe. But... so they brought 'em over here and they cross them on them rearing cattle and the... and the calves were bigger... And they get more growth... and so boy the catlin'... “Jeez... this is great! We get more pounds to sell!” you know and they could always sold cattle by the pound and well... The only problem with that, they were... you get... some problems with all this size... Number one is calving problems... because the calves were bigger at birth... and... you know, they... it... so they'd have more death loss at birth... maybe even lose a few cows that couldn't [inaudible] cows and things like that so... some of the... and the Charolais were probably the worst but... in all... you know, for... a few years, boy, everybody wanted these and then they find and start realizin' all the problems they got so... The... the people that were in the... these breeds to stay... they... had to make some changes in 'em in order to make it more practical so... And that... what I... I refer to the Simmental as being Americanized because they would come... and they were all... spotted... kinda like... a dairy cattle, white and red... and now they're all solid colored... they've made them all black... and they made the size of 'em much more moderate... The calving knees... which is a real important factor has been... really... stressed and... and... so... they're good practical cattle now but they're a lot different then they were back when they came here. And... oh they're pretty... they're, like I said, they're a maternally... milk well... And since we've... you know,

since we've had 'em... we cross the Angus with 'em... but we... we're stickin' with a little... [paper rustling noise because of wind]

TN: Well... You mentioned that, in the beginning that you moved here because Lake County is so... unpopulated... you like the size of it... What do you imagine it'll be like in... another twenty years or so?

RL: Oh... it's gonna grow... It has to grow because if you... you look at the... I mean where all the people... they're all movin' to Bend... and then... where... where are they gonna go? So... they're gonna have to... That'll be... that'll be some growth here... but hopefully it doesn't become like Central Oregon... You know, the... limited... job opportunities here... Which, you know... if you're a retired person, that wouldn't make any difference... we have a little more severe winters maybe... so... and it's, you know... if you're a retired person... you're part of their way from healthcare and that type of thing... But if you're just like to get away from the... you know, the masses, this is a pretty nice place to live... And... and there's been quite a... I don't know if it's just a little short trend but... but the climate that's been... much nicer... in the winter time in the last... we've had hardly any winter at all since we've been here... the first year we had a pretty big snow and... The people that used to... have the ranch ahead of us say... they kept the snow mobile... and his wife was a school teacher... and... they'd leave their car down at the mailbox and ride the snowmobile in here and back and forth when the snow got bad... because it, you know... the wind will get to snowin' and even if you plow the road... the wind blows and it'll drift up and you can't get in and out... and this is a... private road so they gotta maintain it... and we are, you know... ourselves. So like the first year we were here... we plowed it with a CAT two or three times and... I think I've only plowed it once or twice since... Last year... it was hardly...

NR: But you have enough water still?

RL: Yeah...

NR: Even though...

RL: I like to see more snow but... it's been... the winters have been awful easy now... you know like... the... so that the trend is... to... less severe winters... and whether that continues or not, I... who know, you know? We're might just be in a... cycle.

JG: Now... all your machinery here, did you drive that down from Terrebonne? Or load it on something?

RL: Well we hauled it here... no you don't drive...

JG: Yeah... I thought...

N: It'd be a long drive, wouldn't it... [laughs]

TN: I notice you have... some deers are there... [two deer are venturing towards the house from behind his large vehicles in front of the house]

RL: Oh yeah...

TN: How often do they come?

RL: Every day... What are you seein'? What do we got?

TN: Behind the trailer over there...

NR: Horse trailer...

RL: Yeah, you missed a good... a good show, not here but...

JG: So the cows go up in the woods and the deer come down here?

RL: Well the deers stay all year... pretty much...

NR: They're hard on vegetable gardens...

RL: Oh yeah they are... The quail migrate, although they stayed... one winter they pretty much stayed but this last one they left... If you gotta... Lakeview in the winter time, there's quail on the road, in the streets, they just... thousands of 'em! I mean, oh... they're all over...

NR: Even now there's a few... but not thousands...

RL: Oh they're just, I think they moved to town. [all laugh] You can't believe how many quails are down there...

JG: What are... I've been seeing these little... doves here that are banded...

RL: Okay, well those are... those are Louise's, they're tame... Those are... turtledoves... That's a pretty...

NR: And she feeds them, huh?

RL: Yeah... that's a pretty young one there... They came with us and then... Aww, they're neat cuz they're so tame... I mean they'll... they'll land all around the... We have to keep 'em penned til about, til the trees get foliage on 'em because the hawks will... git 'em... They're not very good for protectin' 'emselves... and... I actually... about first of September or so... they're gonna up and get penned back up... But she... she keeps 'em over here and they... they raise babies... coming over in the summer but they all... you know they go in or out of the house... this time of the year... And that's just the young one there... ain't much... ain't much of a band [inaudible]...

NR: Do you get eggs from your chicken?

RL: Yeah... yeah... the chickens are gonna have to change their lifestyle a little, I think...

NR: They're gonna... be allowed in the yard so much, or what?

RL: Well... no, they're gonna... see... where that deer is over there, that... that will be fenced off... and... that's the actually where the... the chicken house... that lil building there... and... this where they lay their eggs but... roost at night... I think we're gonna have to... that'll be supposed to be fenced too... we haven't got that part done but...

TN: Well... Roger, that's all the questions I have... Do you guys have anything else to say?

NR: I just wanna tell you I met your daughter... at the barbeque... Sunday and a half ago, I mean a week and a half ago... Katie... Katie, is that right?

RL: Yeah...

NR: She was... at that barbeque down in...

RL: New Pine Creek, yeah...

NR: I just happened to sit near here... she was so well spoken...

JG: Do you mind if we take some pictures?

RL: No... no...

JG: So pretty...

TN: Alright, thank you Roger.

RL: Oh you're welcome!