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Interview with Elaine Hartley from Down to Earth Natural Foods

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Elaine Hartley

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Researcher's name: Lurette Frost

Event: Interview with Elaine Hartley from Down to Earth Natural Foods

Place: Rural Life Center, Kenyon College

Co-workers present: none

LF- Lurette Frost

EH- Elaine Hartley

LF: This is Lurette Frost interviewing Elaine Hartley from Down to Earth Health Food store in Mount Vernon, Ohio. Did you grow up in Knox County?

EH: No, but I grew up in Ohio

LF: Where?

EH: Middletown Ohio, which is down between Cincinnati and Dayton.

LF: And how did you find your way here?

EH: Through Ohio State, actually and then ended up working more in this area.

LF: so you stayed?

EH: Yeah

LF: cool. So what does your job at down to earth foods entail?

EH: Well, lets see... A variety, that is probably the best way to describe it. I don't have a title because it's a small store and we all do just about everything. I do some ordering, I am in charge of ordering the books, working with the customers, I do a lot of bagging of food, stocking shelves, I guess that's about it.

LF: that's a lot. Could you tell me a little bit about the store and how it got started, how many people work there.

EH: actually the store began, probably, uh I don't know, maybe 30 some years ago, but it was in a woman's house, actually in her basement and then when she was going to sell the store, some one bought it and moved it down town. Not to its present location, but near by and then this person had it for about year and then Dick Snow, who now owns it,

bought it. It has been in its present location for 23 years, I believe, almost not quite. So it has been there quiet and while and I have been there, I think, about 14 years, so I have been there a long time.

LF: So you probably know a lot about it too?

EH: Yeh, I have learned a lot, that's been probably my most valuable experience there, the learning that I have done. Both from the customers and the reading of the books.

LF: Have you always been interested in...?

EH: Actually I have been interested in it ever since ahh, I was probably about 20 when I first started getting interested. I used to eat lunch at a health food store when I worked at Ohio Bell, which was in Columbus and started learning there, reading books, and it just kept going.

LF: So Maybe you could tell me a little bit about what you sell in the store and how you decide what you bring into the store and stuff like that?

EH: Well the store actually has been built on people's requests and it has just continually grown. Even though this is a small community, there is a great interest in this kind of product. I think generally because people are becoming more aware and want to be more responsible for their bodies. As far as the different kinds of things that are in the store: the store is pretty much divided into two rooms, the supplements are in the first room and then the food products are in the second. And there is a variety in both rooms. Herbs, vitamins, sports supplements, and then of course the food, probably caters to organic but not completely.

LF: Right, And who do you think your customers are, like is there a variety of people that come in or?

EH: There is a variety, I am trying to think about that a little bit, ahh. We have the retired community that shops frequently there. We have the younger family, people that may have grown up with this kind of life style and they want to continue it with their own family, and they have young children. There is a small, I would say that is a small percentage of our customer, but that is evident. Probably the majority would be, I want to say the baby boomers, but I am not sure if that is true, but there is a large segment of our customer that is in that age group.

LF: Kenyon students?

EH: And Kenyon students, and very little Nazarene students I might add, isn't that interesting. Yeah

LF: You were talking about families that have grown up with that life style, do you think that their passing it down do their kids as well? Do you think they grew up on farms?

EH: I am not sure about that. I am not sure if they, when I say that if, I know the few people that I have talked to that have shared that with me, that they were raised with this kind of food and their mothers gave them or their fathers gave them supplements. The ones I have talked to came from professional families. So, But we do have farm people that come in, that value the kind of product that we have so there certainly is a big variety of people that come into the store.

LF: Do you guys sell, where is most of the, where do you order from? Do you guys sell local foods?

EH: We have a few local items, that is why we are listed in the Rural life, I forget what that is called, that book, but ant way we are listed in there because we sell the maple syrup from Knox County

LF: The Browns

EH: What was their last name? They are two young people that are home schooled and this is one of their projects.

LF: Oh, cool

EH: Yey, it's really neat. So we carry the maple syrup, we carry the honey from the Simpsons and they are the largest bee keepers, I Believe, in Knox County, I think that is correct. Any thing else, oh we have sorghum molasses from an Amish person in Knox County and we carry eggs that come from Knox County. As a matter of fact our eggs right now are from chickens that were rescued from Croton Eggs farm, so they are happy chickens now. I think that is about it for local. We are not set up for fresh produce, other then just the eggs, unfortunately.

LF: Those fridges are new in the back? Aren't they kind of new?

EH: Yeah, well actually the store was renovated about 3 or four years ago and those were added, yes.

LF: Do you order form whole salers or?

EH: There is a main distributor that we get the food from and that is Tree of Life and they come out of Bloomington, Indiana but they are also located all over the. Well they are from Florida originally. So this is a huge truck that brings the majority of our food, and everything else is ordered from maybe 10 to 14 different distributors. So there is a whole lot of bookwork there.

LF: It could get complicated. So why would you say that most of the customers shop at Down to Earth?

EH: Oh Wow, I don't think there is one reason for sure. I think that everybody that walks through the door has a question and they have an intent on improving their lifestyle in some way and some people have already figured it out and they don't you know necessarily ask a question, but they are the person that is thoughtful. I have noticed that over the years that I have worked here and I really appreciate that. We don't deal with the norm, what ever that is. When I hear other people in retail talk about their jobs, I can not relate because we don't have some of the same issues to deal with, with the public. I could tell you, I think there are maybe three customers that we sort of wish would go away and that is it out of how many ever, thousands that come in every year.

LF: I remember one time when I was there and this woman came in weekly to pick up boxes of soy milk.

EH: Yes there is a segment, there are people that have allergies and have to eat specific foods. So we have a number of people that come in because we have food that is not carried other places and regular grocery stores. Although we might be threatened by Krogers, when they build their new store. They are planing on putting in a fairly large health food section. So, we will see.

LF: Supplements too?

EH: I don't know about that. That is kind of sad. I appreciate the kind of small business because there is this personal relationship and we do care about the service that we do give there. We know people by their first names, many customers by their first names. Another thing, I guess I would like to bring up is that we do a lot of research for people when they come in with a problem. Of Course we do not and can not by law do anything medical, like tell someone what to take, or even suggest. But we have a lot of resource materials there. That is probably my most favorite thing to do there. To gather together information and copy and then give to the people who are looking for specific information.

LF: Is that for diets or supplement?

EH: It could be all of that and much more. We have a file behind the counter that has many different categories. Listed under menopause, there is a big thing that is going on know with a large segment of our population. Of course it is something I know about because it is something that I have been going through and search for, for my self. That makes it even more interesting. Some of them will come in and say that they have been to the doctor and the doctor can't help them and what do you think. Well at that point, it is not what I think, but rather, let me show you some books that might address the issue that you are talking about. Or let me tell you about some body else's experience. That is another approach that can, you know it really might not mean a whole lot, but it might provide confirmation or it might send them in a direction that they need to go, who knows. But the way I view it is that everybody is responsible for their own health and everybody has the capability of finding their own answer, with all these resources.

LF: Do you think a lot of people come in with out even going to the doctor.

EH: Oh, yes and that can be a little tricky. That has been one of the criticisms of the health food industry, that people are avoiding the doctor, therefor prolonging the possibility of getting the proper care. Well that might be true, and that is why we have to be careful not to make any claims about anything and we are not there to encourage people to use our products over getting any kind of medical help. That is totally not were we are coming from. I just see it as a place where people can get information, they process the information and they can decide. There are choices. Very often there are not choices some of the other places. For example, there was a lady who came in a couple of weeks ago who had been to her gynecologist and she had said that she had wanted to get off her hormone replacement therapy and take something natural. His reaction was, if you don't want to do what I tell you to do, then don't bother to come back. So then she comes into the health food store to find out, since her doctor was not wanting to cooperate, what could I take. So that puts one in a little bit of a precarious situation. But you know it is easily handled in the way that I just described. You gather information, process information, say you can figure this out. Another nice part of our store is that we have sort of a make shift collection of alternative health care practitioners, The list that you see there but then we actually have other doctors that people have been to, maybe out of town, and they will bring in their card. They will say that, well his person was able to help me by using herbs or they did something alternative, rather than the regular procedure. So we try to keep a list of these people so that, well for example if a person wants to go to a holistic dentist that doesn't use the silver filling, they want the white fillings. So we have a couple of dentist on the board. So that is another new part of he store.

LF: Do you think that people come in may be possibly because they feel that healing them selves with herbs is a cheaper way to go then going to the doctor?

EH: Well that is interesting. I think economics is a definitely a part of everything that people do, or the choices that they make. First of all I will comment on, that some people complain that insurance doesn't cover the supplements. I am thankful that insurance doesn't cover the supplements. That would mean that they would then try to control supplements. And that is something that the consumer doesn't really take a look at. So to me that is very frightening. I would prefer that they would stay out of it. But oh well. From that standpoint, it is not cheaper. People who go to the doctor that have insurance often get their medication taken care of, for what they think is free. I would say that the majority of our customers use the supplements for healing because they believe in the supplements. They would prefer not to use chemical drugs. Some people have had no success using chemical drugs and they are trying to find something alternative to take it's place or in some cases they are desperate. That is not real common at our store, but sort of the attitude.

LF: With the books, if someone came in with some problems. Would it mostly be in the books to cure with supplements and herbs, or do you ever find anything on changing you diet?

EH: That is actually what I try to first mention. I think that food, you know the supplements have their place but bottom line is the food that we eat. No matter what is going on in your body. Whether it is symptoms in menopause or it is cancer.

(Switching sides of the tape)

The foundation of our health, period. I mean, I don't think that is an opinion. Well maybe it is, in some people's minds. So actually what if often a first question when somebody comes in with a problem and they want to know what they can do, I ask them about their diet. What are you eating? And most people would love to bypass that because that is not the easy one. Is not easy to quit drinking caffeine or get sugar out of your diet. This is a personal experience, when I first started working at the store I had at least three major sinus infections per year and they would last for two weeks at a time. A customer, who was macrobiotic said, have you ever thought to not do dairy products. I said no, would know why I shouldn't do dairy. Well at that point that was the last, well I do a little bit of dairy, but I really don't, that's not part of my diet anymore. And consequently, I really don't have any more sinus infections. That thought me the relationship between dairy and the mucus producing qualities of it that in turn can cause a list of things like sinus and respiratory, that kind of thing.

LF: Are a lot of people allergic to dairy.

EH: Yes, well we are the only country that consumes all the dairy and we still have this high rate of osteoporosis for example. All the Dairy people have done a great job of programming us to think that we have got to have milk for calcium, and that is not really true. And I see health foods stores, just in general, as having the ability to kind of offer this information. Not that anything is gospel, but you take a look at this. Take a look at the statistics for example. All these people with osteoporosis in this country, what is going on? We are such a big dairy consuming population.

LH: Do you think that having the health food store in Mt. Vernon has kind of changed the communities view in some sort of way over the years?

EH: I would imagine in subtle way that it has provided sort of a springboard. I don't notice anything major happening, but... I certainly like thinking about that question but I don't have any real answer to it. I will think about it.

LF: You can think about it and get back to me.

EH: It has the potential, defiantly. I wouldn't really want to own that store, but if I did I would be a little more community oriented. For example, probably would have more demonstrations with food and but it is not my store, so that is OK.

LF: Do you suggest that?

EH: I could, I could initiate it probably and I am thinking about it, as Krogers starts to creep into our... May be I will initiate that, but because my other part of my life is so

important, my artist life, that when I get done working there it is really nice to go home and be the artist. So if I would initiate some of these things I would not be able to go home and be the artist. I would have to go home and prepare for the next days demonstration with food or what ever.

LF: Is there one person that has really changed their life from just walking into Down to Earth?

EH: I don't know if I am going to be able to think of an example, but we hear comments off and on about success stories so to speak. It is rewarding, not that it is an ego thing, but Guess what it does for me personally, is that it confirms my being there. That may be that what I am doing can provide information enough to change somebody's life. If that is what they want to do. If that is what they choose. And I wish I could think of some examples. Probably a lot of little examples that I am not even going to be able to come up with at the end of the workday because I am tired. Definitely... Right now we are hearing a lot about fiber myalga, chronic fatigue, those are sort of related illnesses and according to the holistic doctor that I go down to, that this is very much treated through diet and exercise, more than any thing else and a few supplements. So I have seen a few people with fiber myalga that are not functioning hardly at all. They are not able to work. It is a very debilitating thing, depending on the different degrees of the disease. And they have slowly climbed back up into a semi- active life. And that is really something. You know just through changing their eating habits and getting the right kind of exercise. Exercise that doesn't stress their body but rather replenish it, like yoga and that kind of thing.

LF: You said you go to an alternative doctor...?

EH: I actually go to, when I go to the doctor, which is not very often, DR, Pinkham, who I in Columbus. She is listed on the paper there. I like her because in the summer time she wears sandals and shorts. She is not the least bit intimidating. But she deals, treats primarily through diet change and she of course does supplements. She is an MD, so she has the ability to do drugs but, I have never had that experience and many many people from Knox county go down to her. Not just because they have gotten her name from the health food store but, her name has gotten around just by word of mouth. People are really searching for someone that they can work with. And that is the key word there, work with. Because people are determining that they want to make choices now and be more responsible for their own bodies, they would like to know what other choices do they have. Just because the medical profession is trained in a certain way, the allopathic approach, they don't know about these other things. It is not that they are necessarily against them, although that can be true too, it is just that they are not trained in these things. So you comments like, the doctor said that you can try it but it won't do any good. Or, you are just wasting your money, or well i don't know anything about it but go ahead. So there are all kinds, but no help in choosing to use echinacea for a cold or eating soy for menopause.

LF: Is soy good for menopause?

EH: They have determined that that is a good thing to eat, because of the phyto-estrogen quality of soy. I might add that i have recently learned that actually it is the fermented soy bean, which would be like Tempe and miso, are much better digestible form of soy, then just eating like tofu. And that is of course the most common. What main stream America knows about soy is that you drink soymilk or eating tofu, which is not bad. It is nice to know that the more digestible form is the fermented form. As some personally have switched over primarily to the fermented soy and it does digest; i feel more energy from it.

LF: How does food play a role in your life and healing process?

EH: That number one, that's what i look at first and by no means have I perfected this. I am like everybody else, I like sugar and i love my coffee. So i just temper some of the things that I know... And right now i am not doing any sugar at all because... This is sort of off the subject, but any way. My daughter is dealing with a problem and i have figured out that she needs to do diet and herbs that are cooling that will not add to the energy of her body but retract the energy. She is dealing with a cyst and that is something that needs cool food. This is more of an eastern approach. So I am doing this with her, staying off of sugar. And it is a real challenge. I am not talking candy, because i didn't eat candy but if you stop and look at the sugar content of, for example, juice and it is like woo. I do eat fairly thoughtfully. I have a hard time going out to eat, I am pretty picky.

LF: Are there any restaurants around Mt. Vernon that you think are thoughtful about food?

EH: Occasionally, I will eat at the Alcove, but that is very very rairly. I don't know of any, but i guess the Chinese restaurant at the shopping center would be the only place that i might frequent. I will tell you a good story about that. When i went down to Dr. Pinkham, the holistic doctor, she does a little blood test by taking blood out of your ear, and then she puts it on a slide and she has a special computerized machine that gives a lot of information about your blood. One thing that it shows are the free radicals in your blood and she did this blood test this one visit and she said 'where did you, what did you eat yesterday?' and I said, ' well I went down to visit my mother and we eat all three meals out.' She said, ' you just can't do that that is the worst thing that you could do. Maybe once a week you can eat out, but don't ever do that three times in one day.' And then she suggested if you have to eat out, then you should take a supplement that is called Greens Plus. It is one of her favorite supplements that fights free radicals and it can raise you immune system. Greens Plus, and it had a lot of things in it. A lot of green foods, acidopolus, and you name it and it is probably in there if it is good for you. But yes, I pay attention to, I enjoy it. It is not a chore for me as it would be for some people. I like that part of taking care of myself.

LF: How do you think that food as a healing power plays into Knox County.

EH: I think that you can look around to the restaurants and tell that. There is just no place to go out and get a really healthy meal. Although i don't necessarily think that that comments on, definitely not on everybody, but there is I think a need and there is a segment of the population that does really pay attention to that, because we see them in at the store of course. There is a fair amount of Seventh Day Adventist in the area and they probably of all the categories of people; they are more oriented around the foods that they eat. Many of them are vegetarians, not that that makes it healthy because that doesn't mean a thing. You can be a vegetarian and not eat healthy, that is a given. I don't know, I wouldn't be able to answer that question actually.

LF: Do Seventh Day Adventists believe in being vegetarian or believe in leading healthy lifestyles?

EH: I think it's first vegetarian and then they do stress, i don't know a who lot about it. I am kind of guessing from what i observe. They do stress a healthy lifestyle from the people I have talked with that come into the store.

LF: Do a lot of Seventh Day Adventists come into the store?

EH: Yeah and they also have their own health food store, called Quality Health Food Store. But it is a very different health food store. You know, that term is sort of a loose term and you walk in there and you really question whether it is a health food store, because of some of their items that they carry. It is like a regular grocery store in some ways.

LF: I went there the other day. It had lots of things that i liked but they were not necessarily healthy. Could you tell me a little bit about, in Knox County, the alternative health care systems? Like Enos Yoder, are there a lot of things like that?

EH: There actually a lot, and just here recently were these people have surfaced enough to get a little bit organized and fairly well known, at least in some sort of sub-culture any way. Enos Yoder has his own style of healing and he has actually been over here to Kenyon and talked. And as I mentioned to you Toby Hotsteler, I guess he is sort of seen as a bit of a chiropractor, although he does deal with herbs. He seems to do a lot of intuitive kind of work with, and he would never describe it that way. You will find that their religion gives them their language a little bit more, and i am not sure they would use the word intuitive. A lot of massage therapists, i mean that population has just sprung up, amazingly so, in the last five years. There are two massage schools in Columbus and now there is one in Mt. Vernon through the Knox County Career Center. So you can take massage therapy from them.

LF: Who is it through again?

EH: I think it is through Knox County Career Center or would that be Ohio States University Branch? I am not sure, but if you called Knox County Career they would be able to tell you. So that is pretty neat.

LF: You can go in and be a person who got to be practiced on.

EH: Yes, They do have that available for cheap. A wonderful thing to do.

LF: Enos and Toby are Amish?

EH: They are Amish.

LF: Do you think they do a lot with foods and with supplements?

EH: They do a lot with supplements, but I am not aware that they talk about diet a lot. But I might not know that either. So often practitioners forget about that aspect of it and in my opinion that is the most important thing. And then there is a new person in the area, actually he is over on beyond Fredricktown, and i meant to bring his name and telephone number but i could get that to you if you would like it. He is an interesting person. He has a lot to say about himself and i dot know enough about him to, I know he does massage and I mean he just names about 10 different things that he does so. Like I say I don't know a whole lot about him, but he would be another person that you might want to talk to. I guess it depends on how much time and interest.

LF: Is he Amish?

EH: No he is not.

LF: I am trying to get a range of people.

EH: Yeah, i am trying to think. Bev Actis, who actually works here at Kenyon College, is a very interesting person and is listed on the list here. She, for the past couple of years, has been dealing with sons illness and has not done her work that is listed there, but she is a beautiful person and I think it would be invaluable if you could talk to her. She provides a whole other area of expertise.

LF: And her son is young?

EH: He is an adult actually and had kidney failure. So she, that was her focus then for a while, to help him.

LF: Did she do that through changing his diet?

EH: She worked with a lot of different people, including the medical community, not here, but on the East Coast. He had a kidney transplant actually.

LF: Is she a professor?

EH: No, I don't know where she works. I think that even though this is nothing like the West Coast where you can walk down the street and the shingle will be hanging out and

you can walk in and get your acupuncture or foot reflexology. These people, like i said used to be rather anonymous and you almost, you know, unless you came in and talked to the right person, you wouldn't know that they existed. Now they are beginning to have business cards and part of the problem that people have to careful in Ohio is that the laws are discouraging to alternative medicine. Many things are not licensed. Now Massage therapy is under the auspices of the medical licensing bureau. So they have to take an exam just as a nurse or a doctor would. It is all through the medical profession, so that is one thing that is licensed in Ohio. Nothing like Rake and none of that is too acceptable and not that any guistapo is any where near by, but on the other hand, your language and all have to be careful because the laws are such that you can't infringe on the medical communities.

LF: Something I was thinking about is the recently in the Rural life class and just seeing signs of it, just Knox County is growing and people are coming in from Columbus, do you see that you are getting more business from those people?

EH: Yes, and a lot of business from just the Kenyon college community in general because a lot of the people that are here have come from other places that have more advantages. Many health food stores not just one or two, lots of variety and choices, in not only food but also health care. And now they are in Gambier Ohio and the choices are much different here. We do get a lot of people from Kenyon, both the professors and the students. Not so much the students because i think that a lot of the students don't know that we exist, number one. But yes, as Knox County grows and it becomes more of a melting pot, we see people that have already established their lifestyle coming into the store and looking products that they had bought elsewhere. So that is kind of exciting.

LF: I must say, i was rather shocked when i found out about it my freshman year. There is a health food store here. So i am kind of wondering how you even got the idea to have a health food store. There must have been with in the community, a demand for it.

EH: Well as I said, this woman, who now is no longer living, started this health food store in her basement. I remember going there when my daughter was 3 and 4, we would shop there. She had health concerns, that's why she started it, for her own personal benefit and a few of her friends that were interested. Then it just grew. She actually ended up having health problems and then wanting to retire. So she sold it. It has just been one of those businesses that had just kept growing and growing and growing and much needed in the community. I just see it as a little gem. I am not talking about anything other then its service that it provides.

LF: Very important. Do you think that there is an overall awareness with in the Knox county community of how food may affect people's health?

EH: No: This originally was, as far as I know, I have not been here all my life, but I have heard that originally it was a farm community. Then as it has grown, i think it is like any other place, you have a hodge podge of views about things. Food being the focus and

importance in health, I don't see that as being anything major in anybody's minds in Knox County necessarily.

LF: I would always figure that growing up in a farmers life style that would be the main thing in our life so you would really be focused around it.

EH: I don't know if that is realistic. I'll just give you a personal example of the dairy farmers across the road from me.

LF: Where do you live?

EH: I live 229 west. They are probably the worst, this is just one example of course, but they are the worst offenders of junk food and one example of the family, alcohol. No, I do not see, You know they have gardens, but I don't know that these people, I am making assumptions here that I probably shouldn't be making, but I don't see them connecting. It is their lifestyle to have a garden but I don't see that, you know when they can get the junk food they prefer to have that. It is just that that is what they do. They have a garden and they put it up. They don't do it from, I mean, I made the garden because I wanted the quality food and I don't know.

LF: Do you think maybe that has been lost over years? Because maybe it is their tradition to have a garden from their parents, or it might have been really important. Just with the growing Big Bear you can go to one place and buy all your food and you get sucked into these junk foods that scream to you.

EH: I may be speaking out of turn when I make that comment. I just don't notice that they talk about health in relationship to food. They have got to have it so... It is probably economics more then anything else that I have noticed, with the farmers I have known. I have lived in rural Knox County ever since I have been here. The people that approach food the way I do seem to be more... and I grew up in the city basically, what would I say, probably more oh I don't want to say, everything I start to say I think that is prejudice, educated. I'll just say it. I don't know it is just a different approach to food. OK, I'll give you an example, a lot of people think when you go to Amish country, oh you can get the best food, they are the best cooks. Well I disagree with that. There is more fat and sugar in their food then, and talk about somebody that lives off the land. They live off the land, but they do not in my opinion cook well for the health sake. It's a whole different approach. I mean it tastes good but these people have a lot of health problems although there is like, Toby Hostetler, I think they have a little more awareness that maybe you shouldn't dump in two cups of sugar into that pie. Maybe we should try to use a little stevia, which is an herb that can sweeten instead. So there is a difference between the rural food attitude and probably the health food attitude, that is just a guess.

LF: What things do you think would be important for me to focus on in terms of...

Tape two

EH: We were talking about whether I had any input or suggestion about your project. First of all I might have to think about that and get back to you later. Once again I'm tired and I have learned that it doesn't make my brainwork very well. I don't go that deep. I think that you will find, as you talk to each individual, their going to come up with something that is unique. Because you have related all of this to food and healing, which I absolutely love because that is my interest. I really feel that that is valuable and exciting and everybody has a story. I think stories are powerful. I believe that stories are teachers and stories are something that all people can relate to, all ages. So I love stories. I don't know what else to say on that.

LF: You can think about it. I will come into the store or something.

EH: I will think about it.

LF: Do you know any customers, a specific customer that I could maybe talk to?

EH: Yeah that is a good idea. Actually there is a really neat family that they were both like IBM workers or you know from New Jersey, and they decided to change their lifestyle. I just talked to her today, as a matter of fact, and they are very friendly people. They home school their children and I did ask them, you know, do you home school because of religious reasons and she said no. Because so many people home school for religious purposes. They don't, it is more from their philosophy and want quality experiential education. Anyway, they have this farm, and as a matter of fact they are part of the farmers markets and they are the ones who sell lamb, I think.

LF: The Rickards.

EH: Yes, Have you met them?

LF: Yeah, I have not met them but I know of them.

EH: Oh you have got to interview them. And as a matter of fact she has been doing some, I don't think this is too personal to divulge, but any way she has done some changing of diet. So she could certainly comment on food and would have something to contribute and she is a customer. I have Dr. Pinkhams email too, I don't have it with me. Even though she is from Columbus if you needed extra input, I don't know if that would be applicable here but...

LF: It is supposed to be Knox County but if a lot of people go to her from Knox County may be I could talk to her.

EH: I could think of other customers too and that is another list I could make or something I could think about. Because we have a lot of really interesting and friendly people that would be more than happy to share with you. I wanted out called eat right for your blood type. A lot of people and actually Dr. Pinkham is supporting that. She has seen results with it so she mentions it to almost everybody that walks through the door. So a lot of people from Knox County that are coming into the store are doing this diet.

Of course it is all done by blood type. For example I am type A and type A is mostly vegetarian, actually I was eating according to what type A is supposed to eat like, mostly. I didn't know about the wheat. That is something you are not supposed to have if you are type A. And it is a fascinating concept. It is like everything else, it might not make any difference in your life, but it may. So it is kind of fun to take a look at that.

LF: I actually have an interview with Ron, the head, the manager of the Seventh Day Adventist, Ron Vozar is his name. Do you know him?

EH: I know of him and he has come into our store occasionally.

LF: Just to check out what the Seventh Day Adventist believe and kind see if that really plays a role or if it is less important.

EH: I do want to say this, my opinion on generally how people look at food in this County is that they hear about the fads, like watch your fat, don't eat fat. Then try to get all this food that doesn't have any fat in it. Then they hear about this or that and then they get caught up in some of the fads with out really determining what is best for their own body. That is kind of how my overall view of food in Knox County. If they are going to pay attention at all, they get caught up in what currently is popular. For example the Atkins diet, which is heavily into protein and very low carbs, in my opinion, because it is not balanced, doesn't make sense to me. I mean, just look at nature and see how things are going there and you can kind of figure things out that way. But anyway that is kind of what I noticed, that people come in that have read an article and then they think that that's the way it is rather than maybe once again paying attention to their own needs, their own body language.

LF: OK, I guess that that is it. And it is OK if I come and talk to you more about this.

EH: And let me do some more thinking. I love what you are doing. There is a need, number one. I like your tittle and there is more to be said and I just can't come up with it.

LF: Well you told me a lot and helped me so much. I think what is important is that this for everybody, and education thing for a lot of people and I really want to do it in the right way so it effects people, so they can really understand the powers of food. Thank you...