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Interview with John Norris at his Farm

Courtney Coughlin

John Norris

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Courtney Coughlin

Interview with John Norris at his farm in Gambier, Jan.28, 1995

Tape #2

JN: John Norris

CC: Courtney Coughlin

RN: Rieda Norris

LN: Lisa Norris

CN: Carrie Norris

RN: This steer had a minor problem it had its, a ball on it got the end of it knocked off. So he was crazy anyway, you know. He was a limousine, so John put him in the pull barn and when we took him to slaughter. We didn't want to take him to sale barn because he was haywire and crazy, so we said, well, we will butcher him. So he went up to pull barn and got him and....

(015) So now my steaks get well-beat. You know you got to pound those steaks nice and tender, so I just have fun beating it. I think it is him and I am just beating away at him because he can't beat back at me because he already hurt me. I had the perfect on my foot and toe where the round on the hitch just got my toe perfect. And I couldn't wear a shoe for a while.

CC: Sounded like Gary was doing when he was so mad at that one that kicked back, I think he wanted to try to beat him up some.

RN: Was that one of the three stooges too?

Those 3 stooges, they can get in more trouble. And no, we don't always name our cattle either. Just some of them have their own little personal quip of a name. We have one named Curly because her fur is all curly.

CC: John was telling me that the girls have their own heifers. Do you name them?

RN:No, we just have Lisa calf and Carrie calf, and can we tell them apart? No. Grandpa can, but we can't. They are both white finks, black cows with white faces.

CC: Which means they are what?

RN: They are part angus and part herford maybe or maybe even holstein but they are black with white face. I think they are part holstein, they can throw the calves and they throw big calves too. Nine times out of ten, usually the calves got a

white face to it. Just like the mother does. Then once they get big we can't tell them apart, we just know what cow they belong to. Well, one year we could because one year we had an all white calf.

CN: Mommy, tell the story about when I got ran over by a ---

RN: ...With your boots on, so Daddy decided to have you help and you and grandpa were doing the door while they went and got a gate and the next thing we knew, Daddy said move and you went to move toward me, instead you got stampeded by the cows and calves coming into the barn. But the bull never come out. We had just pitched the barn out and she landed in it.

CN: I landed in a pile of poop!

CN: They dumped the boots out and they dumped the water and after that they had to clean the bed up four times before I was clean. And I had to wash my hair and everything once I got home and it was a terrible mess. I didn't like it! I ended up getting a cracked arm and I had to wear a sling for a long time. Luckily there was no school, because I couldn't write with the other hand.

CC: How old were you?

CN: I was about 5, 5-6.

CC: And you remember it pretty well?

CN: Yea. Because the most part I remember I was before dad was telling us to move he came behind the cattle and instead of in front of the cattle with the gate and it just shoved him out. Because we have a thin, we don't have a wide doorway.

RN: And she was smart enough that she didn't raise up. She stayed still until it was over with and then we picked her up.

CN: It happened so quickly that I didn't really have time to get up.

RN: And John says he doesn't know why I didn't scream. Because a mother seeing her child hurt like that...Sherry wake up. You know, and he said it would have made it worse if I had screamed. I kept my mouth shut and kept myself together because with being

pregnant for him, I had to keep, cause a lot of times the trauma will go.

CN: The other two things that I remember is when, before I got up, I had a mouth full of poop and that really didn't taste very good. And my mom had a different car then and she drove me to the hospital and Lisa kept on asking me questions. It hurt to talk, I don't know why. But it just did.

LN: You bit your tongue.

CN: And my mom got scared because blood was running down my mouth and everything else. And that is pretty much all.

CC: that is a pretty good story.

CC: So basically, farm safety is

RN: Safety is a real

CN: Important thing

RN: Real important. In fact, farm bureau is really pushing farm safety this year and I got several letters for kids for safety, wanting people to join the organization to help to do safety on the farms. Because things can happen so quickly that with the PTO shafts that are out there, and you know cattle and all that, it makes it. There is...farming is the number one, ranked number one in hazzards. Because you have got your cattle, chemicals that all your farmers use on crops that are really hazardous, you know cattle, you have seen what happened today, so quick. That you don't have time to think and I was reading in one of our farm magazines that we got, where this lady, her boy went out to help bail hay and he was coming down in an ingrade and the father thought that tractor was running away from him, you know he was pulling a load of hay, and he went to jump on the tractor, but he missed, and he was run over by the tractor wagon and it killed him. Now she's having to run the farm now to keep her family goin. Cause she had real strong beliefs that she wanted the boys raised on the farm. And you know, safety is very...you take safety as number one on the farm. There is no doubt. We have a real good friend he was working on the combine and he used all the safety precautions he had at his disposal at the time, but the combine fell and landed right on his chest.

LN: He is still alive

RN: He did live to tell about it, but there is a lot of them that don't live that get in cornpickers and...you really stop to look at all the different pieces of equipment that farmers have and one of them has some hazzard to it.

CN: And one time when my mom was babysitting my cousin Eli, thats my brother likes him a lot because he is pretty much same age, goes to his school and everything else, and its my dad's brother's boy and he was sort of like babysitting him and then when my mom, every now and then we went out and checked on Steven and Eli and it was sort of hard because me and Lisa got to the decision that we had to stay out there with them or they would, because at the time my dad and all of them were starting to work with machinery and Eli and my brother were not really that old and they could have run their tricycles or something down the steps and could have got seriously hurt. Luckily we had the fence in at the time, and now we don't. And we could keep the gate shut we when had that then. Now we don't have the post for the gate. We don't have the gate anymore and we don't have the fence.

LN: Sherry are you alright?

RN: Did John take the van back up I wonder?

CN: I don't think so.

SN: Hi

CN: Hello Steven, this is our dad's farm I take and your dad's name is John Norris. Right?

SN: Yea.

CN: And your daddy runs a big farm with lots of cattle, right? And also the first thing that working this whole thing is Courtney and her last name is...

CC: Coughlin

CN: And this is Carrie Norris who is sort of speaking. And Steven, do you like your Daddy a lot?

SN: Yea.

CN: Do you like to go out there and farm with him a lot?

SN: Yea.

CN: Do you like to feed and run, sit with him on the tractor.
You hoping for a big Bakco?

CC: A big what?

CN: Bakco.

CC: What is that.

CN: A bakco is sort of like a pay loader, all except there is
like door like bucket thing that is on the back, and it scoops
up. And Steven I take it that last Christmas of 1994 you got a
what?

SN: Tractor

CN: What kind of tractor?

SN: Green

CN: A green tractor, what do you do, how does it run? Is there a
motor? Or do you have to pedal it?

CN: He is on his tractor riding it. Yes I see, is it 40 track 20?

CN: Yea, well I take that you daddy says that John Deere's are
the best because his first name is in the name of the tractor.
And what kind of tractor is it? Is it a New Holland, is it a
John Deere? Or is it a what?

LN: It is a John Deere.

CN: What is it?

SN: John Deere

CN: And here we are with Lisa and okay Lisa, do you like living
on the farm?

LN: NO.

CN: Why not?

LN: Cause I just don't.

CN: Is there any main reasons?

LN: Because of the cattle and they are really mean.

CN: Well, if you really became friends with the cattle would you really mind about having the farm?

LN: Yes, because I don't like cattle and I don't like a farm.

CN: O.K. See, you are not running dairies or anything what kind are you?

LN: Angus and ---

CN: No, you are not running beef, aren't you?

LN: Yea.

CN: Well, that is pretty much what we have. And I recall that we have had a cow butchered lately and it was all what?

LN: Hamburger.

CN: And I see that you have been having a lot of hamburger lately?

LN: Yea

CN: Is it lean?

LN: Yes

CN: And, okay, well hello Courtney, do you enjoy going around to farms and talking to farmers about their life?

CC: Yes, I do.

CN: What is your favorite part about doing this?

CC: My favorite part is getting to meet all the people and their

families.

CN: What farms have you mainly been visiting with? Have you been visiting with chicken farms, dairy farms, beef farms, what kind of farms?

CC: I have been to one angus farm and your farm. How would you describe your farm?

CN: Beef. And if you would like any hamburgers you can take some.

CN: No Lisa you get to be interviewing me. Not.

LN: What farms have you been to?

CC: I have only spent time here and at one other angus farm.

LN: which farm was that?

CC: The Cassells.

LN: I don't know them.

CC: Lets talk about what it is like to grow up on a farm.

CN: OK, I enjoy growing up on the farm. I enjoy walking out, even in the snow, feeding the dog, I love my dog very much.

CC: What is your dog's name?

CN, LN: Lady

CN: Lady is the dog's name and the main reason I like farming is you pretty much get, the farm life cycle is pretty interesting and you get to learn a lot. And my Dad says that you get more education on a farm then at school. Yes, I sort of think it is and I sort of not. You can learn the math by using a calculator on our farm pretty much, but we don't carry calculators so we usually carry a pencil and paper and so also there is a lot of things on the farm that other farms don't have. And we are pretty fortunate to have things to eat from farmers and some other places there is war and they have to have enough to feed the people for war.

SN: Hi, My name is Steve.---

JN: This is the old homeplace, you know. This is the house of course, and this house was built here because of the spring, the spring is down below the house. It used to be a spring house there, it is not in this picture. Dad had some milk cows and he had this barn, and that barn was the main thing of your whole operation. You kept your machinery in it, it is a 2-story barn, you kept your livestock on the bottom and your milk cows were on one side and your horses on the other, you hay on one side and so on. And this was a corn crib. You picked your corn on the ear and put it in these wooden cribs to dry and it had cracks in the board and the air would come in and dry your corn. this is also a corn crib. And this here is a little milk house and Dad would put the milk in there and he had a, would pump water in there until the truck came, you know. And this was the wood shaft, you kept the wood to heat the house. This was the chicken house up here, we always had a few chickens and you had a milk cow and you didn't buy anything. You had a garden, and I guess that has changed a lot. And this building had chickens then that building. That was kind of a machinery building, you didn't need much room to keep your equipment when you had horse-drawn equipment then of course we got tractors and then I built two buildings here, don't Steven, then I build two buildings here for equipment and we no longer use the corn cribs we build these grain bins up here. We shell the corn, we did that because, that is an old round corn crib, it was a round one, you put corn in it and that is a hog house. And so everything, this was the center, of all the, and you could make a living at that time with a few cows and maybe 8 or 10 cows and some chickens and stuff like that, and this is a field up here and this is a field and that is some corn.

CC: when was this picture taken?

JN: Probably about 73 or 74 something like that. No, that was built in 76, so about 76 or 78, no that is my 78 Chevy Truck, so 78 or 80. Somewhere in there probably, I guess. Yea.

CN: Daddy, you shouldn't have mentioned that, you say Chevy's are so bad.

JN: I know, I have went to use Ford now, but anyway this was kind of how things have changed. We got bigger machinery, went to grain bins instead of corn cribs and we don't use this barn much anymore because it is hard to clean out. And you can use a

mechanical loader to clean this one out so we have kinda changed, you know. Here is an old chicken house too, that we put the chickens in. so.

CC: Do you have any chickens now?

JN: No. We don't have a milk cow and we don't have chickens

CC: So, it is pretty important these days to have a few things mainly instead of doing a little bit of everything.

JN: Nobody does a little bit of everything anymore. Not very many people do. We get bigger into livestock and we got bigger into grain and bought more land, and got bigger equipment and we just concentrate on that. That is how things have changed some. My dad used to use horses and kept them in here, and had horse drawn machinery that you kept upstairs and in these buildings and that was it. Now of course we have this building and that building there and another grain bin there, and I added on to this building and I need another building now, so, I farm a lot more acres then my dad did. (330) Kind of have to. You buy bigger equipment why you have to use it more. I can't think of a whole lot to tell you really.

CC: That was real helpful. Real helpful. So what is your favorite part? What do you appreciate the most?

JN: My favorite part is when I am combining corn and I see the product after I have worked all year to grow it. I take some cattle into town and they look nice and they sell good. and I feel like I have done, accomplished something. You know I don't have anybody, I am kind of my own boss I can do as I please, of course I have to take the good times with the bad. You know, if I make a mistake, why there is no one says anything about it, i just suffer the consequences and go on. But I also can make good on a crop or something and I get to reap all the profits. So, it kind of works two ways. I just like being outside in the, I enjoy seeing things growing, things like that.

CC: Did you know you always wanted to do that when you were growing up? Did you know that you wanted to continue?

JN: I kind of did, yes. My Dad encouraged me not to, my aunt especially but, they wanted me to work in town and do farming on the side. I didn't do that.

CC: And you are glad?

JN: Pretty glad, yea, if I had a job in town I guess I would have a little more security if I got hurt I would have insurance and a better retirement plan. The only retirement I have is what I have the little bit I have saved on my own. And I would have a little more security that way. You know it hasn't been all bad staying here. I have bought some more land which is probably worth more than what I paid for it now. And I am getting along pretty fair.

CC: Do you think that you would encourage your kids to get into farming?

JN: I just have to wait and see.

CC: Wait and see.

JN: Yea, my aunt was giving me good advice to work in town and farm part-time. But I kind of would like to see them do that, but let them do what they want, I guess.

CN: Daddy, who do you think will probably be ones that will raise the farm and who won't pretty much?

JN: A lot of these big companies are doing farming like Croton egg farm over here, and they have a lot of chickens all on so many thousands chickens in these buildings. And these big feed lots out in Colorado and in other places are feeding the majority of the cattle. And of course, they are all owned by some big companies I think, and I hate to see the family farm lossed, and I don't think it will be for a long time. But, you do have to maybe compete with some of these big companies. You know.

CC: Do you think there are some benefits to staying smaller?

JN: You get too much to do and you get in trouble. You know, I had 50 cows for 2 years in a row I had 100% cap crop, and I was real happy. I thought this is good, every cow raised its own calf and didn't have any trouble. I went to 80 cows and I didn't have my facilities enough to handle them and I got too big, and I had scours getting the cows and the calves and I lost several of them. Some of them got in the mud and there was more mud with

more cattle. And with those rounds bales, you get mud all the way around them and I just kind of went downhill. (419). I got a chance to, the college came to me and wanted me to farm for them, and I farmed for Kenyon. I farmed those fields as you go down the hill towards Mt. Vernon. on 229. I farm all that ground in there, and that was good ground and they are good landlords and they fixed it up, I had a hole in a dike there and they fixed it all up and brought topsoil and all that. You know, they are pretty good that way. So I get to do that, then I farm this place and a couple other places.

CC: What are some of the other things in addition to farming, the farming lifestyle that is important to you as a result of living a working on a farm.

JN: I get to be here all summer with the children. I get to eat three meals a day with them all summer long, of course they are in school now, but I am around most all the time. Sometimes out in the field but they usually come with Mother to bring my lunch or whatever. I get to be around them and they can go out to play and I don't have to worry about them being run over. And they like to get on the tractor some, especially this one, Lisa does some too.

LN: I do not.

JN: But, and Steven, he kind of likes it and I am just around more and I don't like driving on the road and driving to Columbus for work, that seems like kind of a lot of wasted time. I would rather, I don't have very far to go to work.

CC: Right

JN:(460) I just kind of like the freedom. Of course, you put in a lot of long hours but especially in the summer time. But it is not bad especially if you are going good and if you aren't making money and in debt bad than you got a lot of weight on your shoulders, trying to pay the bills and if you are doing good it isn't so bad.

CC: Do you think that farm families, because you have the opportunity to be around more and spend time, and do those kind of things, do you think there is a certain kind, a set of values.

JN: I think there is, you see a calf being born, or something. A lot of cities kids don't get to do that. You learn a lot about nature and so on. You see floods and you see droughts. Of course, a drought doesn't bother a person in town much, only maybe their yard turns brown. You know, and that is no real big deal, but if you have a lot of crops out here and it can really cost you a lot of money. And your cows don't have anything to eat, and you got to start feeding your cows feed, and feeding your hay early. You are really up against nature a lot. You are up against Mother Nature, what kind of crop you get, what kind of rain you get and if you get a flood why, of course you lose and then you are against nature having your calves and the kids get to see that. I think they learn a lot and they are not out running around a lot in town. If the husband and wife both work and the kids come home from school, they don't have anybody around really.

CN: Daddy, do you think you get more education, do you think the kids will get more education on the farm

END SIDE A

Begin Side B

CC: Learning things on a day to day basis, learning to make decisions. Those kinds of things that you would learn on a farm, whether or not you study for a test, if you don't well, so you don't do well, you don't do well making a decision on the farm sometimes that can teach you a lot more. Do you think that is true?

JN: Probably.

CN: I think that education comes first in life and if you don't go to school you are pretty much, if you went to have a job in town if you are going down in farm and you don't want to farm anymore because you are sort of giving it up, sometimes it is not right to give up and sometimes if you really wanted to do it you have to go to school to get into town because you have to have graduation and you have to have all these other things that you have to have to get a job in town. I think all my mom and my dad want me to get a good future so I guess there are making me go through school. My sister doesn't like it, but I have started liking it.

CC: That is good.

JN: She helps a lot on the farm and that teaches her to work and if you work, I don't care what you do, whether you are a ball player or a banker or lawyer, or whatever you are, most of em that are successful have to work at it. And the first thing you got to learn in life is to work, I think. I think they are, especially Carrie, Carrie is learning that she has to do her work. Her work comes first and then play later, you know.

CN: Another thing that happened to my sister last year was she for I think one week, she stopped turning in her homework and that really made her grades go down, but luckily she only got grounded for a little bit. And she didn't really get grounded because she was still able to watch television and everything else. I guess she watched television when Mom and Dad wasn't even looking or something. And pretty much she if, when you get bad grades, when you are on the farm you get bad grades, you get spanked or something for getting a bad grade and then the day is over. And then the next day comes along and you have to try harder and harder. You just can't give up, unless, if you give up then I guess you are just giving up on your life if you give up on school.

CC: So definitely, living on a farm gives you a sense of endurance and keep on getting up and doing your chores and doing what is expected of you?

CN: Yea, my sister has a hard time remembering to feed the dog and its sometimes hard for her, but, and the only thing that I like and enjoy is when I don't want to do things, when I am sick, my Mom says, 'Now do you feel like going outside and feeding the dog' or 'Do you feel like going outside and feeding the cats or feeding something or helping daddy with feeding the cows and if I am sick I get to answer that question, and I don't have to say, 'oh mom can I do that later?' because when it is later it is dark and it is too late. So then after that you sort of learn your lesson that you have to do your chores, it is sort of like put yourself in the dogs place. If someone doesn't want to come out and feed you, you are like starving that day. so I guess my sister has a hard time remembering to feed the dog, and I like to feed the dog. Cause I enjoy Lady.

CC: That is good. Do you have, you probably both have memories of being out on the farm with your father.

JN: Oh yea, I work with Dad everyday all day long. Or when I got home from school. I can remember when we bought equipment or when we built the fence or stuff like that. We always work together, that was kind of one reason I wanted to stay too because I enjoy, I liked working with Dad too.

CN: Something that I couldn't believe was that Dad had just recently built a manure storage and it is almost filled now. And I mean the manure is so thick, that the moisture won't drain out and, so it ends up getting real high and so in the winter, right Dad? I mean there is my dad's friend who teases me a lot and I was cold that day, a winter day, and he said, 'well, if you are cold go jump in the manure, you can swim,' because the manure can be warm and but then it would be cold.

JN: She raked hay, you raked hay that one last summer, I was out in the field with her and she drove tractor for the bailer and I told her what gear to put it in, and I put it in gear for her. Its got a seat belt in it and a roll guard and all that.

CN: One had the roll guard on it and one had a cab and a roll guard on it.

JN: One has a cab on it.

CN: Yea, I like the cab one, I didn't like the roll guard one. The one that I enjoyed was the cab, see what I did was I drove the cab bailing, no I didn't, I drove the roll guard one bailing and then the cab one raking because see if something happens back on the wagon when it is bailing I can't hear it inside the cab so I have to keep on doing that, and my dad, when I kept on doing it in the cab, my dad said he would have to keep on running to catch up and jump on the tractor because say I got off direction for the raking and he would have to jump up and say 'slow down' or don't go so fast or turn this way or turn that way. So I get all mad at him and say why do you keep on yelling at me? Sometimes I don't get mad, my mom brought me and my dad a sack lunch and it was pretty good. I had an apple, some granola bars, and some other healthy foods. And pretty much like a healthy food, and there is a lot of other things, good and bad.

CC: Do you have a favorite memory on the farm?

CN: My favorite memory is, took place a spring morning when my dad were and my sister were just taking a day off sort of like, but he still fed and did that stuff and then after he did that stuff he wouldn't go out in the shop and start fiddling with something and we ended up playing in the, we have kinda like a pipe that water runs through it, and we went down there and at the time there was bees in a shed and I didn' t know that I had walked inside it, nothing happened except we were chased out by bees. We never got stung or anything. Another thing is it was just getting fall and my dad cut down this tree on the side of the road and there was a whole bunch of bees on it. And I wasn't out there at time, but my Dad told me. Dad, would you like to finish the story?

JN: There was a whole bunch of bees, you know. I didn't cut the tree down, the township cut it down. It just full of honey bees. I had the neighbor come down to see what was going on and he got stung twice I think. And Dad and I never got stung.

CN:But I think the reason why the bees didn't sting you is because you got so hard working skin, you always carrying things and you got rough skin and you got sort of like workin blood and so they might not like you....Just teasing.

CN: Courtney would you like to ask any questions.

CC: No, you answered my questions.

CN: I am not sure about this, but what is your favorite thing to do in your spare time when you are not going around to farms and stuff, when you are at your apartment. what do you usually like to do?

CC: Well, my favorite things to do...

CN: Is it reading?

CC: Reading is one of my favorite things to do, I love reading.

CN: Ok,

CC: How did you guess

CN: I don't know that is pretty much what I do in my spare time. Is there anything that you would like to say?

CC: That it is fun to meet you guys.

CN; Lisa, what would you like to say, what do you like to do in your spare time?

LN: Read and write

CN: I like to read and I like to write and I like to play with my brother and sister and I guess the other thing I like to do is say that I mostly enjoy playing with other friends. And also I like making milkshakes, that is fun, we buy store-bought ice cream and then we just put in some vanilla in it and put in the ice cream and some milk and stir it up and you got your milkshake.

CC: What kind of things do you like to read and write?

CN: (150?) I like to read realistic mysteries. And I like to write about nature and about wildlife and a lot of other things, I am studying an unit on lions and it wasn't a unit but I was studying lions and I enjoyed studying lions although some of it was sort of gross. And I am just recently doing it, and I am still doing research on lions. Lisa what is your favorite thing?

LN: Are you supposed to do this or do you just do it?

CN: Well, I just wanted to do it. could you tell me about what you like to read, what group you like to read. What do you like to write about?

LN: My favorite book things are --- and I like to write about friends and a lot of stuff that goes on at school.

CC: Like what?

LN: like, Like, like how my day went, like, yesterday at school and stuff like that.

CC: what is your favorite book?

LN: I think it is Jumps Ship to Freedom and Frankie so far.

CN; My favorite books are number one, Number the Stars, I am reading it and I am on chapter nine and I think there are 13

chapters. And so I am almost finished. And inside the book. And I will tell you a little bit, sort of a book review on Number the Stars. (183-203)

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CC: Do you have any friends who are also living on farms.

CN: Well, they are just friends, they are boys but they are just friends. And their names are John Ellet, Timothy Clutter, and maybe Danny Yacker and maybe even Joey Armstrong. And they sort of tell gross stories, but I guess we can live through it, I mean we are just going to be in school together.

CC: Do you like to be friends with people who live on farms?

CN: Well, sometimes yes and sometimes no, I mean there are no other girls I think who are on a farm.

LN: Except for me.

CN: Except for my sister of course. I mean in my class, we have some friends that their dad is friends with my dad and so then the and they work for the farm, so we sort of have things in common and we also like doing another thing in the springtime when their parents are working with my parents we usually go and we walk down streams around our farm and there is this big rock at this one place and we sit on it, and we usually wear our bathing suit and shorts and something else and we usually get some water out of the spring and we splash it on each other and a whole lot of things and its just fun to do everything on the farm there is so many things to do. I mean, in the city, pretty much everything they do is watch television, and if they don't have enough things to do they fight. And I don't think that is good. some people just read all day and just eat. We need to eat.

CC: does your mother need some help?

CN: Thats it, I am finished with my interview.

CC: Thank Carrie.

JN: You wouldn't think we have neighbors as far off the road as we are. But we have more neighbors than the people in town. I mean we act neighborly more. I mean if someone wants their

driveway plowed out or something, or their garden plowed or one neighbor needs to buy a little straw or I need to buy a little hay or we work back and forth. Maybe he wants to borrow a piece of machinery or something, why we have a lot of good neighbors and if you can always ask somebody and kind a like that. Some people in town, I ask them about thier neighbors or something and they don't hardly speak to them you know. They live right next door.

CC: Do you think that has changed much, do you think that there is still this sense, do you think it is unusual that you still have neighbors that you share things with?

JN: Not too much, no.

CC: good.

JN: Even the ones that work in town, they see me out on the tractor and they wave and so on. It is a nice community here, especially, in Gambier and everything.

CC: So do you feel like the people who don't farm, the people who live in town or the people that you know that don't farm, do you hold a mutual respect?

JN: Some of them do and some of them don't. you know. When you live real close to somebody I guess there might be a more, if the neighbor's dog barks or something and you can hear it. Get annoyed and, if you live out here if the neighbor's dog barks you don't even hear it. there could be more trouble that way, maybe. If you live in town they race their cars, somebody always working on cars and revving them up, we don't have any trouble that way. But then you have plans to go somewhere and somebody will say well, you have cattle out or something comes up and you have to stay home. That happens too. But...I can't think of much to say to help you.

CC: That is helpful, I am just trying to get a sense of what it is like to live out in the country and I think it is really neat. It must be pretty hard for a new farmer to start out.

JN: Oh yes, it is very hard. This is my Dad's farm, he has helped me and I just kind of took over and of course he has heled Tim out and Pam, she wanted to go to collegea and she learned to be teacher. I think she is pretty good at it, it is

hard to start, some have, but you can do it, but not very many.

CN: They have to know how to work the cattle, have to know the cattle and how to do everything before you can have good quality of farming.

JN: You have to have good ground to start with. If you were starting all on poor ground why, you are fighting an uphill battle. We try to take care of the land, my granddad had this place, then dad and I hope to later on someday to have it and pass it on to the kids. We just want to leave it better than the last one. At least as good, so we don't want to go out here and plow everything up and have it wash and erode the topsoil or pollute the water. We want to try, it is just like the cattle, if we don't feed them good why, they are not going to do good and they are not going to sell good so we have to take care of them so they will take care of us sort of.

CC: Plus, you must feel a deep connection to this land since it was your father's and your grandfather's.

JN: Yes, Yes, yes, I never want to leave it, you know, because I guess back in the 20s was when my grandfather bought it. And it has been a good place. These hillsides are good for grain, and they are not wet, it is good for livestock they can lay on the banks and the ground isn't wet. Some ground stays wet all the time. So, I have a very deep, if I ever lose the place I would really about fix ya, but we want to leave the ground better than we found it. You know. But there is to be, the whole township there isn't many farmers who farm full time and their wife doesn't work away from home. Very very few in this whole township. Maybe one more, I was trying to think who that would be, well, Gordon Clutter I guess does. He processes his popcorn and he has his own processing plant. But most of them either have another job or their wife works off the farm. Rieda is thinking about, she is trying to get a job at the Nazarene College. Because I am kind of worried about these girls want to go to college it costs I think, well, of course it is not as expensive as Kenyon but I think it costs around 11 or 12 thousand now to go up to Nazarene. It is probably a lot more down at Kenyon, but I don't know how that would be, 12 thousand is 48 thousand for each one of them and I have got 3 of them, and maybe they won't want to go to college but if they do, so we are hoping she can get on there and then we will have insurance and the kids can go to college at a reduced rate if she works

there, so that would be a big, if she could do that. The girls are big enough now that they can come home and be alright for an hour or two. So we are even switching see. My mother never worked in town till Tim got out of school i think or he wasn't quite out of school, but he was like up in high school or late middle school before she went to work. She kind of wanted to work and Rieda want to work too.

CC: There aren't really that many families at all who don't have both parents doing something.

JN: right, that is true. Even in any occupation there aren't too many women stay home and be homemakers. It is almost looked down upon if you, sort of, some people would almost look down upon you if you was to stay home and be a homemaker. Don't you think?

CC: I think that if there was a bunch of women and you were the only one staying home.

JN: If they were all career women and successful.

CC: But probably they would be jealous of the one who could stay home.

JN: That could be too. Yes, that could be too.

CC: It just depends.

JN: So I guess we are changing, trying to feed more cattle, and go to bigger equipment. See my dad helped me see and he quit, so now, I have to adapt to that because I had two of us doing the work and course he is slowly went downhill and did less and less as he got older and so it has been a gradual change but we have went to these round bales of hay instead of the little square bales, and of course there is more waste and we keep them outside and we got a little bigger tractors and bigger equipment and to help make up for that because I knew it was coming. And Steven is not old enough yet and the girls they are in school and they aren't old enough either. So, we have tried to get different things, like that pull barn up there, I have those automatic feeders, automatic waterers and use those big bales of hay so it is not so hard to handle.

CC: It is a lot of work for one person to do.

JN: It keeps you pretty busy, glad that I have help like Gary and his brother helps me. If I didn't have them I would be in trouble because a job like what we did up there today, you have to have two to do that. You can see what he likes...

CC: Do you like your little tractor, steven? Is that from Santa?

JN: Oh, he has been wanting one of them. It is pretty heavy, it is metal. You are strong lifting up that tractor.

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Jn: What kind of scares me is the price of equipment has gone up and now my dad has bought a tractor in 1961, paid \$4,000. He got it brand new and a set of plows with it. Now, we went to a power show over in Columbus yesterday and one of equal size to it was 30,000, so you see it has gone up about 8 times and I don't know what cattle was at the time maybe they was .25 cents or something like that and maybe they are .75 now. That is only 3 times, the increase. Corn wasn't much higher, was about as high as back then as what it is now. so that is, it is kind of hard keeping your equipment up.

CC: That would be frightening.

JN: Now, if I get hurt you know very bad, and I can't work, I am in trouble. I have insurance but it is not nearly as good as what it would be in town. And if I can't work I certainly can't get my stuff done. I guess that is one reason she is counting on getting a job because I can get insurance through her occupation...

CC: So that must really scare you with things like today...

JN: Yea, a lot of times I am out there working by myself, something happened to me, maybe she wouldn't know where I was, she wouldn't even look for you until evening, you know and then maybe didn't even know and I didn't tell her.

End of Side B