

## Interview with Ed Teefey

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Interviewer: Mark DePue

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DePue: Good morning. Today is May 20, 2010. My name is Mark DePue. I'm the director of oral history at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. Today it's my pleasure to have a chat with Ed Teefey. Good morning, Ed.

Teefey: Thank you, Mark.

DePue: Ed is the president of the Mt. Sterling Farmers Bank.

Teefey: Farmers State Bank.

DePue: State Bank and Trust Company. I'm not doing too well at the start of this today, but once we get into the interview, we'll have some fun. So we're going to be talking about banking and farming this morning, once we



*Ed Teefey*

get started. We'll also be talking, especially early on, about your early life and your passion for harness racing and for all things horses; that will be fun. Our next session, when we get together again, we'll be talking a lot more about harness racing. But let's go ahead and start with the beginning of your life. Tell us when and where you were born.

Teefey: Well, I grew up in Mt. Sterling, Illinois, over in Brown County, one of the smaller counties in the State of Illinois. We currently has a population of about 7,500. Two thousand of those are inmates at the Western Illinois Correctional Center, so we have about 5,500 people there, in a county seat town of 2,000 in Mt. Sterling. I was born there. My family came here from 1850s from Ireland, and my direct ancestry has been in Brown County ever since.

DePue: Tell me a little bit about your parents. Let's start with your father.

Teefey: My father, as I said, was a Brown County native, served in the Second World War, came back and ran a grain elevator with his father, who had been a state legislator. My father was elected to the state legislature in the '60s, continued to run the grain elevator and feed store through most of the '60s and later had an insurance agency, real estate business, worked for the Illinois Banker's Association for a while and, unfortunately, died very young at fifty-two.

DePue: He was in the grain elevator business. Was that because he basically inherited that business or his father was in that business?

Teefey: Yeah. His father, my grandfather, was in the livestock, feed store, grain elevator business. My father took it over shortly after the Second World War, when his father passed away in 1948.

DePue: What got him interested in politics?

Teefey: Well, my grandfather had been a state legislator, so I think it was kind of a natural evolution there, that my father had always been interested in politics, both local and statewide politics.

DePue: What's the flavor of politics in that neighborhood?

Teefey: Well, the flavor historically was very Democratic. My grandfather and father were both Democrats. The county, back in the first half of the 20th century was very Democratic, as it was in the second half, up until about the early '70s, mid-'70s. Since then, it's become more balanced and, probably in the last decade, leaned a little bit more Republican.

DePue: Would your grandfather have called himself a New Deal Democrat?

Teefey: Oh, I think so, definitely. He would have been a Roosevelt Democrat.

DePue: How about your dad?

Teefey: Oh, my dad was a pretty moderate Democrat. He didn't have the social issues back in the '40s and '50s and '60s. When my grandfather and my father served in the state legislature, as you do today, abortion wasn't an issue; gay rights wasn't an issue and things like that. So there was more Democrats in these conservative areas. My father and grandfather, if they were around today, they would have definitely been pro-gun, pro-life Democrats.

DePue: I'm sure, though, that the economy, and especially how the economy affected things on the farm, was always probably upper-most in their minds, as politicians?

Teefey: Absolutely. Growing up, as I said, my grandfather and father were both in the grain elevator business. I can remember, as a kid growing up, my father talking about \$1 million rain, for example, which today would probably be a \$100 million rain. But the whole economy of a town like Mt. Sterling in the '40s, '50s and '60s, into the '70s, pretty much evolved around agriculture. Just about everybody was dependent upon the agricultural economy. It's changed a little since, with some of the industry and the jobs that have come into the area.

DePue: You were still pretty young in the '60s and even into the early '70s. Do you remember conversations around the table about things like federal farm policy and views that might have been shared by your father and grandfather in reference to how much or how little the federal government should be involved with farming?

Teefey: Well, I don't specifically, Mark, but, you know, generally I think that, at least in the '70s there started to be a feeling that the farmer didn't have a whole lot of control over his economy, and there needed to be some regulation, as the import/export market started to become a bigger factor.

DePue: Let's get closer to home and the things that you were probably interested in at that age. What kind of things did you do as a young kid? What were your interests?

Teefey: Well, I have great memories of childhood, growing up in Mt. Sterling. I went to a local parochial school, which was real small. It's still there, by the way. And I did a lot of the normal stuff, you know, played a little basketball and played a little golf, but was never very good at any of that. My affinity, as you alluded to earlier, was really the horses. I had a pony when I was about four or five years old. I remember riding it around town, had a little cart, and I'd drive it around town and give the kids in the neighborhood a ride. I was pretty visible with that little pony, hauling people around town.

DePue: Your parents got that for you as a present?

Teefey: Yeah, my dad always had a riding horse or two. He enjoyed the horses, and so I had a pony when I was four or five years old. We lived in town; I kept it in the garage.

DePue: In the garage?

Teefey: In the garage, right, which was an experience for a while. I took care of him and rode and drove him constantly.

DePue: Well, that tells us a little bit about Mt. Sterling at the time, if you can have livestock inside the city limits.

Teefey: Well, at the time you could. Probably today you could get by with it for a while, but probably somebody would holler. But back then, in the late '50s and the early '60s, I wasn't the only one that had a pony or had a horse within the city limits. There wasn't any zoning at the time, and it was pretty well accepted, frankly.

DePue: Tell us a little bit about your mother.

Teefey: Oh, my mother was also a Brown County native. Her father died young. She grew up on a farm, east of Mt. Sterling. Her father passed away when she was thirteen, and her mother went back to school, became a school teacher. My mother was very supportive of my dad during his legislative career and in running the elevator. After my dad passed away, my mother actually served a term or two as the Brown County circuit clerk. She passed away in 2004.

DePue: What kept you busy in the summertime?

Teefey: Oh, the horses. I enjoyed the horses from a young time. There at the Brown County Fairgrounds in Mt. Sterling, there was a large contingent of standardbred horse trainers, so there was always about maybe sixty or seventy horses training at the Brown County Fairgrounds. I spent my summers out there, mucking out stalls and washing horses and walking horses. By the time I was thirteen or fourteen, I was actually working out the horses. I did that from a relatively young age.

DePue: For our rare viewer who might not know exactly what mucking out stalls is...

Teefey: (chuckle) Alright, just simply cleaning out the manure from the stalls, yeah.

DePue: Well, that sounds like a great summer job.

Teefey: Well, it's where a lot of the horse people start, yeah. It's a necessary evil of the business.

DePue: At the time, did you mind it much?

Teefey: Oh, no, I enjoyed it. I enjoyed sitting around, listening to the old-timers talking about the stories about the adventures of training horses and racing horses and travelling around the Midwest or different parts of the country, racing the horses back in the early days. I enjoyed the stories and doing that kind of work, walking the horses and cleaning out the stalls. It gave me an opportunity to be with people I found very interesting.

DePue: We need to have a couple of definitions up front here, and then much later into the discussion, we'll get back to harness racing in much more detail. What's a standardbred horse? I think we've got a picture here to show.

Teefey: Well, a standardbred horse, they started developing actually in the mid-19th century. As you might imagine, in the 1800s, when you'd go to church or you'd go to school or go to town to pick up the groceries, you might come across the neighbor in a horse and buggy. You had your horse and buggy, and before you knew it, you were racing into town. After a while, the people started developing that breed and trying to get those horses, those buggy horses, to trot faster. You'd breed a fast stallion to a fast mare, and you started developing the standardbred breed.

The standardbreds pull the carts now, I mean, they pull the little sulkies, we call them, as opposed to the thoroughbred horses, like you see in the Kentucky Derby, where the jockey sits on top. With the standardbreds, they're driven and pull a cart.

DePue: The other definition that we need to get straight, right at the beginning, is trotting versus pacing.

Teefey: Well, they're both standardbreds; trotters and pacers are both standardbreds.

DePue: We've got a picture up here.

Teefey: Yeah, that's a trotter; it's a good picture of the trotter. You can see the left feet, the left front foot and the left hind foot are coming together, as the right front leg goes forward, and the right hind leg goes back. That's the trotting gate, kind of like a dog would trot; you'd normally see that. Back in the mid-1800s, that was the prevailing gate. Towards the end of that century, into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, pacing became more popular. Today, although there's a lot of



*A trotter*

classic trotting races, there's many more pacers than there is trotters. The pacer, unlike the trotter—

DePue: Let's go ahead and look at the picture of the pacer here.

Teefey: There we go. It's a good picture of a pacer. You can see there that, if you look at the right legs, the right front leg and the right hind leg are going back at the same time, and the two left legs are coming forward, as the right legs go back. The straps that you see on the sides of the pacer there, are not worn by most trotters. They're called hobbles, and they help the pacer kind of solidify that gait. They're straps that are usually pretty loose on a



*A pacer*

pacer. They don't force him to pace, but they just kind of remind him to pace. The pacing gait has become more and more natural as the decades go by. But the pacer shuffles and the trotter trots, kind of like a dog would trot.

DePue: Which one is more natural for the horse?

Teefey: Well, initially the trotting gait was more natural. Any horse will trot at some speed, regardless of the breed of the horse. So the trotting gait originally was probably more natural. But since the late 1800s, as the pacers, the good pacers, the good gaited pacers have been bred to the good gaited pacers. The pacing gait has evolved, also, into a very natural gait.

Trotters are bred to trot. Pacers are bred to pace. There's not much cross-over. Now, many of our little pacing bred babies, at a few days or a few months, you'll see them pacing in the pasture. So, the pacing gait, although not historically the more natural gait, has now become almost as natural as the trotting gait.

DePue: The first picture we showed earlier was of a standardbred. It happened to be of Dan Patch. Was he a pacer or a trotter?

Teefey: Dan Patch was a pacer. He was a very naturally gaited pacer. [In the] early 1900s, 100,000 people would come out to see him from time-to-time. He was a tremendously popular athlete of the day, back when baseball and horse racing were about the only games in town. He travelled throughout the Midwest and was in many towns in Illinois, raced here at the Illinois State Fair and would bring out huge crowds. After a couple years of racing, pretty much nobody raced against him. He just did exhibitions. He was a pacer, and

he didn't wear the hobbles. He was a naturally gaited pacer, stayed on gait without the straps that kind of reminded them to stay on gait.

DePue: So it was the hay-day of harness racing a few decades back?

Teefey: Well, it's had its ebbs and flow, Mark. It was very popular at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in the early 1900s, at the time of Dan Patch. You know, the pre-World War II years were a bit depressed for the sport, and through the war years, but then, with the advent of pari-mutuel wagering, which we can talk about sometime, and night racing, harness racing then evolved into a very, very popular sport in the '50s and '60s.

DePue: At what point in time, when you were growing up, did you get interested, not just in horses, but in harness racing?

Teefey: Well, the horses that were trained at my local fairgrounds were all harness horses. That's what the races that were held at my local county fair were for harness horses, and the horses that were trained there at the local fairgrounds were harness horses. So, other than the ponies and other than spending a little time riding horses, I liked the competition aspect of the harness horses.

I interchange harness horses with standardbreds, by the way. Standardbreds are harness horses and harness horses are standardbreds. That's what I grew up with, with those old standardbred trainers and standardbred horses. That competition was taking place at the Illinois county fairs on a regular basis, so I saw a lot of it.

DePue: That and not thoroughbred horse racing?

Teefey: Pretty much, that's right.

DePue: Is there a reason behind why harness racing prevailed, in this part of the country, versus thoroughbred?

Teefey: Well, I think a large part of it is, with the Standardbreds, their nature is just such that they're a little easier for just a guy that's working at the local factory, you know, has a job to go out and take care of him himself. They pull a cart, so you can ride in that cart, irregardless of what your size is. I think it takes a different skill to get up on top of a thoroughbred, as opposed to getting in a cart, a jog cart, an exercise cart. And the carts are different, the exercise carts, as opposed to what we call the sulkies that they race in. I could take you to Mt. Sterling and have you in a jog cart, working out standardbred, in a couple of days, Mark. It might not be quite that easy (DePue laughs) to get you on top that thoroughbred.

DePue: I'd be hard to convince to get up on top of a thoroughbred. (Teefey laughs) Is more money involved with thoroughbreds?

Teefey: More money. That's another good point. It's more expensive to get in. The cost of the horses are more. They race much less. A typical thoroughbred might race ten or twelve times a year, whereas a lot of standardbreds might race thirty times a year more. So they're a little bit more durable. Again, we had this opportunity at the county fairs. There's a few county fairs that race thoroughbreds, but as I was growing up, there was probably fifty county fairs that were racing the standardbreds.

DePue: In the hierarchy of racing, is thoroughbred considered to be the top of the line?

Teefey: Well, it's the sport of kings. I mean, there's no race on the standardbred side as prominent as the Kentucky Derby or the Triple Crown races, the Kentucky Derby and the Preakness and the Belmont. But the standardbred industry has major races. Our major race, our counterpart to the Kentucky Derby, is the Hamiltonian, which is \$1 million plus race.

It used to be in southern Illinois. It used to be at DuQuoin, at the DuQuoin State Fair for many, many years. For the last twenty years, it's been at the Meadowlands in East Rutherford, New Jersey, right across the Hudson from New York. It races for a purse of well over \$1 million now and draws large crowds and draws network television coverage.

DePue: When you were in high school, then, tell us a little bit more about how you were involved in horses and harness racing.

Teefey: Well, a typical day for me would be to go to school and then to go to high school. When my day was over, I would go to the fairgrounds, go to the horse barn. By that time, by my high school days, I had two or three horses that I would work with myself. I would clean out their stalls. I would exercise them, give them baths, cool them down and put them away and feed them and take care, rub their legs or what was ever necessary. I spent, in a couple of hours most days after high school, taking care of those horses. It's like with any livestock; it's a day in, day out, seven day a week responsibility.

DePue: Were you making money doing that?

Teefey: I was holding it together. I didn't make a whole lot of money, probably in those days. I didn't have much money to spend, so I could work for other people enough to turn enough money to take care of the feed and supplies and the tack and stuff that I needed to take care of my own horses. Back in those days, you could kind of hold your own, racing around the Illinois county fairs.

DePue: When you said you were exercising the horses, does that mean that you were actually hooking up the sulky and taking them out?

Teefey: Sure, yeah, yeah. By the time I was thirteen or fourteen years old, and that's not unusual in this sport, I was exercising the horses.



- DePue: So, we're talking about the same timeframe now. What did you see as your future career?
- Teefey: Well, my father, (DePue chuckles) was pretty supportive of the horses and got a kick out of [them] himself, although he was a very busy man. But he enjoyed it and didn't discourage me from it. My mother was less encouraging, I should say, and was more interested in making sure I didn't get too focused and too obsessed with the horses so that I wouldn't go ahead and pursue some higher education.
- DePue: What did you think, though?
- Teefey: Well, I had mixed emotions about it. I really enjoyed it. [I] thought I had a chance to be able to eke out a living in it. But I was practical enough, at least by my college days, to know that it was a tough living.
- DePue: When you say eke out a living, were you toying around with the notion of actually being... would you call it rider?
- Teefey: Well, a trainer, possibly. I drove a little bit and got a license to drive when I was sixteen and raced throughout the county fairs for a few years and had some success and enjoyed it. [I] wasn't sure I had a whole lot of talent, but if I'd done more of it, I could have been decent and drove a few hundred races, probably.
- DePue: Just a few hundred, then?
- Teefey: Yes. Yes. Yes. Yeah, in my career. That's not very many. But I enjoyed it.
- DePue: We think about what a jockey is like for a thoroughbred horse and obviously, size is very important. They want to be as small and as athletic as possible. Does the same thing play out for a driver in harness racing?
- Teefey: Ah, it's been a debate for decades, if not centuries, as to what weight meant to a driver. I think they used to feel that weight wasn't very important. Over the years, the sulkies have evolved to be much more aerodynamic and lighter. The seat of the racing sulky is behind the wheels, so there's a little bit of an uplift on the horse, quite frankly.
- Obviously, weight has a lot less effect in harness racing, as opposed to thoroughbred racing. But with that said, most of our top drivers today tend to be on the small side, all the leading drivers that I can think of today, Illinois products like Tim Tetrick and Andy Miller and Tony Morgan. Most of the stars of the sport, frankly, are 150 pounds or less.
- DePue: If harness racing and horses in general are pulling your interest one direction, what's the tug of the opposite direction?

Teefey: Politics. You know, coming from a political family in those days, in my early days, my dilemma was, do I pursue a sport that I truly love and enjoy, enjoy the people, enjoy kind of the uniqueness of it, as opposed to following in my father and my grandfather's footsteps and other members of my family, who had spent time as elected officials. So I had some interest in that, too.

DePue: You graduated from high school in 1970, which is to say, that you were coming of age in one of the most politically dynamic times in American history. Was that part of the reason you were interested in politics?

Teefey: Oh, I think so. Like a lot of young people and a lot of people of our generation, Mark, I was inspired by the Kennedy legacy. Then, obviously, we went through the Johnson-Nixon, Viet Nam War years that were pretty disruptive for the whole country. The civil rights issues were, of course, becoming of age. So, as you said, there was a lot going on. I think a lot of us thought that we'd like to be able to make a change, like to be able to contribute somehow to making our society better.

DePue: In high school, though, would you have defined your career goal, if it was in politics, to actually run for office sometime?

Teefey: In high school, I don't think I was obsessed with it, but I think I saw that possibility and thought that was something I might do or even would be likely to do someday.

DePue: Where did you end up going to college?

Teefey: Well, I was horse crazy, so it was difficult. I wasn't a great student, so I started out at Illinois State [University], up at Normal [Illinois], and went there for a year. It was a couple miles from home, so it made it pretty difficult to commute, to spend a whole lot of time with the horses, which was fine with my mother. I wanted to get closer to the horses and still be involved in it. So, after my freshman year at Illinois State, I transferred to Western [Illinois University] in Macomb. That was less than an hour from home, so I was able to be a little more involved with the horses.

DePue: Does that mean you were trying to come home every night?

Teefey: Oh, no, no, no. I wasn't coming home every night, but I would come home most weekends, which gave me an opportunity to go to the fairgrounds and work with some of the horses that different people had there.

DePue: Did your family own some horses at that time, then?

Teefey: My dad, in his later years...My dad always had a saddle horse or two around. He never found much time to ride them. Of course, I had my pony. Him and four guys in the community...I guess him and three other guys in the community, four guys, bought a horse in the late '50s, a standardbred. He had

two or three horses with a little group of local businessmen in Mt. Sterling, that they'd race around the county fairs and some at the pari-mutuel tracks in Chicago and St. Louis.

Then, there in the early '70s, my father and I, we had a few horses together. He was always interested and grew up with horses and liked saddle horses. He would hang around them and knew quite a bit but wasn't a real hands-on, as I became.

DePue: What was your major in college?

Teefey: Communications and political science.

DePue: With an idea of doing what with these things?

Teefey: Well, I found out shortly after I got my degree, there wasn't a whole lot you could do with communications and political science (both laugh), but no, I liked politics. I liked to study politics and learn what I could. I was always interested a bit in public relations and just tried to hone and sharpen those skills. Probably as much as anything at that time, I was just looking to figure out how to get a degree and keep my mother happy. (both laugh)

DePue: Keep your mother happy? Your dad would have been okay to spend more time with the horses?

Teefey: No, no, I don't think so. I think my dad was more open to seeing me be successful in whatever I chose to be.

DePue: Well, you obviously have an interest in politics; you stated that already. How would you define your own political views at the time?

Teefey: At that time?

DePue: Yeah.

Teefey: Oh, at that time, I leaned very Democratic, I suppose. I followed Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights Movement closely. I had my reservations about the war, as the war wore on, the Viet Nam War, but there was also a sense...My father was a second lieutenant in the Second World War and very much a patriot. So it was a difficult time for a lot of us. He was very patriotic, had real hard, negative feelings towards the draft dodgers and those type of people. Although I wasn't sure the war was the right thing, I grew up in a very patriotic family and supported what the government thought should happen, for the most part.

DePue: But for young men your age, this whole discussion about the war is much more than just an esoteric discussion; the draft is facing you as well.

Teefey: Yeah, right.

DePue: How did that sort itself out for you?

Teefey: Well, I had, as many, a college deferment. About the time they did away with the college deferment, they started the lottery, as people of our generation remember. I remember the day that my lottery number was drawn out. It was an eighteen. Frankly, there was no college deferments at that time, so I was ready to go. But they did away with the draft, and I didn't have to go, so I never served.

DePue: So the timing was just about right for you?

Teefey: The timing was just about right for me, as far as not being drafted, right.

DePue: You've talked quite a bit about your mother and your father. What would have been their views, had you been drafted?

Teefey: Oh, no reservation, none. I think that any parents would have some fear of their son or daughter going into a situation like Viet Nam or similar situations. But, as I said, it was the thing to do. In my family, there was no reservations. If you got drafted, you go.

DePue: During the summertime, did you still find employment around horses?

Teefey: Oh, yes, sure, yeah, through my college days. In my later college days, I decided, maybe, that I wanted to diversify a little bit, so I started doing some race announcing. Instead of driving the horses and doing all that, I picked up a few jobs actually doing the announcing for various county fairs. By my later college years, I made a summer of that. I could work about every day, announcing the races, doing the play-by-play, the public address stuff for the various county fairs.

DePue: So, you'd be an employee of that particular county fair, not—

Teefey: Right, just an employee of that county. I was just a free agent that some county fair would hire me to come in and do. Back in those days, most county fairs raced horses three or four days. I would go to a county fair, announce the races for three or four days, and then go on to the next county fair.

DePue: What was the circuit like then? Was that from June all the way up through August, when the State Fair began?

Teefey: Well, back in my college days, the circuit started about the first of July and ran through Labor Day, ran through about the time I had to go back to college.

DePue: Kind of a colorful gig for a college kid to do, isn't it?

Teefey: It was a great gig, absolutely one of the best times of my life (chuckles). I could drive from county fair to county fair. I had nothing really to keep me home, and I would announce the races, which would maybe take two or three or four hours and maybe come home or maybe hang out at the county fair or whatever. It was about as good a money as you could make doing anything else in those days.

DePue: Graduate then in 1974?

Teefey: Graduated from college in 1974, right.

DePue: With the intentions of doing what with your life?

Teefey: (chuckles) Not really knowing, not really knowing. I applied to a few law schools in my senior year at Western, didn't get accepted in any. So I went to work for a year and actually worked for the Illinois Department of Agriculture for a year and then finally got accepted to a couple of law schools and went.

DePue: Well, deciding to go to law school is a major decision in your life. What caused you to change gears, if you will, or focus on law?

Teefey: Well, I was still very interested in the horses. I think at the time I was trying to figure out how I could make enough money to support my habit, my wanting to be around the horses. I kind of evolved in my later college years from thinking I could really make a living in the industry to try and figure out how I could make a good enough living that I could support having some horses as I grew older.

DePue: Well, if I can reflect on that, that's not the normal course of reasoning (Teefey chuckles) for deciding to go into law, is it?

Teefey: No, but at the time, I thought there was some opportunities, I thought, in my area for a young lawyer with roots in the community. At that time, I thought the state's attorney's job was rather attractive in those small counties. You make a pretty good salary, and you don't have much crime. So it looked like a good... I never did run. I never did do that. Life made some turns that took me away from that, but that was one of the things I had in mind.

My father had been a state legislator, although not even a college graduate, and I thought that it would open up some doors, even politically, or I could practice law. My father was a state legislator and had the elevator for many years and later did some legislative consulting for different groups, here in the state capitol. I think he always felt that, if he'd been a lawyer, he could kind of get off the road and slow down, back in Mt. Sterling, and hang up his shingle or kind of practice. He was a big, not a pusher, but a big influence on my decision to go to law school.

DePue: Were you still toying around with the notion of actually running for political office sometime?

Teefey: Yeah, I think that was always in the back of my mind.

DePue: This is at a time, again, that people in our generation oftentimes, because of what was going on with Viet Nam, because of what was going on in politics, and then with the Watergate scandal and all, got involved themselves in politics. Were you involved in local politics at all?

Teefey: Well, yeah, I was. I supported various candidates on the local basis, even in my college days, even in my Western days, I worked hard in the Alan Dixon elections, when he was state treasurer and later the secretary of state and then U. S. senator. [I was] also involved in a lot of local state representative and senatorial races. So, yeah, I was pretty active in my college days, in law school days, in local politics.

DePue: Where did you go to law school?

Teefey: I went to law school at Northern [Illinois University] in DeKalb.

DePue: Which is father away from the horses, is it not?

Teefey: Father away from the horses, but the law school choices, none of them were going to be very close. I could have went to Southern [Illinois University] at Carbondale, which was as far as DeKalb was. So, I had no choice. If I was going to go to law school, I had to pretty much either go to Southern or Northern or John Marshall or DePaul or Loyola or something that was going to take me a few miles from home.

DePue: You mentioned that, when you were in high school, you weren't necessarily the world's best student at the time.

Teefey: No.

DePue: Going to law school is a different kind of equation, I would think.

Teefey: It was, and I was a decent college student, but I was a B, B- college student. That made it a little harder to get into some of the law schools. But the law school study was my cup of tea. I enjoyed it and did relatively well. I liked that type of curriculum.

DePue: What was it about the law school environment, the curriculum, that got your juices flowing a little bit more?

Teefey: Well, I think, Mark, you just don't have all the core courses that you might have to take in undergraduate school, the biology or the chemistry or the accounting and some of the stuff. I guess I should have paid more attention to

the accounting (DePue laughs) since I eventually (Teefey laughs) became a banker, but that was never something that I ever thought I would do in my college or law school days. I just enjoyed the study and the research and the case studies that you do in law school and the debates and the moot court [simulated court proceedings] type of activities.

DePue: So, you could envision yourself, while in law school, of doing this as your life's profession?

Teefey: I envisioned myself, yeah, doing something tied in with my law degree, obviously, yes.

DePue: I know that you had a serious bump in the road while you were in law school. That was when your father passed away?

Teefey: My father passed away at fifty-two, just between my first and second year of law school, which was quite a traumatic experience for me.

DePue: How did that sort itself out? He had some property back home. I imagine part of that equation was horses, as well.

Teefey: Yeah, by that time, although we had some horses together, a few horses together, I pretty much ran the horse operation. But my father was a big help when you had the bumps in the road on the financial responsibility of it. So there was a lot of adjustment. We were very close, and so it was a very traumatic experience for me. He died August 29, so it was late in the summer, where I had to go back to law school within a week or two. It was a tough time.

[I] got rid of some of the horses, kept some of the horses, and, as I mentioned to you the other day, I actually took one of them back to law school with me. I decided I had one that I'd been racing that summer that I thought, Well, I'll just take her up and see if I can't just keep racing her at the Chicago tracks, while I go to school. And I did that.

DePue: So, you kept your fingers in this business all the way along?

Teefey: I did. I did. It became a little more serious, after my father's passing, because I had to make it work. There was no reserves; there was no financial reserves to fall back on. I was a law student, and my mother wasn't in a position to really help me out financially. So I took the horse and found some friends in Chicago, at one of the race tracks, that were willing to take the horse in for me. I worked for them a little bit, and they helped me. That particular horse made a little money, and I had a lot of fun. It was real popular with my classmates, to follow the horse and go to the races with me. So, we had a couple of good years, yeah. She made a little money.

- DePue: I imagine you were just a bit unique in law school, maybe being the only student who was also driving at the harness racing?
- Teefey: Yeah, I still run into law school classmates. If they see me today, it's like, "You still got the horses?" I had this horse at that time, during my law school days, I had a horse by the name of Suitcase Sal. I just ran into a classmate in Chicago a couple of weeks ago. He saw me and he said, "How's old Suitcase Sal?" who's long been gone. Yeah, it was unique; it was unique.
- DePue: This is probably an inappropriate question, but did that make you popular with the women, as well?
- Teefey: Well, back in my day, there wasn't very many women in law school. There was a few. But I can't remember winning over any women because of the horses.
- DePue: But somewhere in this process, you took the bar and passed the bar in what year?
- Teefey: I took and passed the bar in '78, 1978.
- DePue: And when did you get married?
- Teefey: Shortly thereafter.
- DePue: Tell us a little bit about that.
- Teefey: Well, I had dated my wife for many, many years.
- DePue: What is her name?
- Teefey: Ginger. Her name's Ginger. She was from Golden, Golden, Illinois, which is in Adams County, not too far from me.
- DePue: Her last name?
- Teefey: Smith, Ginger Smith. We got married. We went together through the law school days and got married shortly thereafter.
- DePue: Where did you meet her?
- Teefey: A blind date, blind date. She went to a neighboring high school, twenty miles from mine. She was a cheerleader, and some of my friends were dating some of the other cheerleaders. They set us up on a blind date, and it worked.
- DePue: She knew, obviously, all about both law school and also your passion for horses and harness racing, I would assume.
- Teefey: Yes she did, no surprises there.



DePue: What did she think about that strange combination, or unique combination, shall we say.

Teefey: Well, she came from a real conservative, normal background, so it was a little bit of an adjustment. But like you said, she knew what she was getting into.

DePue: What happened after you passed the bar?

Teefey: I came back, practiced law in Mt. Sterling for a while and then had an opportunity to actually go in the bank to start a trust department. The local bank was interested in developing trust services. No other bank in the county had trust services. So they approached me about coming to work for them, and I did. I went in there in about 1980 and developed a trust department and did estate planning.

DePue: Can you define just a little bit more for us then exactly... When you say a trust department and trust work, exactly what you were doing.

Teefey: Well, the bank had been a commercial bank. It had been formed in 1914 and had been a commercial bank, offering normal banking services. Trust services would be estate planning and actually acting as a corporate executor or administrator for estates and did escrows, contract for deeds and that type of stuff. It would hold the escrow files and then act as the trustee for a living trust or a land trust, which are specific to Illinois, and just offer a lot of estate planning services and trust services, escrow services. They were needed in our community at the time.

DePue: Did you find that work appealing?

Teefey: It kind of dovetails back into the horses. I found the hours appealing. I enjoyed practicing law, but you work long hours. You're on tight schedules in the private practice of law, whereas in the banking environment, it's more of a 9:00 to 5:00 environment, which again, gave me more time to kind of revisit the horses, which I'd pretty much kind of gave up in my private practice.

I was newly married, and I had other priorities there for a while and worked hard as a lawyer. When I went into the bank, within a few years, having established the trust department, kind of getting it up and going, I had more time to revisit the horses a little bit.

DePue: What percentage of your clientele, the first few years you were in the bank, would have been farmers?

Teefey: Well, going into the bank, there in about 1980, just a very large percentage of both the commercial bank customers and the trust customers would have been involved, either directly as farmers or in the ag-related industry, in the fertilizer business or the feed store business, elevator business, maybe in the insurance business. But, if somebody's in the insurance business, 90 percent

of their customers, their significant customers, were farmers. In those days it was an agricultural community.

Dot Foods, which now employs over 2,000 people, full-time employees there in Mt. Sterling, was starting to evolve in the late '70s and '80s into a major player in Mt. Sterling, and it's even more so now. So the demographics kind of changed, as Dot Foods started growing and hiring more people. A lot of the farm wives, or a lot of the younger people, could leave the farm and still stay in the community and work for Dot Foods. But in the '70s and early '80s, it was about all agriculture.

DePue: What I want to do now... This is the point in time where we want to make a transition and focus much more on banking and what was involved with banking and farming and tie those two things together. To start with, let's kind of set the framework and talk a little bit about the national economy and the farm economy at the time. This was 1979, the 1980s when you started with the bank?

Teefey: Yes, yes, interesting times. In the '70s, you just couldn't hardly go wrong as far as buying land. There was big inflation going on with land prices in the '70s.

DePue: I read someplace that it was, within that decade, somewhere around 250 percent inflation of the cost of an acre of land, of prime farm land.

Teefey: Yeah. In some areas even more, I would think, Mark. I can remember, ground that was selling for less than \$1,000 in the '60s was bringing \$2,000-\$3,000. It was unheard of, but there was ground in my county—which isn't the best—that was bringing \$3,000 an acre in the '70s.

DePue: Of course, a lot of that was being driven up by the opening up of grain markets in places like the Soviet Union. It was incredibly good time for a lot of the grain farmers, especially.

Teefey: Absolutely. The '70s were really, like you say, they were just a boom time. And a lot of people thought that that boom wasn't going to ever bust. That's the rest of the story (both laugh).

DePue: See, that happens after that time, too. Hasn't it?

Teefey: Yeah. A lot of people really did prosper in the '70s, but they also got caught up on their growing net worth. There became less and less awareness of paying attention to cash flows. People would become richer and richer, simply on the inflation and everything, because their financial statements kept getting better in the '70s.

DePue: Were the farmers actually out there deliberately trying to purchase more land and grow the size of their farms?

Teefey: Oh, many of them were very, very aggressive. What would happen is that their financial statements would reflect that they had made a half a million dollars in progress over the last year. There was a tendency to be able to borrow against that. They weren't really cash flowing a lot of times, but their net worth was increasing, because of the inflationary factors that were involved in land prices going up. They might have lost \$100,000 last year, but their financial statements showed a \$500,000 increase.

There was banks that didn't get caught up in this, but many banks at the time thought, Well, so what? He lost \$100,000 last year; he's worth a half a million dollars more than he was a year ago. So, we'll just go with him again. We'll roll over his operating losses. His net worth keeps going up. That would work fine, as long as the inflationary factor didn't wane. But, as we know, it did in the '80s.

DePue: What was the basic policy or philosophy of your bank, in terms of those kinds of loans?

Teefey: Well, it wasn't really a pretty story. I was in the trust end of it, so I wasn't in the commercial end of it. I didn't make loans and didn't know very much about banking. My expertise in the early '80s was estate planning. But as was the case with many agricultural banks, our bank started experiencing problems in the early '80s, as interest rates were high and land prices started going the other way. So, there became difficulties there.

DePue: Let me put a couple of markers out there. The downturn really hit hard when [President Jimmy] Carter basically ended the grain agreements and established the grain embargo, about the time that the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. There's another piece of history that still lives with us today.

Teefey: Right.

DePue: So that changed things dramatically. But the economics of the country just weren't going that well, either. This is the time of serious recession of '79, '80, all the way up to '82 and '83. Just a couple of numbers here, inflation rate for January of 1980, 14 percent.

Teefey: Yeah.

DePue: That's astounding, compared to what we've lived with the last three or four decades.

Teefey: Right.

DePue: Unemployment, about the worst of it was 10 percent. That would have been in 1982. It was, I think, even higher in the state of Illinois at that time. But here's the one that was a real kicker, as far as bankers were concerned, I would think. June of 1981, the basic interest rate was at 18 percent.

Teefey: Right.

DePue: Now, a few years before that, when all these farmers were purchasing new land because the prices, they thought, kept going up and up, what were the rates at that time?

Teefey: Oh, much, much lower. Actually, they were higher than they are now, but they were 7-8 percent, 6, 7, 8 percent. The difference between that and the 16, 17, 18 percent...I remember those days well; it was just terrible. So, you can't get rid of your land; you're not cash flowing, and interest rates are 17 or 18 percent, that's a disaster waiting to happen. And it did happen in the early to mid-'80s. It took most of the '80s to clean up some of these problems.

DePue: Cleaning up some of these problems...I would assume that means that farmers are going bankrupt.

Teefey: Yeah, farmers were going bankrupt. Farmers that were good people that worked hard and had been doing that for generations, frankly, kind of got caught up in it. Some did; some didn't, some avoided it. Some with low debt levels, didn't really have that much problem. But some of the farmers that looked like real movers and shakers in the late '70s were hit the hardest in the '80s, because they had big debt loads, and the interest rates went up. When the interest rates went up, it just killed them.

Then, in the '80s, land prices went the other way. They started declining...quickly. There was a couple of years there where you couldn't hardly find anybody that wanted to buy land, because interests, as you talked about, were still very, very high, and the economy was in a major decline.

So the banks, a bank like mine in an agricultural community, really, really felt the pain of it, as did the whole community, because in a small community of 5,500 people, you're dealing with your friends, your neighbors and your family many times. It's a very close-knit situation. It's not impersonal, like it is in the big city or someplace else. You're dealing with people that you grew up with and people that you know very, very well, that you go to church with. You don't want to sell them out. You try to work it out, and that's what we tried to do.

DePue: Did the bank have to foreclose on a couple of farms?

Teefey: Oh, there's a few times you had to foreclose. When you've got farmers that just simply wouldn't cooperate with you, you have no choice. But in our particular case, more often than not, the farmer would come to us and say, "I've got a terrible mess. What are we going to do?" You tried to work through it with them. But there was terribly painful loan losses. Frankly, my particular bank, we just almost didn't survive them. Eighty-five, '85, it was touch and go as to whether the bank could survive.

DePue: Any particular anecdotes that would really illustrate the pain that was involved at that time? Do you remember any specifics about any foreclosures that the bank had to do?

Teefey: I do, and they're painful; they're painful. During this whole process, a lot of times you would get a deed in lieu of foreclosure. The farmer would come to you and say, "I can't go on. I can't make it." There was hardly any market to even sell the farm ground. So, sometimes they would just say, "Hey, listen, I'll just give it to you." And we'd take it sometimes, short of foreclosure.

We probably had at times 200 troubled situations. But we did everything possible to avoid foreclosures. You can't avoid them all, but we avoided a lot of them. Throughout the workout process, the bank took in a lot of land, and we didn't have much of a market for it either. After you'd take it in... You took it in '82 or '83, by '85 or '86, it was worth even less. That negatively impacted the assets of the bank, as the value of what we call "other real estate" declined. It was a very, very difficult time.

The federal government, the FDIC, (Federal Deposit Insurance Company) came up with a program, which allowed you to charge off troubled agricultural assets over a period of years. That particular program, in our case, probably saved the bank. You didn't have to recognize an ag [agricultural] loss immediately.

DePue: You mentioned that 1986 was probably about the worst time for your bank? In 1986, farm prices were 51 percent of parity. Explain to us what that means, because that was a huge part of the problem, wasn't it?

Teefey: Yeah. There's was just no supply and demand. Normally in the economy, you would have supply and demand factors, but with the international markets and the imports and the exports and limits and tariffs and government restrictions, the farmer had just no control over the value of that asset. The input costs continued to rise, and the commodity prices stayed low or became lower, didn't go up.

It was just a terrible, difficult time, and the farmers hands were really tied, which put the banks in a bad situation. It didn't become personal, in many cases, but the banks were trying to survive and, at the same time, trying to keep their friends and customers of many years in business, too. It was a sorting out process.

DePue: So the parity would be a price, determined by the government, above which they thought farmers could make a decent profit, and below which, they would be struggling?

Teefey: Yeah, that's pretty much the way it was. But different farmers had different debt loads and different things on the expense side that made that work for a few. It didn't work for all, of course.

DePue: Grain versus livestock in your area?

Teefey: Well, back in the '40s and '50s and '60s, there was livestock on about every farm. Most of the farmers were diversified with row crops and with hogs and cattle. By the '80s, that had started to decline, [there were] more and more row crop farmers and less and less livestock. That trend's continued to today, where there's very few farmers in Brown County... There's a few, but not very many, that has much livestock.

DePue: Did the livestock farmers have an easier time of it during the '80s?

Teefey: Oh, I don't remember. Obviously, there's been a lot of ebbs and flows... When corn's high, hog and cow prices are low. When they're low, there... There was probably some years in there, when the corn and bean prices were low, that the livestock farmers did better. We didn't have a whole lot of involvement with a lot of livestock farmers, a few hog farmers, but not a whole lot.

DePue: I think one of the things you had alluded to before was the payment in-kind, the PIK program that the federal government had sponsored, which was taking some of these more marginal acres out of production.

Teefey: Yeah.

DePue: Didn't that help ease some of the pressures?

Teefey: Oh, sure it did, as the CRP (Conservation Reserve Program) programs have in later years. I think that that helped some, because they got paid and didn't have the input costs. But you get more and more government control. You could debate that all afternoon here, but I think, in the short-term, that was beneficial to many of the farmers.

DePue: What I'd like to have you do—this is a bit of a change in direction—I want to be able to understand the normal relationship, maybe in regular times for farmers, that a farmer would have with the banker and why they would, maybe on a yearly basis, find themselves in need to go and get some kind of a loan, purchase some things and then, at the end of the year, sell it. Could you walk us through a typical cycle, or is there such a typical cycle for these farmers?

Teefey: I think there's a typical cycle. I think that the '80s caused a big metamorphosis of how that was done in many banks. Some banks were probably ahead of the curve. The bank that I'm in, I think that after the '80s, the lessons were learned, as far as documentation and being more involved in the management of the farm. Again, in the '70s, the values were inflating so fast that a lot of the bankers just didn't anticipate that that was going to stop.

Coming out of the '80s, there's been a lot more attention on cash flow, whereas, that financial statement used to be the big thing. If you're worth \$2

million, you're worth \$2 million, nothing to worry about here. But we learned in the '80s that the value of the land can go from \$3,000 to \$1,000 pretty quick and evaporate millions of dollars in net worth. So, the key thing, after that, is to making sure that there's enough cash flow in an operation to pay off whatever liabilities that that farmer might have.

To get back to your particular question, the normal cycle would be, a farmer would come in sometime in the spring, and, with the help of one of our loan officers, would work out a cash flow requirement for the particular year, what the input costs were going to be, the price of the seed, the price of the fertilizer, the cash rent and living expenses and whatever. Then a loan would be taken out, what we would call an operating loan, which would be taken out with the anticipation that that would be paid back after the harvest and after the grain was sold. That would be the typical thing for a farm operating loan.

Then, of course, from time to time, the farmer might need to buy a tractor or a combine. That would be set up on an intermediate term. As that operating loan is paid back in the fall, after the harvest, a tractor might be set up over a five or seven year payout. A combine might be paid out over five or seven years. A truck or something like that would be an intermediate-term liability. And then, of course, if they had a real estate purchase, that would be a long-term liability.

DePue: Would the interest rate vary between these loans?

Teefey: Well, yeah. Back in the '70s, a lot of banks didn't anticipate the interest rate increase that we saw in the late '70s, in '80 and '81, so they had fixed rate assets, loans being an asset; deposits being a liability to a bank. They had fixed rate loans that might go out ten, fifteen years. A customer comes in, takes out a loan at 7 percent. The bank fixes it, keeps it in-house, has a fifteen year maturity on it. At the time this bank took out that 7 percent loan with that customer, the cost of funds, which the banks manage, the cost of the money—what they're paying on checking accounts, what they're paying on certificates of deposit, what they're paying on money market funds, savings accounts... If you loan it out at 7 percent, that effective cost of funds might be 3 percent. You've got that interest margin there, between 3 percent and 7 percent.

Well, what happened in the late '70s and '80s was many banks that had trouble had fixed loans for maybe five, seven, fifteen years and interest rates went to [the] 16, 17, 18 percent you're talking about. So I've got a loan here that I'm getting a 7 percent return on. I've (the banker) got to keep the liquidity in the bank; I've got to keep funds in there; I've got to keep deposits in there. So I'm paying you 15 percent on your certificate of deposit. I'm paying you 15 [percent], and I've got a 7 percent loan here to cover it. It doesn't work. You're (the bank) losing money.

So, what banks did after the '80s is that banks are pretty careful—smaller banks that don't have the ability to match up the assets and deposits like maybe a larger bank... You don't fix the interest rate (for) more than three or five years. You get away with some of that interest rate risk.

We've talked before, Mark, about, if you got a home loan [mortgage], for example, where somebody wants a fixed rate, which probably makes good sense on a home loan, you want a twenty, twenty-five, thirty year fixed rate. Then banks sell those, on a secondary market, to Fannie Mae (Federal National Mortgage Association), to Freddie Mac (Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation) or to some kind of secondary market, where the bank then gets a processing fee. They get certain fees, but they don't have that interest rate risk, going forward.

DePue: Does that allow the bank to have more money available to make more loans?

Teefey: Exactly. That's how, and that's one reason the government developed and justifies that program and, frankly, bailed it out. That's right. The bank takes the fee, sells it [the mortgage] on the secondary market. If you've got a \$100,000 loan, then that frees up that \$100,000 to loan to somebody else.

DePue: I must admit, I'm most curious about those short-term loans and that farmer who comes in at the beginning of the spring and says, "I need to have—

Teefey: A hundred thousand, \$500,000, whatever.

DePue: "...to operate, to purchase the seed corn, to purchase the fertilizers and the herbicides and to operate, and then I intend to pay you back November, December timeframe." What's the logic for that? Is that just because they've found themselves in a cash flow problem, or is there good logic for most farmers to do that?

Teefey: It's good logic for most farmers to do that. I'd say it's an exception that a farmer has enough cash flow today to have enough in their checking account or enough in savings, enough liquidity to be able to handle all their input costs. They're so high, the cost of the grain and the cost of the fertilizer, the cost of the fuel, the cost of the crop insurance. So, for most farmers, it's a cycle where... In my community, maybe less than 5 percent of the farmers wouldn't have to borrow anything to operate in 2010. Then, hopefully, they pay you back in the fall, and they've made a profit. They've got money left over to live off of or to impact their net worth, with the hope someday that maybe they don't have to borrow operating funds.

But most farmers today, I would think 90 percent of the farmers today have operating loans. Now, it's changed because a lot of the suppliers, a lot of the people that sell the grain and the fertilizer and the pesticides, a lot of those people now are kind of in the quasi-credit business. They're using low interest rates or telling the farmer he doesn't have to pay them back in the fall, as an



incentive to buy that product (the operating loan) from them, which puts them (suppliers) in competition with what we do.

DePue: The farmers that you're working with now, I've talked with enough of them, they strike me as a pretty darned sophisticated group. They're watching the commodity prices go up and down in the Chicago Board of Trade, and they're—I hesitate to use this word, but—they're playing that as well, trying to figure out when's the best time to sell.

Teefey: Oh, it's really changed. As I said earlier, I grew up in a family that had a grain elevator and bought grain, sold feed. I can still remember a few of the horse pulling the grain wagons, but you're right. Today, there's a lot of hedging; there's a lot of contracting, a lot of trying to anticipate the market and trying to protect yourself and go ahead and sell when you've got a price that's historically, maybe not the grand slam that you want, but that you know it's a price where you can make a profit, so you sell your crop in the spring, and then you just hope that you produce a crop to be able to deliver it in the fall at the contract price.

But you're right. It's got so sophisticated, not only in the marketing side of it, but it's also got so sophisticated in the planning side, in the soil testing and the fertilizing and even the equipment is so technologically advanced over what it used to be, where the farmers with their planters, they can computerize their planting, so they know the seed count per acre. They can change that, depending on the terrain and the soil type and that type of thing, unheard of just a decade ago.

DePue: Is there a difference, in terms of the bank, in dealing with farmers who are renters versus farmers who are owners?

Teefey: Well, yes, but the basics are very, very similar. You're looking at net worth, assets, what kind of a risk level makes sense for that customer, and then you're taking a look at the cash flow. If you're a renter, you're either paying cash rent, or you've got a crop share arrangement. Those are the two normal arrangements between a landlord and a tenant, that you either pay cash rent, which is something else that has really skyrocketed in the last few years. As land prices go up, the cash rent goes up, too. It makes it real tough on a lot of tenant farmers, because the cash rent goes up.

The big corporate entities come in and bid up the cash rent. Some of the big corporate farmers that actually farm tens of thousands of acres, they can buy their fertilizer in bulk; they can buy their seed in bulk. They've got this big fancy equipment, so they can run in and farm ground cheaper than the neighbor, cheaper than the local guy. That's been difficult for a lot of the tenant farmers, because that's inflated the cash rent figures.

DePue: I had one tenant farmer who explained to me that he pretty much has a choice. He can look at either purchasing more land and growing the size of his farm or at purchasing equipment and keeping his equipment fleet fairly modernized. He really couldn't do both. Do you find that's the case for many farmers that are out there? A new tractor, a new combine is how much, a couple hundred thousand, \$300,000?

Teefey: Yeah. Easily, easily, easily. The margins become less and less, and the pressures become more and more, especially when you've got these large corporations coming in, driving up the cash rent. Then, you get a rainy season, like we're experiencing right now, where a lot of the corn has been replanted. I've got one good customer that just told me he's replanted some fields three times. He's had to buy the seed three times.

And then there's issues. When it's this damp and this cold, there's issues with what the pesticide and the herbicide does to that seed, as it sits in the ground in cold, wet weather and doesn't come up. Those are things that the farmers don't necessarily anticipate. If they're sharp, they know that that possibility is always out there, the weather and elements like that, but it sure adds to their cost and to their grief.

DePue: You started the business on the trust side. Walk us through some of the pain and some of the decisions and the dynamics of these farmers, especially when they're looking at perhaps passing that land to the next generation, and then you get into tax issues and the whole realm of other federal and state and local legislation.

Teefey: Right. We're kind of in limbo now with the federal estate tax in Illinois. When I started out, in the late '70s and '80s there... In the early '80s there was an Illinois inheritance tax you had to deal with, too. Right now there's no Illinois inheritance tax, and the federal exemption, although it's kind of in limbo right now, is still like \$3 million. There's an unlimited marital deduction, so there's no particular tax issue when the ground passes between the husband and the wife.

But the problem is that you need to do something before one of the spouses dies. That's where trusts will come into play. In Illinois, we've got a unique situation called an Illinois Land Trust, which allows somebody to collect real estate in a land trust. Then they can transfer beneficial interest as personal property amongst your kids or your children, and you can [take] advantage to the gift tax exemption. It's a good way to reduce your estate, and you don't have to deed it every time, because you just assign the beneficial interests. But it's a problem, if your assets are up over \$3 million.

DePue: The trend in the last few decades have been increasing the size of an average farm, over time. Yet you get to the point in time, when you are reaching your seventies or '80s, it becomes obvious that you have to pass the property on to

the next generation. Isn't the part of the dynamics of most farm families that you end up dividing the farm up and not being able to pass it on as one entity?

Teefey: Well, sometimes. There's no doubt—

DePue: Is that the role of the estate planners, the trust department?

Teefey: To some. Typically what you'd find in a rural area, or typically what my experience has been, which might not be necessarily the norm...Not everybody wants to farm. So, what we have here is an evolution of more and more of our young people are going to college. More and more of our young people are not wanting to stay in a small community, like I've chosen to stay in, a community of 2,000 people. Many of our kids go to college, and they get experiences away from Mt. Sterling, and for whatever reason, they don't want to come back, or they choose not to come back. More and more of the farm families, as they become more educated and more sophisticated and successful, to some degree, their kids are going to college, too. And a lot of them choose not to come back.

Now, at lot of times you see a couple of kids want to come back and farm, and a couple of kids don't want to come back and farm. Obviously, that does kind of create estate planning issues. It's going to create issues at the death of the parents as to what the division is going to be. Sometimes you see farms split up, and the kids that are not on the farm, they cash out part of it, or the other siblings buy out the interest of the siblings that don't want to be on the farm. We as bankers, we deal with those types of issues all the time.

DePue: Do you have situations where the family wasn't good at sitting down and doing an estate plan, developing a trust? A lot of what I'm getting to here is all of the emotional issues that are involved with that, the passing on to the next generation.

Teefey: Yeah, we've seen it all, over the years. Frankly, that was one of the big problems. The emotional issues were big issues in the '80s, which we were talking about a while ago, the fact that I farm; my dad farmed; my granddad farmed; all we've ever done is farm, and now I've lost the family farm. That was just a terribly emotional time.

Today, land prices are now at an historic high, right today. So really, that gives the farmers many, many more options, not that they don't have tax considerations that they've got to deal with. But in the last three to four years, many of the better soil types throughout Illinois, of the tillable ground, those prices have about doubled. So sure, you've got the problems, but you've got some nice problems, in a way, too, because right now you're sitting on land.

Frankly, there's some people who are just saying this is a good time to take the profit, and you're seeing some land sold. A lot of times Mom and Dad need to sell the farm, or sell part of the farm, to retire. There's transition

issue there that we deal with all the time, that Mom and Dad are decided, Hey, we've farmed for fifty years, and it's time to move to town and settle down.

DePue: As goes the old adage, land rich, cash poor.

Teefey: Very true. Yeah, very, very true. I mean, there's people—I deal with them all the time—people in their '80s that come to me, have lived, you know, they drive a ten year old car, I mean, salt of the earth good people. There's a lot of them where I live. That's why I am there, but they'll come in at retirement age, '70s and '80s...I can think of one lady in particular; she would come in to me, and she'd say, "I just don't know if I'm going to make it or not. I just don't know if I can pay my bills. Will you make me a loan? If I need a few thousand dollars...If I need five thousand dollars...If I need to pay my taxes, will you make me a loan to do it?" She lived in town. Her husband had died years before, and she had a 120 acres that she cash rented or maybe she did it on shares; I don't remember. But this lady worried about it and worried about it and worried about it all the time. When she passed away, she had a well over \$1 million estate. But she didn't have much cash flow from it all. I see that all the time.

A lot of the farmers by nature, Mark, are just conservative people, people that have beat out a living for thirty or forty years and done it just the way their fathers and mothers did it before them. They come at seventy or eighty, and I can think of case after case after case after case; two or three of them I just dealt with last week. These eighty, ninety year old widow ladies, they're multi-millionaires, but they never lived like the normal Joe, making \$40,000 a year, that has nothing. But that land is precious; they haven't wanted to sell it.

Sometimes I tell people, especially the widows, sometimes they'll say, "Well, we bought that property in 1948. We gave \$400 an acre for it. You'd think that they'd say, "It's got to be worth..." I said, "Mam, it's worth ten times that. It's worth \$4,000 an acre today." "Oh, it just can't be." (chuckles) But it is. But they're scared to trade car, or they're scared to spend any money. That's their choice. That's their choice. But you're right; there's an awful lot of people that are land rich and cash poor. But a lot of it, for the older people, is the psychological state. They've just lived, and they've pinched and accumulated a lot of money, and they just don't really know how to spend it. And that's okay, I guess.

DePue: Some of those folks would have come of age in the Depression era. They would have been growing up in those years.

Teefey: Many of them. And two or three of the ones I'm thinking about, as we talk, definitely that's it. They're just thinking, I've been through a tough time. I've been through it. I'm not sure where my next meal's coming from. Hey, listen, I understand what you're saying." "Boy, is that really right? Am I really worth

that kind of money?" "Mam, you're really worth that kind of money."  
"Wow!" But they just don't adjust. Whatever, they've got something that hopefully the next generation will protect it and respect it to some extent.  
(laughs)

DePue: You said that during the '80s, especially when times were especially tough for the farmers, the bank was acquiring a lot of land, whether it wanted to or not.

Teefey: Right.

DePue: Did your family...Did you acquire some land during that time?

Teefey: No, I didn't. No, my family didn't have much land. I've got a little bit now that I've acquired since, but not at that time. Didn't have any money to acquire it with. Even if you did have money in the '80s, there was some opportunities there and some people that did have cash were able to acquire some land and do quite well.

There were some people that were liquid, had cash, didn't have any debt, they got some real bargains. Ground that today would bring \$5,000 an acre, they were buying for \$1,200 an acre, or less. There were some opportunities for people that had cash. My father died in 1976. I didn't have anything, so I wasn't in a position to take advantage of that, but there was some that did.

DePue: These years in the '80s, especially, I would assume you've got a young and a growing family during that timeframe, and you've got this banking business in some incredibly tough times for banking and farming in the United States. How much time does that leave for horses for you?

Teefey: Well, in the '80s it didn't leave much. I had a few because right about '80, '81, the thing hadn't really turned real sour yet, as far as affecting the bank numbers. It did shortly after that. But I was stationed in Mt. Sterling. I was there in Mt. Sterling. The bank was in Mt. Sterling. It was a great get-away for me, frankly, Mark.

I can remember totally stressed out, I mean, wondering whether the bank was going to make it or not and whether this Friday the regulators were going to come in and close it up. My job became...I moved from a trust officer, estate planner, being a lawyer, to somebody that was dealing with the work out situations, dealing with the regulators, dealing with the lawyers of the customers that were in financially distressed situations.

So, I kind of vacillated in the commercial side of the bank in the early '80s and having no experience whatsoever with commercial banking, having no experience. As a trust officer, I gained no experience as a commercial banker. But my legal skills and my legal background allowed me to become

somebody that could deal with regulatory issues that the bank was dealing with and also deal with the collection issues and the workout situations.

DePue: Workout situation?

Teefey: Well, the workout situation, as opposed to a foreclosure. You know, you've got a farmer coming in, and maybe he's got a lawyer with him, maybe he doesn't. He saying, "What are we going to do? I can't pay you. I can't do it." So the options are, you can say, "Tough, we'll foreclose on you." That's not what we did in 95 percent of the cases. I mean, "Okay, what can we do? Can we cut your interest rate? Can we defer a payment? Can we take part of your property as a credit against the loan?" Not that we wanted it, but what we have is the regulatory agencies looking at all these past-due loans and looking at all these troubled assets.

If those troubled assets and if those bad loans and those, what we call putrid assets, if they start eating up all your capital, before long you're broke. Unfortunately, but truthfully, that was the cycle that I was in, was the juggle of trying to work something out. And, frankly, in a lot of situations—the regulators know that this took place; although this is not what they want to hear—you're juggling the value of those assets; you're trying to keep those loans looking as good as you possibly can, so they just don't overwhelm you and have a situation where the regulators say, "Well, your bad loans, your uncollectable assets exceeds your capital."

Today there's safeguards that they don't even let it get close before they close you. But back then, you got pretty close. You could get pretty close before they close you. In our particular situation, we about ate up all our capital. If you'd had to recognize all your real loan losses, if you had to recognize the real value of the assets that you've taken back and the real value of the troubled loans on the books, it would have ate up your capital. You'd have negative capital. You'd have been close.

There was a constant juggle, and there was a constant struggle for credibility. I didn't make the loans, so in my particular situation, at least I was credible in that light. "Listen, I'm trying to do the best I can. I think we're making progress. Give me a little bit more time. I'm not trying to cover my butt, but I am trying to keep the bank open. I am trying to buy time here. I do think we're making progress. I do think we can pull through this." And we were able to do that, but it was a struggle.

I dealt with some situations. Once, I remember, *USA Today* came out with a list. In the worst of the bank crisis, *USA Today* came out with a list, state by state, of the banks that were most troubled, most likely to fail, it said. There was five banks in Illinois, and we were one of the five. One of my colleagues and I, we'd go around, any place in a forty mile radius, we'd buy up every *USA Today* we could buy up. (both laugh) You know, you're scared.

The other thing that can happen, if you get rumors that the bank has got problems and people pull their money out, then there's no hope. (snaps his fingers)

DePue: The old fashioned run on the bank.

Teefey: The old fashioned run on the bank. So you're fighting. Not only are you fighting to keep your farmers alive, your friend alive, trying to figure out some kind of solutions for him, you're taking back some of those assets. And while you've got all these dynamics going on, you're still trying to use your credibility the best you can to tell your customers, "Stick with me. Leave your money here. It's going to be okay." It was terrible. It was a terrible dilemma for three or four years there.

DePue: Some sleepless nights.

Teefey: Some sleepless nights, right, right.

DePue: If in these workout arrangements, the bank ends up taking control of some land, would you typically try to turn that around and sell it right away, or would you rent it out, maybe to the same farmer who had to give it up to you?

Teefey: All of the above. You want to try to keep it productive. There was little market for some of it. But you did rent it out, sometimes to the person you took it back from. At the height of our problems, we had about \$3.5 million in what we called other real estate or other assets. That's a lot for a bank the size of our bank, back in the '80s.

It's awful hard, Mark, to really know...It's kind of like dealing with Florida real estate today. It's awful hard to know what the real fair market value of that is. If you'd had to fire sale it all, I'm afraid you maybe were carrying \$3.2 million, so that's a \$3.2 million asset of the bank. But if you had to fire sale it, if you just had to auction it all off tomorrow or sell it to the highest bidder that might come along in a sealed bid tomorrow, you might \$2 million or \$2.5 million. It's a subjectivity there, as to what that type of stuff is worth. So, what you did is you tried to sell a little bit of it, and you tried to carry on some more, and you tried to convince the regulators that it was worth what you said it was worth. It was a tough time.

DePue: As I understand, somewhere along this process, you end up being president of this bank.

Teefey: Well, mainly by default. (laughs)

DePue: Now, tell us about that.

Teefey: No, mainly by default. The regulatory thing became...the noose kept getting tighter and tighter and tighter, and the regulators were pressing for

management. Although I hadn't made the loans, and although I didn't have a cloud over my head on as far as making the mistakes, I also had no commercial banking experience.

So, it was in about 1986, in the middle of all this, the board of directors... We'd had some management changes, and the board of directors made me president pro-tem and head of a committee for a search to find a CEO (chief executive officer). At the time, I was able to convince the regulators that I was continuing to make some progress. I was a lawyer. I'd had some experience in workouts—because I'd been doing this now for two or three years, in this bank situation—and that I was going to make a diligent search for a CEO, and I did.

But, under the circumstances, the bank had such little capital, was still really on the cusp of whether it was going to fail or not, you know, fail or succeed. Literally, the financial demands of anybody that I could find that was willing to come into our type of situation were just going to add to the problems, because there wasn't much money. So, I've been president ever since. We worked out of it and came through it, and it's been a good experience. The bank is the only locally-owned bank in the community, and we're safe and sound.

DePue: How did you manage to work out of it?

Teefey: Just with a lot of hard work and a lot of support and a lot of good faith from the people in the community that didn't do as you said; they didn't take the money. That was important.

DePue: How much of it had to do with a little bit of improvement in the agriculture economy?

Teefey: Oh, a lot of that. As the late '80s came around, and things got better there, you were able to find somebody that would at least buy those troubled assets, which in the early '80s you couldn't hardly give them away. Sure, sure, as the economy came back and the interest rates came back down, which also encouraged people to go out and to invest and to borrow money. There was a lot of different factors. My directors made financial contributions, and a lot of good things happened.

DePue: Were you able to stay involved at all in the harness racing? For example, did you continue to do announcing in the summertime?

Teefey: Yeah, I did. I did some. I cut back, but I did some. It was a great relief for me, even the hands-on stuff. I would even go back to cleaning out a few stalls. I had people that would do that for me by then, but I would go to the fairgrounds and say, "Hey, listen, you work out the horse. I'll clean the stalls," or I'd do this or that. That type of physical activity and just a totally different environment would give me some relief from the stress, frankly.



DePue: I'm curious. Was the board of directors okay with your hobby?

Teefey: Oh, yeah, they were, because they knew that most of my challenge was mental, frankly. They knew that I'd had a ton of stress. They knew that I was thinking about it twenty-four hours a day. It doesn't make any difference where you're at. Frankly, sometimes when you're sitting behind a desk, you find yourself working with things and dealing with situations that would be better handled by somebody else, whereas, when you're not there, your mind is still turning.

Frankly—I think you can relate to this as most professional people can—sometimes your best ideas, sometimes the more successful things you come up with happen driving down the road or sitting in church, (chuckles) not necessarily when you're just sitting behind a desk. My board, thank goodness, recognized that.

DePue: This has been a fascinating discussion and an important one, because it's part of our overall project on Illinois agriculture. This is one that we hadn't focused nearly enough attention on, up to this point. But every farmer's got a good banker that's backing them up someplace.

Teefey: I like to think so, and I think, for the most part, I think that's true, Mark.

DePue: Tell me, what's the most satisfying part of the job of working with farmers and banking?

Teefey: The most satisfying for me—I've been there thirty years now—is looking at the successes, looking at the people that struggled, looking at the people that, twenty years ago or thirty years ago, that you'd sit around with, and you'd worry about, are you going to make it, or aren't you going to make it, and should I go another year; can I loan you some more money; shouldn't I loan you some more money? It comes down to a character issue. It comes down to a gut instinct of the quality of person you're dealing with and his ability to survive.

I've always liked the person, even though they might be under water, that they would return your phone calls immediately; they would call you; they would tell you the truth, would tell you that, "I've really got a problem here," as opposed to the person that just kind of tries to hope to catch you asleep. So, [I like] the person that's really there, working with you. Thank God, over the last thirty years, I've got a lot of stories where people were struggling, twenty-five, thirty years ago or twenty years ago, that are now very, very successful. So that's always gratifying.

DePue: What's the frustrating part of the job for you?

Teefey: The regulation, I think, would be the most frustrating part for me. I'm not a great detail person. I've got some great people working for me. I've got a

great staff, a young man that's doing a good job for me now, but everything is so tremendously regulated.

DePue: Are we talking about primarily federal or state regulations?

Teefey: Well, both; they work together. We're a state chartered bank, and frankly, both agencies worked well with me in the '80s to buy me a little time to work through the problems, although it was pretty touch and go a few times. But now, there's just so many federal and state regulations that you follow and a lot of things that...probably too many to go into now, but just an awful lot of regulation.

DePue: I'd like to have you, though, go into one or two of them that you find especially difficult or frustrating to deal with.

Teefey: Well, I suppose, as think about the various regulations, I'll throw out one. There's a Regulation B that requires, if you come in with your wife or if your wife asks for a loan...This is just a small example, and maybe it's a...but you can't look to the other spouse to sign the loan. You've got to take a look at that individual lady or that individual man, even though you know they're in my community, you know everybody, you know the circumstances, you know that he wouldn't care or she wouldn't care if you said, "Have Mark come in and sign this along with you, and it won't be any problem." You can't do that.

And then there's so many ratios, and there's so many different issues that the regulators monitor. But in my type of situation, a lot of times, historically, if somebody came in and needed a personal loan and needed this or needed that, I'd say, "Bring Joe in" or "Bring Margaret in tomorrow, and you guys both sign this," knowing all their property's in joint tenancy, knowing if something happens to one of them, those assets are going to go to the survivor. It would just be easier to do that, but I guess maybe it's a woman's rights issue or something like that, but you can't do that by law. You can't ask a lady to bring her husband in, or you can't ask a man to bring his wife in, just different things like that.

DePue: This far removed from the time when the bank was in very serious trouble, had gotten national press as being one of the most troubled banks in the country.

Teefey: Right.

DePue: Now we're twenty-four years removed from that. Any regrets? This isn't necessarily the business you thought you were going to get into.

Teefey: Never dreamed of it. But I raised two good boys. I look at it kind of philosophically. There was things maybe that I thought I would accomplish that I've never accomplished, but there's also, as I've told you, there's some real success stories in people I've been able to help and I've had personal

confidence in, that I stuck with, that have done very, very well. So that's good.

I always appreciate my stockholders and the board of directors and the people who have paid me for thirty years, allowed me to educate my kids.

DePue: Was there a conscious decision anywhere in here that says, No, I was toying around with the notion of getting involved in politics. I don't want to do that.

Teefey: No, no. Actually, in '88 I did make a run for state rep [representative], an unsuccessful run. But I enjoyed it; met a lot of people. Kind of coming out of the crisis and maybe a little bit of a premature run, because there was still some left-over issues to deal with. But I have no regrets that way. I think the political climate's...I stay very involved. I try to stay involved in current events and state events and do a little governmental work and spend some time at the capitol.

[I] have a lot of good friends that are state legislators, but that's all changed, too. It's really changed from the time when my dad was a part-time legislator and ran the elevator, wasn't paid much, went home, spent about seven weeks a year over here, and went home and did his thing. Today we've got professional legislators; we've got so much power in leadership. It's a different environment. I've accepted that. I accepted it as an environment that I'm very fortunate to know some very good legislators, but I don't feel like I've missed anything there.

DePue: Well, we spent most of today talking about banking and farming. It's been an important discussion for us to have, certainly a great addition to our series on agriculture. But there's one more addition, and that's on harness racing, that we definitely want to spend some time on. We will turn our attention next time to that. So, thank you very much, Ed. I'm looking forward to the next time.

Teefey: Thank you, Mark. Enjoyed it.

(end transcript #1)

Interview with Ed Teefey

# AI-V-L-2010-023

Interview # 2: June 16, 2010

Interviewer: Mark DePue

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DePue: Good morning. My name is Mark DePue. I'm the director of oral history at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. Today is Wednesday, June 16, 2010, and I'm here today with Ed Teefey for our second session. Good morning, Ed.

Teefey: Good morning, Mark. Glad to be here.

DePue: We had a fascinating discussion last time, kind of a dual discussion, because we talked about you growing up in west central Illinois and developing this strong passion for all things horses and especially for harness racing but also getting into the banking business and ending up working on banking to, shall we say, a depressed farm community, a struggling farm community in the 1980s. You talked about what it was like to be banker for agriculture during those years. Thank you very much for that discussion.

Today is a completely different discussion, because the goal today is for you to explain to me and to all of our viewers here, the ins and outs of the harness racing business.

Teefey: And I look forward to it, Mark.

DePue: Before we start, why don't you tell us your specific title at the bank.

Teefey: I'm the president of the Farmer's State Bank and Trust Company of Mt. Sterling, Illinois. I'm also president of the Illinois Standardbred Owners and Breeders Association of Illinois.

DePue: So you've got those two aspects of your life that you've always managed to find a balance in, right? (laughs)

Teefey: Well, I try to balance them.

DePue: I wanted you to just give us a real thumbnail sketch of the origins of harness racing in Illinois, if you could.

Teefey: Well, I think harness racing in Illinois probably mirrors the history of harness racing in the United States, at least in the eastern and midwestern part of the United States. Back, as the country was developed in the 1800s and the mid-1800s, most people, at least in the rural areas, had horses to work their fields and to transport their family into the towns and to the churches and to the schools.

In that era, in the mid-1800s, it became commonplace in the East, in the Midwest and here in Illinois, that naturally, one neighbor might race the other neighbor into town with their horse and buggy. After a while, people would breed the faster mares to the faster stallions, with the intention of trying to produce a faster horse to pull the buggy. Industrious people, at the time, decided to start keeping records and registries of what mare was bred to what stallion and what that production was and, frankly, the term standardbred came out of that effort to develop trotters that could trot a mile at a certain standard, which in the early days, it was a mile in two minutes and thirty seconds.

So, to get into the standardbred registry in the mid-part and later parts of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, you had to be able to demonstrate that your horse could trot a mile in two minutes and thirty seconds or better or that its mother could or its offspring could. Those type of things started the early days of the registries and the recordkeeping in the industry.

DePue: We've run into the first word of many that probably we need to take a step back. We did this the first time around, but I think it might be worth repeating and describing exactly what a trotter is versus a pacer, and we've got



*A trotter*

some pictures that can help illustrate that.

Teefey: For sure. That's a trotter there, Mark. You can see that its right front leg is moving forward at the same time that its right hind leg is moving back. If you look at the two legs closest to us, the left front leg and the left hind leg are actually coming together. That is the trotting gait, and that gait in the mid-1800s was the predominate gait.

DePue: Is that a natural gait for the horse?

Teefey: That's the natural gait. It's kind of the same gait that the normal dog would trot in. So that's the trotting gait, and that is a natural gait for about all horses. In the standardbred breed, that gait is perfected, so those horses wouldn't get from a natural trot, which most horses will naturally trot into a gallop or a cantor. Standardbreds are bred to stay on the gait, stay on that trot and trot fast.

DePue: Well, how about a pacer?

Teefey: A pacer is also considered a standardbred, but it's evolved now into a very distinct breed within the nomenclature of standardbred, or harness racing. A pacer moves their legs... The right legs move forward together, as the left legs move back. It's a shuffle type of gait. Pacers actually have now, in the 20th century, evolved, for the most part, into a faster gait than the trotters. Whereas, at the turn of the century, turn of the 19th century, there was probably 90 percent of the standardbreds were trotters. Today, probably 80 percent of the standardbreds—what you see at most pari-mutuel tracks—are pacers.



*A pacer*

DePue: So it's all about speed, isn't it?

Teefey: It is; it's all about speed.

DePue: Tell us about the role that county fairs and the state fair had in harness racing. That seems to be much different than it is for thoroughbred racing.

Teefey: It is, and I think it has evolved, as we talk about, out of the intrinsic nature of the horse and buggy and the agricultural climate of the 1800s and the early 1900s, the pre-car days, the pre-motor days, especially. Horses and buggies were everywhere. As you grow older, especially, but it's more people can

more comfortably drive a horse than they might be able to ride a horse, which is the way it is today.

With thoroughbred racing, with the running horses, the jockeys, as you know, are normally very small, 105, 110, 115 pounds. Not everybody can get on a big, powerful thoroughbred and work it out, let alone race it. It's quite different with the harness horses, with the standardbreds. Size isn't as important. You ride in the cart. You have a different degree of control. Weight is much less important. The horses, for the most part, have a little bit more of a docile nature than a thoroughbred. It's more of a hands-on type of business.

So, in the 1800s, as county fairs started popping up, one of the centerpieces of many county fairs, especially here in Illinois, was harness racing. Although some of them did have running races, it seemed that harness racing became the more popular sport to have at the county fairs. In the late 1800s and the early 1900s, there was probably sixty or seventy county fairs in the state of Illinois that had half mile race tracks and exhibited harness racing.

Today, we're down to thirty-six county fairs in Illinois. But, if you look back in my archives, you can see that there was many, many more tracks in the early 1900s than there is today. But it still continues to be healthy, here in Illinois, at the county fair level.

DePue: I suspect that people started to bet on these races, practically from the earliest moments of the sport, before it was even a formal sport. When was betting authorized, made legal, in Illinois?

Teefey: Well, originally, in the early 1900s, in the pre-prohibition days, there was some legalized betting in Illinois. It was eventually outlawed in the 1920s and was legalized again in the 1940s. The business kind of thrived from the '40s, and was the only legalized form of gambling in Illinois from the 1940s until the lottery came on in about 1970.

DePue: When you say the only form, they also allowed thoroughbred gambling.

Teefey: Oh, sure.

DePue: My curiosity is, they allowed thoroughbred gambling through the 20s and 30s. Well, why not harness racing? What was the difference between the two?

Teefey: I really don't know the answer to that. I know that there was thoroughbred gambling, back prior to the prohibition days, and there was tracks that hosted thoroughbred racing. There was tracks that hosted harness racing, too, but I've seen the same archives that you have, in those days, that they talk about the legalization of gaming on the thoroughbreds and not on the harness racing. I'm not sure what happened. But in the '40s, they both became regulated and prospered up until the '70s.

DePue: I know that the year it became legal for harness racing was 1945, which is convenient, because you've got all the veterans coming back, and you have an uptick in the economy at that time, too, so a lot of things are changing in the United States at that time. Let's talk about pari-mutuel betting, because I don't know if that was the same timeframe that pari-mutuel betting came into vogue.

Teefey: Well, right. In the 1940s, when they legalized wagering, it was pari-mutuel wagering. They did away with the bookies, and the bookies could make their own odds. The bookies took on some risk by doing that. They would determine that this horse was going to be 2 to 1 or this horse is going to be 10 to 1.

With pari-mutuel wagering, the racetrack itself takes on no risk. The people are betting against each other, basically. The more money that is bet on a certain horse, the odds go down. If less money, very little money is bet on a horse, the odds are going to be large. So the owners of the racetrack have no interest in the outcome of the race. It doesn't make any difference to them whether there's a large payout to win on maybe a \$2 bet or a small one. The money is calculated through the computer system, through the toll stater (??) system.

DePue: Through the system?

Teefey: Well, the system that the racetracks use that reflects the odds in the infield or on the televisions now is called a toll stater system.

DePue: Toll stater

Teefey: Toll stater. That's a computer that figures the number of dollars that are being wagered on each one of the respective horses in the race. As more money gets wagered on a horse, those odds go down. Then the odds on horses that aren't getting wagered on very much, those odds go up. Then approximately 82-83 percent of the money wagered is paid back out to the public. The rest of the money is split up between the track owners and the purses that the horses race for and the tax that the state takes.

DePue: The conversion from using the bookie system to going to the pari-mutuel system, was that done in part because of fears of corruption? I mean, corruption, vice and organized crime have oftentimes been connected with this business.

Teefey: It has. I think the major reason to move from the bookie system to the pari-mutuel wagering system was that there would be a better accounting system, so that the state would be in a better position to figure out how they can collect their tax. Unfortunately, the problems, some of the problems with the politicians... Back when harness racing and thoroughbred racing was really thriving, at least some of our politicians got in trouble with awarding dates,



with awarding what time of year and how often a certain track was going to be able to operate.

DePue: We're going to come back a little bit later to this, a much more thorough discussion of the betting and the gambling and the regulation of it in Illinois. But I want to turn the direction to that farmer out there who decides that he or she wants to get into the business of raising standardbred horses. How important is it to Illinois agriculture that you've got this business of standardbred horses?

Teefey: Well, I think it's considerable. The various studies that we've done over the last decade or two would indicate that there's around 40,000 people employed within the industry, the thoroughbred and the standardbred industries combined. It's not just the racetrack owners, but it's also the jockeys and the drivers; it's the trainers that train the horses; it's the owners that own the horses; it's the feed stores that sell the grain to the horses; it's the farmers that board the horses on their pasture land and raise the hay for the horses and raise the straw for the horses, which is used for the bedding. And then there's veterinarians, of course, and shippers that haul the horses from the farm to the racetrack or from a racetrack to another racetrack. There's the grooms that clean out the stalls and work on the backstretch. I could go on and on about all the little sidelights that contribute to the workforce that goes into the sport. So, it does. And, of course, the horses eat corn and oats and other hay and other Illinois agricultural products.

I think that's why the Illinois Department of Agriculture and other departments of agriculture throughout the country have promoted the sport over the years. There's a bureau here in Illinois, the Bureau of Horse Racing and County Fairs that organizes the horse racing at the county fairs, sponsors events, sponsors bonuses and that type of stuff, too, to encourage people to buy horses and to raise horses and race horses in Illinois so that those agricultural products and those jobs can stay here in Illinois, so that the racetracks in Chicago or St. Louis don't have to import the horses that are raised in Kentucky or Indiana or Ohio or from outside the state, Mark. There's a lot of agricultural products that go into it. There's a lot of jobs and also a lot of fringe jobs, veterinarian jobs and feed stores that are needed to make this industry work.

DePue: Well, Ed, I want to get a little bit personal here, so you can help me and others understand how this actually works. You're an owner, right?

Teefey: Yes, I have several.

DePue: Is that an investment? Is that a passion? Tell us more about being an owner of a horse or several standardbred horses. What does that mean? How does that work?

Teefey: Well, as you know, Mark, I come from a very rural area in west central Illinois, so I'm fortunate that pasture land is readily available and the cost of the labor force. For most of my life, I did a lot of the work myself. So, with harness racing, especially, where you can actually sit in the jog cart and work the horse out yourself, a guy like me, that was an attorney and a banker, I could get off work at night, and I could go out to the barn and hook up my horse and work it out four or five miles and give it a bath and muck out the stall. It was more fun to me than playing golf.

Sure, you're looking for that champion; you're looking for a financial return, but you're also realizing it's a risky investment; there's no doubt about it. I would never suggest that anybody should get into it just strictly as an investment. You need to love being around horses and working with horses, I think, to make it worthwhile.

DePue: How much would a good standardbred horse with a proper breeding line cost?

Teefey: You know, as we talked about before we went on the air, you never know. Sometimes a \$1,000 horse becomes a champion. Sometimes a quarter of a million dollar horse becomes a dud.

A lot of our horses are sold as yearlings, where they just broke the lead; they haven't been tested; they haven't pulled a cart. Those horses will sell, in some rural markets, from \$1,000 to many hundreds of thousands of dollars. That's probably would be the mean. Some will actually bring less than \$1,000 in some markets. Upper range in the standardbreds is maybe a half a million dollars for that very well-bred champion. On the thoroughbred side, they can bring millions.

DePue: Any difference in the prices for a stallion versus a filly?

Teefey: Yeah, normally if you historically go back and take a look at sale results... I think the trend is even more so now, that the stallions, the male horses normally average a little better, better than the females do. For the most part, in both thoroughbred and standardbred racing, the males don't race against the females.

There are exceptions, and now and then you'll get a top female, a top filly, that will end up in the Kentucky Derby or, in harness racing, in the Hambletonian or the Little Brown Jug, which are our equivalents to the Kentucky Derby type of races. But for the most part, the horse colts, the boys, will be a little bit more durable, a little bit faster than the fillies. But there are exceptions.

DePue: Well, again, shouldn't that mean that you pay a little bit more for them, as well?

Teefey: And you do. You do.

DePue: How much does this equation, when you're factoring in how much you're willing to pay for a horse, is tied to their production after their racing days are done?

Teefey: With the fillies, there's probably more of that than there actually is with the colts, because the fillies, after they retire from racing, can be kept around as brood mares. Only the real champion stallions really have much commercial value as a stallion. Of course, the champion stallions have a lot of commercial value. I mean, millions of dollars in commercial value, where the top mares might not have that same topside value. But more of the mares are actually kept by and bred to produce foals.

When you look at a horse, you look at—and you're alluding to this... When you try to decide what a horse is going to bring or you anticipate what a horse is going to bring, probably you're looking first at pedigree. You're looking at the brothers, the sisters, the mom, the dad, the sire of the dame, and you're looking at what the relatives did, how successful the relatives did. That's probably the first thing you would look at.

Right along with that, you look at the conformation. You look to make sure that the horse doesn't have some kind of a crooked leg or a conformation fault that might keep it from being a top athlete. And then, probably, some trainers would be interested in temperament. You can't tell a whole lot about temperament before you've actually trained a horse, but you can get a little sense of that, just how alert the horse is.

DePue: What kind of temperament are you looking for?

Teefey: I think most trainers would be looking for a horse that acted willing on the lead or working out in the paddock, that the ears were up, that it was alert, that it didn't appear to have any vices that might cause you difficulty, biting, kicking, that type of thing. Sometimes you work through that, but you try to avoid it if you can.

DePue: Can you tell by looking at the horse or judging the horse's temperament whether or not it's got that competitive spirit?

Teefey: I think a lot of top trainers and people that have been in the business would like to think they can. Again, you look at all these factors, conformation, breeding and temperament. Sometimes you think you got it all right, and the horse will bring a lot of money at a public auction, and you don't get the champion you looked for. But you increase the odds if all those factors kind of line up, Mark.

DePue: How many horses do you own currently?

Teefey: I have around twenty, probably.

DePue: Twenty?

Teefey: Twenty.

DePue: How many of those are in racing shape right now?

Teefey: Well, in my particular operation, I have four or five that are actually racing right now. And I have two or three that are training, hopefully are going to race. Then I have a half a dozen brood mares, which are just retired race horses for the most part that you raise babies out of. You get one a year. There's eleven-month gestation. So I've got a half a dozen of those. And then I've got six yearlings, last year's babies that will either go to the sale or be trained this fall. Then I've got five or six foals from this year. I've got them in all different phases.

DePue: Well, this sounds like enough to keep anybody busy.

Teefey: Well, it can keep you pretty busy.

DePue: How have Ed Teefey's horses done here the last few years?

Teefey: Oh, I'm still looking for that champion. (DePue chuckles.) I've had some profitable ones, and I've had a lot of unprofitable ones. But I continue to enjoy it.

DePue: When you have a horse that you see some promise in, what's the sport's year look like for that horse?

Teefey: Well, in Illinois there's thirty-five county fairs that still race horses, and they have special races for two and three year-olds. Either thoroughbreds or standardbreds don't start racing until they're two. Right now [June] is the time of year that the two-year-olds start racing in the standardbred side. We raced last night in Carrollton, Illinois, down in Greene County, and they race there again tonight. A lot of the two-year-olds that raced last night are just now starting to race and the same in Chicago.

You have the options of racing at the county fairs and picking up some experience. You're not going to race for a lot of money, but there's a few thousand dollars at stake in the races at the county fairs, or you can race your horses at the pari-mutuel tracks on the standardbred side at Balmoral Park right now. They're starting to offer two-year-old races, and they have for the last week or two.

Later on, many of the big purses are in Chicago at the pari-mutuel racetracks and then, of course, at the two Illinois State Fairs, the State Fair here in Springfield and the DuQuoin State Fair. They have races, championship quality races, for Illinois-bred two- and three-year-olds. The finals here at Springfield at the Illinois State Fair go for \$50,000. The top

racers for standardbreds in Chicago...At the end of the season at Balmoral Park, we have kind of a championship night, they call it Super Night, and the two-year-olds will go for a quarter of a million dollars, one dash.

Harness racing purses are split up. The first five horses in a race receive a part of the purse, 50 percent of the purse to the winner, 25 percent for the horse that finishes second, 12 percent for third, 8 percent for fourth and 5 percent for fifth. That's pretty much universal in the standardbred sport.

DePue: Well, I think most people are familiar with win, place and show. Win being first, place is second, show is third. What do you call that horse that came in fourth and fifth?

Teefey: Well, as a gambler, you're only interested in first, second or third, (DePue laughs) win, place or show. As an owner, you're interested in first through five, because you're going to get fifty, twenty-five, twelve, eight and five. So, even the horse that finishes fifth, you get 5 percent of the purse. So, if you're racing for a \$5,000 purse, the horse that finishes fifth is going to get \$250. It kind of gets you to the next week. It's a little bit of money. So, the owners are looking past that win, place and show.

DePue: When you go to the county fairs, you didn't use the word pari-mutuel for the county fairs.

Teefey: Uh huh. Actually, my home fair, Mt. Sterling, we do have pari-mutuel wagering there. It's the only Illinois county fair that does have pari-mutuel wagering. The rest of them don't. It's a training ground for the young horses that will eventually go to Chicago and race. It's a tradition of many of these county fairs to have harness racing, but there's not legalized gambling.

DePue: There's no gambling at all?

Teefey: There's no legalized gambling. You know there's—

DePue: (laughs) You're being careful here.

Teefey: Well, at Carrollton last night, you know, there's always somebody that's setting the round. They're pooling the numbers. They might have...sitting in a box seat and people with a deck of cards saying, "You've got one; you've got two." They put \$1 in the hat, and they do that. There's always a little gambling going on, but not a lot. Most people, I think, are there just to enjoy the sport.

DePue: I just realized I had the racing form from last year's Illinois State Fair. You open it up, and you start reading on the horse and, oh my god, they pay attention to statistics just as much as baseball, don't they?

Teefey: Exactly. It looks like Greek, but after a time or two that you've actually taken a look at it, it's past performance information. You can easily look in the race program and see how the horse has performed in the last six or eight races, what post position he started from, where he was at the quarter pole, where he was at the half, three-quarter pole, at the head of the stretch, where he finished, how much he was beaten by, how fast he was individually timed, who drove him, who trained him, and all kinds of statistics.

DePue: For any race that he or she was in?

Teefey: For any race. In a particular race program like you have there, it probably goes back six or eight races. So, the gambler can take a look at that and see, well, is this horse getting better? Is this horse getting worse? Is this horse going up in class? Is this a tougher race than he's been in? How fast has he been finishing? Does he get tired? Does he have a big spurt at the end? All of those type of factors go into it.

DePue: That's part of the fun of going to the racetrack and studying the racing form and trying to speculate. The amateurs and the professionals are both sitting there doing the same thing together, I would guess. If you've got a promising horse, how many times a year would you expect that horse to be running?

Teefey: Well, that's another nice thing about the standardbreds, the trotters and the pacers, is they normally race a lot more than the thoroughbreds. A top thoroughbred would race maybe ten, twelve times a year; fifteen would be a lot. Whereas a standardbred, an aged standardbred, a developed standardbred, a three-, four-, five-year-old or older standardbred, it's not unusual to see them race thirty or thirty-five times a year, Mark. So they race a lot more. They're more durable than the thoroughbreds and race a lot more.

DePue: That means, as an owner, you get to travel all over the state.

Teefey: Yeah, well, as an owner, you get to see your horse race a lot more, if you have a Standardbred, than you would as a thoroughbred, normally.

DePue: Are there oftentimes cases where, especially for some of the more expensive horses, there are several owners, there are several investors behind that?

Teefey: Oh, absolutely. In my case, in my little town of Mt. Sterling, the local truckers have got... We've got a horse together, along with the funeral home director and the IGA grocery store guy and the insurance guy. We've syndicated horses amongst seven or eight of us many, many times. At the local coffee shop, about every day we're talking about how our horse is doing. (laughs) That's a great way to do it. I mean, that's a great way to get in, is to get a few people to put a few hundred bucks in. We're not talking about a lot of money.

We've put horses together... The first horse, one of the little groups I put together, the first horse we bought, eight of us gave \$2,000, collectively,

for it. So we all put about \$250 apiece on it. Some of the guys who got into that horse enjoyed it enough that they've bought others, and they're very active. Others lose interest and fall out.

One of the guys, a good friend of mine, that got in on that first \$2,000 horse, has now got, probably, well over a half a million dollars in horses, many, many horses. He's gave \$75-\$80,000 for horses since. He enjoyed it, wanted to stay in, could afford it, liked it. Some do and some just lose interest.

DePue: People like him and people like yourself, can you make a profit in the sport?

Teefey: Oh, sure. No doubt about it. There's a lot of success stories. There's a lot of elements that go into finding a good trainer and finding a good driver to race the horse and, hopefully, there's a lot of... The stars kind of have to line up, but it can be profitable. On the standardbred side, if you manage it and you watch your expenses, you don't have to be a wealthy person, because I'm sure not... You don't have to be wealthy person to be involved in the business.

DePue: You've already said you've got quite a few horses in all stages of their lives right now. Do you have your own trainer who works with your horses and your own driver who works with the horses exclusively?

Teefey: Not necessarily exclusively, but I have, yeah, I have different trainers. I have a trainer that takes care of my horses in Chicago. I've got a trainer that works with them at the local fairgrounds in Mt. Sterling, and then I use high school kids to help me with taking care of them, mucking out stalls and that type of stuff. I still try to do some of it myself.

DePue: When you were describing this before, I had this image that all of these horses that you own are on a piece of property that you own there in Mt. Sterling.

Teefey: Yeah. Not the case. I've got some pasture ground there, so I've got my brood mares and my mares there. This year's babies are with them. Then I have the yearlings in another place. But then I have horses in different stages of training that are kind of scattered around.

DePue: So you're doing that on a contractual basis with somebody else who's training the horse?

Teefey: Well, in Chicago, at the pari-mutuel tracks like Maywood or Balmoral, a trainer usually has a standard per day rate. That rate on the standardbred side probably would be from \$30 to \$55 dollars a day, in that range, depending upon the trainer. What that would cover would be the feed, the daily exercise, and just the overseeing of that horse.

Let's say, the average for a trainer might be between \$1,000 and \$1,200 in Chicago, per month. So you're going to spend \$1,000 to \$1,200 per month just for the trainer. Then, on top of that, you're going to spend #100 or

\$110 a month to have the horse shod. A horse is shod about once a month, a race horse is, to keep their feet in good shape, to keep their shoes sharp and in good shape, so that's going to be an additional cost of \$100, maybe \$120 a month. Veterinarian costs will be over top that training bill. And then, on top of the training bill, the trainer normally gets 5 percent of the horse's earnings. The driver, that actually races the horse in the race, they get 5 percent of the horse's earnings.

So, you can see that, in Illinois, you can probably figure that it will cost you about \$2,000 a month. Out East, where the purses are now bigger and there's subsidies and slot machines and stuff that we'll about later, I think, the costs are significantly higher than that, but the purses are significantly higher than that, than we have here in Illinois.

DePue: Well, this is getting more complicated with each minute we discuss it. Do you have, currently, horses that are stabled at Balmoral?

Teefey: Yes. Yes, uh huh.

DePue: How many?

Teefey: Four right now.

DePue: Which ones should we be watching most closely?

Teefey: Well, from day-to-day you don't really know. I've got a horse that we're just starting to race now, a horse called King Tat that I've got relatively high hopes for. But when you've been in it like I have for so long, you still get up, and you still get down, (DePue chuckles) but you learn to stay pretty copasetic about it all and not get too high or low, because it can break your heart.

Horses are relatively fragile. You can have a champion one week, and the trainer will call you up and say, "Are you sitting down?" I've had this happen many times with my trainer, where she would call me up and say, "I've got good news." But when my trainer calls me up and says, "Are you sitting down?" I know I've got bad news coming.

I had a horse last fall that won a race by open links and just looked like a champion. I get a call a couple of days later that he chipped a little bone in that race and was going to have to be rested in the stall for the next three or four months. So, about the time you think you're going to cash in, sometimes (DePue chuckles) you get some real bad news.

DePue: As far as this being an investment, going back to investment, are there more stories of people losing their shirt in this business than those who make a lot of money?



Teefey: Well, like with any business, any speculative business especially, and that would include farming, I suppose, Mark, there's people that lose. There's people that lose money and get out. There's people that stay in too long and lose everything, like there is in a lot of other businesses. But there's a lot of people that make their livings at it. There's a lot of people that make the right investment decisions. Probably, they would say, as an investment. Part of that perspective would be, you've got to be careful not getting overly attached with a specific horse and hanging on too long. That's like a stock or a lot of other investments. Sometimes it's just better to cut your losses and get out or get rid of a specific horse.

DePue: This next question's a rather peculiar one, perhaps. But you look at the racing forms and you wonder, how did they come up with that name?

Teefey: Yeah, yeah.

DePue: How do you come up with these names?

Teefey: Naming is sometimes a challenge, because, frankly, the United States Trotting Association, which registers the standardbred horses and does a great job of it, by the way, but you can't use the same name twice, normally. If there's a horse that wasn't particularly a champion horse, a more obscure horse, and that name hasn't been used for forty years, they'll let you, sometimes, use that name again.

But if the horse was a champion, if the horse was a stallion, then you can't use that name again. So, it's a little bit of a challenge to come up with names that haven't been used in forty years. A lot of times you'll see horses named that they try to get part of the stallion's name into the name, maybe both the stallion and the dame's name.

Myself, I sometimes name them after friends, name them after sports mascots, name them after my grandchildren (both laugh) and try to come up with some kind of cute, name them after politicians, something kind of catchy. I've got a filly right now called Hillary that I race every week.

DePue: Just Hillary?

Teefey: Her name is Hillary.

DePue: That's a pretty short name for a horse, isn't it?

Teefey: Yeah. In Standardbreds, you can't have more than eighteen characters, as far as the length of the name, actually eighteen spaces. Sometimes they'll run a lot of words together to kind of come up with a catchy name.

DePue: Does Hillary [Clinton] know about the horse named Hillary?

Teefey: I doubt it. I doubt if she does.

DePue: How's Hillary going to do?

Teefey: Well, Hillary's been kind of a nice horse. She's not a super star, but she's a horse that pays her way, makes a little money. Sometimes what happens, you get a horse that makes a little money, you've got to be careful that you don't have two or three that aren't, that eat up all the profits. That can be the case, many times.

DePue: Let's shift gears a little bit and talk about racetrack owners. That's a much smaller group of people, obviously. When we say that, we're really not talking about county fairs or state fairs, are we? Or maybe we are.

Teefey: No, we're not. When we talk about the county fairs and the state fairs, obviously, the Illinois State Fairgrounds and the DuQuoin State Fairgrounds, those meets are owned by the State of Illinois. The county fairgrounds in most counties, are owned usually not by the county, but by a not-for-profit corporation that operates those county fairgrounds.

The pari-mutuel tracks that we have left in Illinois... We have Arlington Park, which is the top thoroughbred track in Chicago. I think the majority of the stock in Arlington Park, historically, has been owned by a gentleman by the name Dick Duchossois. But a few years ago, he sold a significant portion of his stock, controlling stock, to Churchill Downs, which, obviously, Churchill Downs is the corporation that owns Churchill Downs. So it's owned and publicly traded, Churchill Downs is.

The harness tracks in Chicago, Balmoral Park and Maywood Park, are owned by the Johnson family, Balmoral Park, in part, by some of the George Steinbrenner family of New York Yankee fame. Hawthorne Park, which is in Cicero there, is owned by the Carey family. And then the Fairmount Park, down in Collinsville, is also owned by a publicly traded corporation. So, there's just a handful of a couple corporations and then a couple of families that own the racetracks here in Illinois.

DePue: Well, I want to pick this up again when we talk about legislation and who seems to dominate that discussion in legislation, whether it's the racetrack owners, or it's the horse owners. But let's pick that up a little bit later and talk about the evolution of gambling on horses in Illinois, if you will. We already discussed that in the '20s and '30s, there was a tradition of thoroughbreds.

Teefey: Uh huh.

DePue: And 1945 began the tradition of pari-mutuel betting on harness racing. But I want you to discuss other competitors in gambling and how that has affected horse racing in Illinois.

Teefey: Well, to digress a little bit back to the late 1800s, the popular sports in America, at the turn of the century, were horse racing and baseball. They really gathered the attention of the public back then.

DePue: And boxing, as well.

Teefey: And boxing became very visible. That's right, Mark, boxing was popular too. We get into the post-World War II era there, starting in '45 with legalized gambling in Maywood Park. One of the things that harness racing did was they grabbed the nighttime segment. Thoroughbreds have traditionally raced in the afternoon.

Starting in the mid-'40s, harness racing, when it was legalized in Illinois, decided to give it a shot at night. So Maywood Park in Chicago, which is still in operation, had lights around the track, and they raced at night. And the sport, throughout the country, even today—not at the state fairs and county fair levels, for the most part, although some county fairs do race at night—the sport, in a lot of venues throughout the country, still raced at night, where the thoroughbreds, some race at night, but traditionally, they've stayed in the afternoon.

So, nighttime harness racing started in Illinois in Maywood Park in 1945, and it was extremely popular. Horse racing, thoroughbred and harness racing, was the only legalized gaming in Illinois, until the lottery came along in approximately 1970, I believe. So, there was no competition, no legal gaming competition, to horse racing from 1945 'til the lottery in Illinois came along in about 1970.

They really had a monopoly on the legalized gaming dollar. If you wanted to gamble legally, through those four or five decades there, in Illinois, you either gambled on the horses... At that time, for most of that period, you had to go to the racetrack to gamble. Later, we'll talk about the off-track betting parlors. Even now, we've got internet wagering and all that, but from 1945, up until the mid-'80s, [if] you went to the track, you went to the track to gamble. If you wanted to gamble legally, about anywhere else, you went to Las Vegas. There wasn't any legalized gaming competition.

DePue: Did the lottery affect the sport? Did the purses start to decline?

Teefey: When you trace the revenue stream, as we talked about earlier, the gambling dollars, depending upon the jurisdiction, approximately 83 percent was redistributed to the gambler. The other 17 percent of the dollars wagered...

On a decent weekend night in Chicago, on a harness track, they might bet \$1million, to give you some perspective. That was on a decent night. So, of that \$1 million bet on a particular night, 83 percent of that would go back to the gamblers. The other 17 percent would be split up between the state and the

track owners and the horse men, by way of the purses, of the money that's distributed to the horse owners.

When the lottery came along, then people who liked to gamble now had an alternative, a legal alternative. People that historically went to the race track with their paycheck, now might stop off at the local convenience store, gas station, grocery store and buy lottery tickets. We could see quickly that it did have an impact, that the lottery did have an impact on the number of dollars wagered on the horses.

DePue: Was that before they allowed off-track betting?

Teefey: That was before off-track betting. Off-track betting came along in the mid-'80s. Off-track betting made it more convenient for the gambler. They didn't have to go then to the racetrack to wager. They could go to the off-track betting parlors that were scattered throughout the mostly metropolitan areas, but also... There was one opened up in Springfield, shortly after it was legalized, one in Peoria. So you didn't have to go to the track anymore. You could go to those parlors.

DePue: What was the rationale for opening up the off-track betting?

Teefey: To attract gamblers to more convenient areas, where they didn't have to drive to Chicago or St. Louis to have access to be able to bet on the horses.

DePue: Was part of the argument that you wanted to restore some of that purse that you'd lost because of the lottery?

Teefey: Yeah, that was part of the argument, obviously.

DePue: Part of the argument is that we can get more tax dollars?

Teefey: Sure, because the whole industry is legislated, here in Springfield, of course. You've got to pass legislation that legalizes these off-track betting parlors, so you had to build your case that you were going to generate more revenue for the State of Illinois and allow the sport to survive.

The percentages that were distributed between the state and the horse men and the racetrack owners are different at the off-track betting parlors than they were at the actual racing track. So, it's kind of been a bit of a bittersweet experience for the horse men, because their share of the profits from the off-track betting parlor is less than their share from the live racing.

The other thing it did, it took people away from the live racing. People didn't have to go to the racetrack. So the on-track attendance started to decline, with the advent of the off-track betting parlors.

DePue: That's got to be a complicated process. The off-track betting is part of the pari-mutuel system, correct?

Teefey: Yes.

DePue: Just the communications requirements that that would necessitate is kind of an amazing thing.

Teefey: Yeah. The off-track betting parlors have large satellite dishes, and the mutuel information is shot back and forth amongst the tracks. Originally, the races were just simulcasts.

With Illinois races, now, of course, if you go to an off-track betting parlor, you can wager on tracks from coast-to-coast and in Japan and Australia and in different countries. So, that has watered down the Illinois product a bit, the live Illinois product, where that used to be the only game in town, so to speak. Now, if you go to an off-track betting parlor, or if you go to one of the racetracks, not only can you watch the live races there at the track, you can also bet on tracks from all over the world.

DePue: I would guess, from the perspective of the racetrack owners and of horse owners, that seeing something like the lottery be developed was not a good thing.

Teefey: It was not a good thing. It wasn't as bad as what happened a few years later, when the riverboats came along.

DePue: Well, let's go to that. I knew that caused you more anxiety.

Teefey: Yes. That caused more problems. Again, the lottery started the decline a bit, but a few years after the lottery, there was some legislative relief in the Horse Racing Act of '75. But then, in the '80s, the riverboats started coming on line. They actually became a factor in the '90s. That further diluted the dollars that were available to wager on the horses. The gambling dollars started being spent at the boats.

DePue: Which gets us to the place we're at today. Before we get into legislation (Teefey clears throat) that's currently being discussed on the future of harness racing, I want to again ask you a few more terms, for those of us, like myself, who are very ignorant on it, to ask the expert what terms like stakes race mean.

Teefey: Sure. At a racetrack, whether it be a standardbred track or whether it be a thoroughbred track, the horses are normally entered like three or four days before the actual race. So, if you're going to have a race this Saturday night, for example, the horses would be entered and the post positions would be drawn like today, being Wednesday. The tracks put out what they call a "condition sheet" that the trainers look at, that would have maybe four or five

days' racing on that condition sheet that would tell the trainer what races were coming up. Now, those races are divided into three primary classes, what we call a condition race, what we call a stakes race, which you alluded to, or what we call a claiming race.

A condition race would be for a horse, let's say it was non-winners of a race lifetime, non-winners of one, meaning that horse had never won a race. So, if you had a horse, anybody had a horse that had never won a race, they can put it into that race, which is for non-winners of one. Another condition might be non-winners of two races. A condition might be non-winners of \$10,000 in their last five races. So, you can see, that's a condition race, and the horse that you enter in that race has to fit those conditions, whether it be non-winners of so much money in the last few starts, whether it be non-winners of a race, whether it be non-winners of two races or three races or four races.

A stakes race many times is for an age division, for like two year-olds or three year-olds or even older horses. What makes it a stakes race is that you pay a fee, maybe three months before the race. In the condition races we're talking about, there's usually no entry fee at a pari-mutuel track. They have to have your horses to put on the card to make it work. So, there's normally not an entry fee on a condition race. A stakes race, the purse is normally much, much higher than it is for a condition race. But you might have to pay in March for a race that doesn't happen 'til June or July. A lot can happen in that intervening time, so maybe fifty horses will make that March 15 payment. When it comes time for the race in July, maybe only ten of the fifty will actually pay the entry fee and enter that stake race. So a stake race, you stake your claim three or four months before the race, which those payments, those stake payments that are made, maybe in March or April or three or four or five months before the race, those go in to build the purse up. We talked about condition; we've talked about stakes.

The third type of race is a claiming race. A claiming race, you actually put the horse and claimers across the country, at some small tracks that claimers might be as low as \$4,000 or \$5,000, [while] at some of the bigger tracks, the claimers might be as high as \$200,000. When you put your horse in a claiming race, you are agreeing to take the claiming price, if somebody else wants to buy your horse.

So, if you enter your horse in a \$10,000 claimer, anybody that wants to buy that horse can put in—usually it's a certified check that they have to give to the racing officials—about twenty minutes before they say, "Go" of that race. If they do that, your horse has been claimed. It's a very popular way for racetracks, because, theoretically, if you put your horse in it, if everybody puts their horse in a \$10,000 claimer, all those horses should be very similar in ability, which the race secretary that puts these races together, as a respective track, is looking for close competition.

It's exciting if you can keep all the horses of about the same ability. Theoretically, if a trainer says, "I think this horse fits in a \$10,000 claimer," then all the horses that enter that race should be worth around 10,000. If a horse wins that race very easily or the horse looks to improve, then the next week the trainer might say, "I don't think I want to lose this horse for \$10,000. I'm afraid somebody's going to claim my horse, so the next week, I'm going to put him in for a \$15,000 claimer." The competition, theoretically, is going to be tougher, but that horse, then would have less likelihood of somebody coming in there and buying him. If you put him in for ten, and he's not competitive, the next week you think, I didn't get any money in for a 10,000 claimer, I think maybe I better try an \$8,000 claimer, where the competition isn't quite so tough.

DePue: I guess I'm not thinking like a horse owner, because I am intrigued by this whole concept of the claiming. Why put your horse up in a claimer, if you're not ready to sell the horse? Why not just sell the horse?

Teefey: Yeah. Well, you could. That's an option. But not every horse, obviously, is claimed. On a given night, only one or two horses could be claimed out of five or six claiming races, one or two horses altogether out of five or six claiming races. A lot of times, the people aren't necessarily wanting to have their horse claimed. It's just a popular way, throughout the country, with the standardbreds and the thoroughbreds, it's just a popular way to categorize and for horses to be entered.

It's especially for the older horses. For the two year-olds and the three-year-old horses and the younger horses, there's more races that fit those horses. But as the horses get older, the claiming races are very, very popular throughout the country.

DePue: There's got to be all kinds of anecdotes, where somebody puts their horse into a claiming race, with no expectations that this horse is going to be purchased. Then they find out at the end of the race, and only after the end of the race, when the horse has done well and they've got all this emotion involved with this horse and, oh, now they have to sell the horse.

Teefey: The horse is not theirs. Actually, if you claim a horse, you have to have your trainer there, ready to pick the horse up, right after the race. There is some heartbreak. I've had it happen. I've had horses that I've put in claimers, thinking, "I think I can sneak this horse through this claimer a time or two." And, sure enough, they announce that the horse has been claimed.

But that's just a part of the game. Sometimes horses are claimed for \$4,000 or \$5,000 or \$10,000. They go to a different trainer, and they take them outside the claimers, and the horse goes on to be a very good horse. Other times, the horse is claimed and maybe never race again.

DePue: Well, some of the other terminology is obviously connected with the betting side of the business. There's only two that I can think of. I'm sure you can come up with some more. We've talked about win, place and show, but then you've got the exacta and the trifecta and variations of those, as well.

Teefey: That's right. That's right. So, to touch on those briefly. Exacta... With win, you're just betting the horse to win. Of course, place is to be second. Show is to be third. Now, if you bet a horse to show, for example, if he finishes first or second, you still collect. If you bet a horse to place, then he has to finish first or second to collect. And, of course, if you bet a horse to win, he has to win. But the win payoff would be more rewarding to you than a place payoff, and a place would be more rewarding than a show payoff.

In an exacta wager, you're picking a horse that you think will be first and the horse that you think will be second. They have to be that way, in order. So, you're saying such a horse is going to win and such a horse is going to place. If you happen to be correct, then that payoff is substantially more than just the normal win, place and show bet.

A trifecta is to pick the horses that you think will be first, second and third. So, exacta is the horse that's going to be first and second. The trifecta is picking the horse that's going to be first, the horse that's going to be second, and the horse that's going to be third. If you do that, you can do real good. Now tracks have come up with the pick four or in other races, the super trifectas and other type of gimmicks. But that's basically what an exacta and trifecta is.

DePue: We're going to get into the transition then of legislation that deals with the future of harness racing. But before that, this is probably a good way of setting this up. You've been in this for many years. You've had a passion for harness racing for your whole life. What do you think is the advantage of gambling on harness and thoroughbred racing versus gambling in the casinos and lottery or other forums?

Teefey: Well, I think that you've got a better chance at a return. I'm not a gambler, myself; I'm not very much of a gambler. I always tell people it's enough of a gamble to own them. So, I'm not an expert when it comes to wagering, but there's no doubt that there is some skill.

There are skilled handicappers that study the program that you showed us here earlier today and that understand the breeding and realize that this driver or this jockey might be better than the others and that the trainer's on a hot streak. They can read that past performance program and see these horses that are improving and these trends. There's no doubt that there's people that really can develop a knack for it.



The chance of winning, betting on a horse, is substantially better than your chance of winning in a casino. Those casinos are obviously paid for by somebody's losses. So, there's no doubt that there's more skill in studying that past performance program that you had earlier and looking at the breeding and looking at the jockey and pulling all those variables together. There's a lot more skill in that. There's a lot more thinking that goes into that than pulling a crank or pushing a button on a slot machine.

Now, from my perspective, as being an agricultural banker and somebody that's been involved in this business for a long time, the other element that always comes up, in front of the Illinois Legislature, Mark, is the use of those Illinois products, Illinois agricultural products that we talked about earlier. Not that the casino... The casinos obviously produce a lot of jobs; there's a lot of people that work in the casinos. But the horse racing really does have a significant impact on Illinois agriculture.

In my town of Mt. Sterling, there's thirty to sixty horses trained there year around, buying oats and buying hay and using farriers and using the local veterinarians and employing the local high school kids to muck out the stalls or do whatever they can. So there's a real connection between horse racing and Illinois agriculture that we don't see, of course, with the casinos.

DePue: One of the things I was expecting to hear was some reference to the romance or the tradition of horse racing, versus casinos or the lottery.

Teefey: Well, no doubt about it. I think that's definitely a part of it, and that's definitely a part of the package that we use when we lobby the legislators, the fact that the tradition of horse racing in Illinois that goes back into the 1800s. We've talked about it. It's been a centerpiece of the state fairs. It's been a top attraction for the county fairs for decades, and it would be a tragedy if it was to die out.

DePue: But, it's at risk right now of slowly dying out, because of these other competitors. So that gets us to the point of the legislation. Talk about what the legislation is attempting to do right now. Maybe we should start with... I know another term here that I have to put my finger on. Well, maybe I'll just turn it over to you, and I'll figure this out in a couple minutes.

Teefey: In the jurisdictions that are prospering now, which would be New York and Pennsylvania and our neighboring state of Indiana, several provinces of Canada, especially Ontario, they have to try to save the sport that does contribute to the agricultural economy of these various provinces. They have allowed the racetracks to put slot machines, actually, in the racetracks. In Illinois, we don't have that. In New York they do. In Pennsylvania they do. In the last couple of years, they have in Indiana.

So, the tracks then become not only a place where you can gamble on horses...It's not really an expansion of gambling, because you're already gambling on horses at these racetracks, if you can add slot machines. Then the slot machine revenue is again split up between the track owners, the state and the purses, the horsemen. There's pending legislation—there has been during about every legislative session for the last decade—to allow the racetracks to install slot machines, which would be regulated, of course, by the Illinois Gaming Board.

We're hopeful that something can happen this fall, again, but thus far that hasn't happened in Illinois. A lot of our top drivers, a lot of our top jockeys, a lot of our top stables, a lot of our equine stars have all moved out. They've gone to Pennsylvania; they've gone to New York; they've gone to Canada, and they've gone to Indiana, states that have allowed this to happen.

You say, how would that benefit us, if that would happen? Well, the number on the standardbred side, on the trotting/pacing side, the number of standardbred foals has declined from 2,500 in 1985 to 765 in 2009, okay? So just the horses, alone, aren't being raised here. And the purses in Indiana, the purses in New York, the purses in Pennsylvania, the purses in Canada are so much higher that our drivers that our top driving stars have moved out. And we've generated many of them at the Illinois county fair level.

One of the nation's top drivers right now is a young man from down in southern Illinois by the name of Tim Tetrick. Tim grew up at the Illinois county fairs, raced as a eighteen or nineteen year-old at the Illinois State Fair, went on to star in Chicago and is extremely talented. But he saw the brighter lights of New York and Pennsylvania and those larger purses and went out there and has become one of the real stars of the sport.

I could go on to Tony Morgan and Brandon Simpson and Brent Holland, Andy Miller. I could go on and on with the stars that we've produced in the sport in Illinois that aren't staying here. Then you can see those numbers of foals and the number of horses that are being bred, the number of stallions that stand here, because we haven't been able to keep up with the competition. There's just fewer and fewer horses being bred and raised and thus less and less of the agricultural products being used that has to maintain those.

So, we argue that if we could have those slot machines then we could raise the purses, and more people would buy mares, and we'd raise more foals.

DePue: You're definitely in favor of this legislation then?

Teefey: At this stage of the game, yeah. I think that the sport has to have it to survive.

DePue: Does that mean that there's a part of you that regrets seeing that happen?

Teefey: Yeah, there's definitely a part...I'm a bit of a traditionalist in that I enjoy it, I enjoy to watch it. But we talked about the turn of the century, the turn of the last century, the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, where you had just boxing and baseball and horse racing. There was gambling involved on all those sports. There was gambling on baseball; there was gambling on boxing. You stand around the corner, around the racetrack and gamble with your neighbor and gamble with the guy that's standing there and gambling with the bookies or whatever.

But, obviously, with all the television and all the different type of competition, NASCAR (National Association of Stock Car Racing) and everything that we've got out there, the people today haven't grown up with the horses, like our grandfathers did. So there's a distance. There's a distance from horse racing, and, to some extent, that will never return.

But I've seen in New York and Pennsylvania and in Canada, where the purses are bigger, that more people get involved. More people still get interested in it. More people learn to enjoy the sport. Will it ever be like it used to be, with large crowds, just for the love of the sport? No, probably not. But we have seen, there has been templates in these other states, where bringing people to the track, bringing people back to the track and being able to subsidize the horse industry with the income from the slot machines has revitalized the sport. Whether eventually there will be an over-saturation of gambling, only time will tell. I don't know.

DePue: One of the things I've read is that, for those races that occur at places like the state fairgrounds and DuQuoin, the payouts aren't exactly prompt. We're talking about the State of Illinois, how long does it take the State of Illinois to pay its bills? Has the harness racing industry gotten caught up in that problem, as well?

Teefey: Well, you have been doing your homework, Mark (both chuckle). Very timely issue, and I'm just fighting as we talk. For the last twenty years there's been pari-mutuel wagering at the Illinois State Fair here in Springfield. This year, nobody bid on the contract to operate the pari-mutuel site at the fair. There will be horse racing at the Illinois State Fair, but as of today—we're only six weeks out—as of today, we don't have anybody that's willing to step up and manage the pari-mutuel site of that.

The Johnson family, which own Balmoral and Maywood Park, have done it for the past twenty years. Their reason for not doing it in 2010—and hopefully they'll reconsider; I'm working hard on that—is that they haven't been paid over \$200,000 by the State of Illinois, for operating the fair in 2009. Now, that's been relieved, I think, in just the last few days, but they've had to wait almost a year to get their money.

They've had to pay the mutuel clerks; they've had to pay the judges, and they've had to pay the race announcers; they've had to pay the starting gate; they've had to pay all the vendors out of their own pocket. It's taken the state almost a year to reimburse them. Frankly, at the time that the contract was let, and the deadline for the contract, the deadline for the bids, they hadn't been paid anything. So they just didn't bid on it. Now, there's been an extension to bid, and they're wrestling with whether to do it or not. Their concern is, are we going to have to put out hundreds of thousands of dollars and maybe wait up to a year to get our money back?

DePue: How about the horse owners?

Teefey: The horse owners had the same problem. The horse owners from the Illinois State Fair at Springfield and DuQuoin have just been paid in the last week.

DePue: For last year's races?

Teefey: For last year's races. Right, right. So the problems that the state has, paying their bills, has definitely been very, very troublesome. It's caused a lot of hardships in the business.

DePue: The word I was trying to find before was recapture. I think that's part of some current legislation. Can you explain that, as well?

Teefey: Well, recapture came out of a task force that Governor Edgar set up, back in the '90s, when they were looking for ways to allow race tracks to take the signal. I'm talking about the video signal from tracks outside of Illinois. It hadn't happened in Illinois, so there was some thought by this task force that the live racing, that the racing on the Illinois product, that was taking place as the Illinois race tracks, wouldn't decline; it would stay where it was.

There was also a thought that, if you start taking the video signal from tracks in California and tracks in New York and tracks from all over the country—which this hadn't happened before—what would happen, because the percentage that the race tracks were going to get from the gambling on these other tracks was going to be less than what they get on their own live product?

There was some thought by the race tracks, what if we lose the betting on the Illinois product, on our product? The result of that was there would be an opportunity for the race tracks to recapture some of those lost revenues and that the taxes and what the horsemen got and what the state got would be adjusted in favor of the race tracks. They would recapture some of the money that would be lost, if they lost the betting on their live product. That's what happened, unfortunately.

Once the airwaves and once the betting parlors and once the race tracks in Illinois, once the gambler had an opportunity to bet on this product

that was going to be other race tracks from all over the country, the betting on the Illinois product went way down, and the tracks were allowed to recapture some of the losses. As the race tracks recaptured it, the horsemen, the purse account, got hurt by that, substantially. That's been a real battle for the last ten years.

DePue: Well, I can imagine why. I set up a question long ago, but to bring it up again, which group seems to have a better lobby and more success in working with the legislature in the State of Illinois? Is it the horse owners, or is it the race track owners?

Teefey: Well, there's always been a battle, because everybody wants a bigger piece of the pie, the race track owners and the horsemen. Most recently, during the spring session of this legislative year, the race track owners in both breeds... There's always been problems getting the race track owners and the horsemen on the same page, but there's also sometimes been trouble to get the standardbred people on the same page as the thoroughbred people. This spring, everybody got on the same page. They were able to work out an agreement between the race track owners and the horsemen in the thoroughbred and standardbred people that they had an agreed-upon bill.

The challenge now is that the riverboat lobby is so strong. The riverboats are successful. There's a lot of money behind the riverboats. They've got a lot of good lobbyists. They're generating a lot of money for the State of Illinois, and they don't want the competition. So the argument is, is this agricultural interest?

If it's just strictly the gambling dollar, I suppose from strictly a bottom line sense, you could say, we don't need horse racing. If you just look into the dollars that it generates as opposed to the dollars that the riverboats generate, you could just say, hey, it's survival of the fittest. It's a tough old capitalistic world out there. But, as I think we've talked about today, Mark, there's just a lot of benefits, a lot of jobs, a lot of agricultural benefits that are derived from the success and the revitalization of horse racing in Illinois.

Many of our agricultural legislators, many of the downstate legislators, relate to that. Most of them, as you well know, are the more conservative nature, whether they be Democrats or Republicans. There's not a whole lot of downstate legislators that are real pro-gambling, but a lot of them are pro-agriculture. So, I would say the bigger argument is the owners. The bigger lobby or the bigger influence on the legislature, I would say, for the most part, at least in the downstate legislators, is this connection between horse racing and Illinois agriculture.

DePue: One of the most prominent figures in Illinois politics for the last two or three decades has been Jim Edgar. Generally, he's no big fan of gambling, but he

has a passion for harness racing and horse racing. Is he an example of what you were just talking about then, do you think?

Teefey: Oh, absolutely. Governor Edgar has been a big proponent for many years, had a few horses during his tenure as governor and has been more active since. I know him not to be a gambler at all and to be a very conservative fellow. But he loves the... You go back and talk about that element that you were talking about, the tradition and the color and the beauty and the excitement of the sport, as a sport. As for Governor Edgar, I think that's his passion. He just loves the pomp and circumstance of it all and the fact that it can be a hands-on business. I know that he's, you know, very hands-on, as far as going to the races and being around his horses.

That's part of the lore and part of the tradition that we have to be able to impress upon the legislature, and Governor Edgar is well-aware of the agricultural benefits that are derived from making sure that the breeding farms that I think we're going to visit here, sometime in the future... You [will] see all the people that work there and all the horses and all they eat and all the care they have and the people that takes care of them. That's something that we, people like myself and Governor Edgar, we strive to see that doesn't die out here in Illinois.

DePue: You just mentioned that this is not the last of our conversation. We're going to go out and actually physically visit several places to get a picture, to get some of the actual excitement of the harness racing. I'm really looking forward to that. But we've had a great conversation today. It's obvious that harness racing has seen better days, that it's got some struggles ahead. My last question for you today, as we close up, is what do you think is the future for harness racing?

Teefey: Well, I'm optimistic, and I continue... Even though we talk about the number of mares and the number of foals in Illinois going down, I think there's an opportunity. I've picked up a few mares. I've actually bought a few mares this year, with the idea, I think, that we do have a pretty good chance of being successful this fall with the legislature.

We've had meetings with leadership, with the leaders of the House and the Senate and have had some encouragement that they see the need to pass a bill that will help this industry survive. So I'm very cautiously optimistic that we could have some favorable legislation in the near future.

DePue: Thanks very much, Ed, for giving us a lot of insight and a much better understanding of harness racing today.

Teefey: Thank you, Mark.

DePue: That concludes our interview. Thank you for being with us.

(end of transcript #2)

## Interview with Ed Teefey

# AI-V-L-2010-023

Interview # 3: July 21, 2010

Interviewer: Mark DePue

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DePue: Today is Wednesday, July 21, 2010. My name is Mark DePue, the director of oral history at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. Today is a day I've been looking forward to for a long time. We're out here with Ed Teefey. Good afternoon, Ed.

Teefey: Hi, Mark.

DePue: Ed, tell us where we're at.

Teefey: We're at Walker Standardbreds, which is the largest standardbred nursery in Illinois. They raise trotters and pacers here. We're looking at Incredible Finale, who is the first Illinois-bred standardbred ever to make over \$1 million. It made almost \$1.2 million. He was owned during his racing career, in large part, by New York Yankee owner, George Steinbrenner. He's gone on to be a super sire in Illinois. His offspring have made over 30 million.

DePue: Well, we've got a beautiful day out here at Walker Standardbreds. We're going to be spending most of the day in various locations, starting here. We'll film in a few locations here and then go to the Illinois State Fairgrounds and film out at the stalls and the stables that are there. But we wanted to start at the

beginning of it all, and you start with the stallions, at least the stallions and the mares.

Teefey: Start with the stallions and the mares. The babies are raised here and sold as yearlings at their annual sale in August. Then they are trained that fall and hopefully go on to race too and become champions.

DePue: Can you tell us a little bit more about Incredible Finale?

Teefey: Incredible Finale, now, is getting close to thirty years old. His days have slowed down (horse snorting), but he's one of the greatest pacing sires ever to stand here in Illinois, after just a brilliant racing career, where he took on the best horses in the country and raced very successfully against them, winning some of the top national races, which is unusual for an Illinois-bred, in his day, to be able to do that.

Being owned, in large part, by George Steinbrenner, this horse got a lot of fame during his racing career. Then he retired here to stallion duties at Walker Standardbred. He's been a very successful sire for now a couple of decades.

DePue: Stallion duties.

Teefey: Stallion duties.

DePue: I like the way that rolls off your tongue.

Teefey: Right. There we go.

DePue: How much would a foal that was sired by this stallion be worth?

Teefey: Well, his stud fee, in the last couple of years, for a live foal, I believe, was \$3,000 or \$3,500 possibly, so it's \$3000 to \$3,500. If you brought an outside mare in to breed it to Incredible Finale and you got a live foal, then you would owe the farm \$3,500.

DePue: Obviously, the Walker family loves what they do. Tell us about the business side. What's the end product of their business?

Teefey: Well, they've got some of the best mares in the State of Illinois. I don't know how many mares they have now, but upwards of 100, I would suppose. Those mares are bred to their stallions. They've got Incredible Finale and Sportsmaster and Yankee Skyscraper and Pizzazz, who Kelly's cleaning up there. We're going to get him out of the stall in a minute.

So, they breed their 100 mares—there are approximately 100 mares that they own—to their stallions. Then, as yearlings, every August, they sell them. That's their harvest. Like a farmer would harvest his corn and his beans,



Walkers sell their yearlings every fall at their yearling sale, which is right here at the farm. That's a big part of the business side of it for them, besides the stud fees.

DePue: I think Kelly's ready to bring out Pizzazz. Let's bring on Pizzazz!

Teefey: Pizzazz, his first year as stallion was last year, in 2009. This is his second year, so he won't have any babies to sell until 2011 (door shutting). He was a stakes winner in Canada, as a two year old, made a couple hundred thousand dollars at two, raced a little bit at three, and then went into stallion duty last year. He's by an Illinois-bred horse called Kadabra, who was a winner of \$1million.

DePue: Now, we're going to take a closer look at the sires and dames book, which you're carrying around right now. That whole side of the horse racing industry and sport fascinates me, quite frankly. (stable noises in the background)

Teefey: There's Kadabra. He's a trotting sire. He was a stakes winning trotting performer during his racing days. Incredible Finale, who we just saw, of course, was a pacing sire. You can see, he's a big, good looking, strapping young horse here.

DePue: Did you say Pizzazz was a racehorse for a while?

Teefey: He raced at two and three, was a multiple stakes winner, mainly in Canada. He raced for the Walkers. They maintain a small racing stable, and he was a champion too, a couple of years ago for them.

DePue: Well, he's a beautiful horse.

Teefey: Big, good looking, beautiful horse.

DePue: Does he know that?

Teefey: He's pretty proud. He's pretty proud, don't you think, Kelly?

Kelly: Yes.

Teefey: Yeah, he's pretty proud. He's a good looking horse.

DePue: I've been impressed by how gentle a lot of these standardbred horses are, but he seems to have a little bit more friskiness in him.

Teefey: Well, he's young. He's been in the breeding shed for a couple of years now. He's not the type of animal that you'd want a untrained person to handle.

DePue: Anything else you can tell us about Pizzazz?

Teefey: I think that's it. He's the hope of the future for the farm here.

DePue: Thank you very much, Kelly, for bringing him out for us. (sound of horse hooves). I think what we need to go to next is the collection room.

Teefey: Okay.

(pause)

DePue: Ed, we've move to the collection room. Tell us what goes on here.

Teefey: Well, it's the collection room; you're right, Mark. This is where we collect the semen, which will later be used to inseminate the mares. There's a breeding dummy here. The chute over there... They might bring a mare in here that's in heat, which would stimulate the stallion. These stallions are worth sometimes as much as \$1 million or more, so they don't use any natural breeding. It's all artificial insemination. That's a lot safer for the stallions, actually safer for the mare, avoids infection, avoids the possibility the stallion getting kicked or injured or hurt in some way, which he couldn't continue to produce and to breed.

The mares are brought in here, the stallion stimulated. Then the stallion mounts this dummy. When he's on the dummy then, we take what they call a Colorado AV, which the AV means it's an artificial vagina. This is when the stallion's aroused. This is heated to around 120 degrees. You put hot water in here, and you can raise the temperature, then, of this artificial vagina to about 120 degrees.

Put this sleeve... There's several of them in here. This sleeve here goes inside this artificial vagina. The horse then ejaculates into the sleeve. Okay, then once the horse ejaculates into the sleeve, the sleeve is taken out of the artificial vagina, and then the semen is collected in a glass container. It is cooled back down then to about 100 degrees, which is the temperature of the stallion. It's a little warmer in here to encourage the horse to ejaculate.

As soon as he ejaculates, the temperature then is reduced back down to the body [temperature] of the horse, which is about 100 degrees, to preserve the life of the semen. Once the semen is collected, then it's collected into a tube and eventually put into these little containers, like this, a little bit of that.

It's put into this machine right here, which they call a "densitometer." In this densitometer, they push a few buttons, and it will tell you how many live sperm are in that ejaculation. It will also tell you then, based upon the number of live sperm that are in that individual ejaculation, how many mares can be bred. Optimally, you want about 500 million live sperm into each mare that you inseminate. You inject each mare with about 500 million live sperm, and this machine tells you what the density of the sperm is. Then actually, they take a small amount of the sperm and put it under the microscope. Under the microscope, they can determine what the viability of that sperm is,

because a lot of that sperm is not alive, and they need to know. This tells you the density of the sperm, and this shows you the vitality of the sperm.

DePue: Does that change, as the horses get older?

Teefey: Oh, for sure. Not only as the horses get older...A lot of times, as the horses get older, their sperm count will go way down. But [there are] a lot of fertility issues with various stallions. Some stallions might be able to breed only a couple of mares from an ejaculation. Other stallions could breed maybe ten or twelve mares from an ejaculation.

Once they determine the density of the sperm and the viability of the sperm, then they mix the sperm with an extender. They take the sperm...The extender is just like it sounds; it extends the volume, so they can breed two to ten mares, depending upon the number of live sperm they have in that ejaculation. So, if a horse is real healthy, if a horse is very fertile, he's going to have a whole bunch of live sperm. That one ejaculation, once extended, might be able to breed ten to twelve mares. Whereas another horse doesn't have a lot of sperm, doesn't have a lot of live sperm, he only might be able to breed one, two or three mares.

DePue: Is the breeding actually going on in this room, as well?

Teefey: After the sperm is extended, and it's usually put in the refrigerator here and cooled down...It would be cooled down kind of gradually, even in a freezer like this or in a cooler like this. It would be put in here. I'm not sure what they have in this cooler. Let's look and see here.

Well, probably from the way he looks at it, the sperm, after it's extended, is put in these little cups. These cups have different colored lids. The lids, the different colors, relate to the different stallions. Yankee Skyscraper has one color; Sportsmaster has a color; Incredible Finale has a color. Then the individual sperm is put in the little cups, then it is put in a cooler; the cooler is put in the refrigerator, and it's cooled down, which slows down the sperm but keeps them alive.

Then, actually, there's little stanchions, like we have here, at various places on the farm, closer to the brood mares. So that sperm is actually transported around the farm, and the mares are actually inseminated on any number of locations around the farm.

DePue: Very interesting. There's always more to be known about this than you would think from the outside, and you've done an excellent job of explaining this. Anything else we need to mention in here?

Teefey: I think that pretty much covers the collection room.

DePue: I think the next step, then, when we start up the film again, is you'll be talking about sires and dames.

Teefey: Okay. That'll be fine. Great.

DePue: Thanks, Ed.

(pause)

DePue: Ed, we're outside now, just outside the stable where we were filming some of the stallions in the collection room. We obviously have some of the paddocks in the background. One of the questions that came up, right after we got done, was how frequently the collection process occurs for these stallions.

Teefey: On a healthy stallion, here at Walker Standardbreds, I imagine the average is about three times a week. Some horses might just be collected a couple times a week. Some horses could probably be collected as many as four times a week. I think here they collect on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, three times a week.

DePue: In other words, with that frequent a collection process, this semen must be sent all over the country.

Teefey: Oh, it is. It is. It can be sent all over this country and into Canada, too.

DePue: What we wanted to do now is have you show us and talk to us about the sires and dames, because I was fascinated by this part of it.

Teefey: Well, over the years... There used to be a guy that originated in Iowa by the name of Wallace that started the registry. Then, in the—

DePue: Why don't you show us the spine of that, while you're talking about it.

Teefey: In the middle part of the 20th century, or actually in the first half of the 20th century, the United States Trotting Association, which is now the registry, the only major registry, the only significant registry in the standardbred world, annually puts out a book called the *Sires and Dames*. It puts out another volume called *The Yearbook*, which shows the race results.

*The Sires and Dames* lists all the registered stallions, lists all the registered mares, and then has a list of the current offspring, actually all the offspring from the mares and all the current offspring from the stallions. In the pre-computer days, this was really the bible of the industry for the breeders and for the owners and prospective buyers to study the pedigrees.

DePue: Show us the inside, what we're looking at.

Teefey: We'll open it up here. We'll open it up to one of the better mares, bred here by Walker Standardbreds.

DePue: Flip it around so the camera can see that.

Teefey: Fox Valley Red Hot. If you look at Fox Valley Red Hot in the mare section here, you can see she had a two year-old record of one fifty-four two, over a mile track. She made \$257,000. The CH means she was a chestnut; that was her color. She was a foal of 1987. Her sire was Armbro Wolf. Her dame was Ravina Hanover, by Meadow Skipper. It goes on and lists another generation of the breeding there. She was bred by Fox Valley Standardbreds, which was the precursor of Walker Standardbreds. This farm used to be headquartered up at St. Charles on the Fox Valley. She was last owned by Jim and Donna Krebs, the late Jim and Donna Krebs of Cantrall, right north of here, actually. Then it lists all her foals. [Her] 1993 foal was Red Hot Express, made \$16,000. The '94 foal was Hot Chilli Pepper. He had a record of 151 and one. He made \$486,000.

The next foal was Our Roan Express, foaled in 1996, had a record of fifty-three and one—the F means on a five-eighths mile track, as opposed to a half or a mile track—made \$131,000. Then it's got who he was by, his sex; he was a gelding. The RO means he was roan<sup>1</sup>. He was by Broadway Express. His last owner's listed here, the address of the last owner. It's got all that mare's production, from 1993 through her last foal, which was foaled in 2003. [It] has the record, how much money they made, who they were by, and who the last registered owner was.

DePue: Is this the kind of thing that horse breeders, horse owners, those in the industry...I'm trying to wrap my brain around how interesting this would be to somebody who's in the business, versus somebody like myself, who would look at all the statistics and our brain would kind of freeze over, after a few seconds.

Teefey: Well, it would at first. Now we're in the computer age, and much of this stuff can be looked up online, through the United States Trotting Association websites. Prior to the Internet age, as I grew up...I've been interested in the business now for forty-five years. I couldn't wait to get the annual *Sires and Dames* volume, because you could look up your mare; you could look up a famous mare; you could see where they were racing, who last owned them, how much money they'd made. You'd look up the stallions to see who their top performers were. It was something that we really, really looked forward to, up until the last ten years or so, when we can look most of this stuff up now.

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<sup>1</sup> Denotes an animal, especially a horse or cow, having a coat of a main color, thickly interspersed with hairs of another color, typically bay, chestnut, or black mixed with white.

This was done through a calendar year, so this book happens to be the 2007. All this stuff is compiled through December 31 of 2007. You would get this book in maybe July, alright? By the time you got the book published and disseminated, it was about six months old. Now, with the online resources that we have at the trotting association, I look at the results from last night, every morning. It's one of those things that has a lot of tradition. I'm an attorney, as you know. My father used to say, if I'd spend more time with my law books and less time with my *Sires and Dames*, I'd been a lot better student. (DePue laughs.)

DePue: Very good. Is it the kind of thing that a professional gambler—if there is such a thing—would spend a lot of time on?

Teefey: No. Not much, not much. The professional gambler would be looking at the past performance reports and see what was happening in the last two or three or four races. This doesn't have this. This is dedicated to the bloodlines and the breeding and the offspring of the mares and the stallions.

DePue: Well, we'll get a little bit more of what the gambler's going to be looking at in a couple weeks here.

Teefey: Okay.

DePue: But I think it's time right now to take a look at one of the paddocks and one of the stallions out in the paddock.

Teefey: Alright. Great, great.

DePue: Thanks, Ed.

(pause)

DePue: Ed, whose paddock are we inside?

Teefey: Well, we're still at Fox Valley Standardbreds, Walker Standardbreds here in Sherman, and that's Richess Hanover. That's one of their top sires. He's the son of probably the greatest sire the sport's ever known, Western Hanover. He's from Rich N Elegant, who was one of the top mares ever. This, of course, is a half-brother to Rock N Roll Hanover, who is currently the top stallion in North America. He's a royally-bred horse. He's got several world champions. He's a sire of Street Dancer, who made over \$800,000, who was owned, in large part, by former Illinois Governor Jim Edgar. So Jim Edgar owned probably Richess Hanover's most famous off-spring, Street Dancer.

DePue: Of course, we've got Kelly in here helping us again, because he's [Richess Hanover] being just a little bit bashful here. But the obvious question is, what's with the donkey?

Teefey: Well, that's Nugget. Nugget's just a companion for Richess. Richess has had some temperament issues over the years, and the donkey there, Nugget, seems to calm him down and keep him company and just keep him a lot happier.

DePue: Well, that gets to the essence of what a horse is and what it means to be a horse. Are they generally a social animal?

Teefey: Yeah, these stallions are not pets. These stallions are serious animals, especially as they mature. They've serviced a lot of mares. This horse has been in service for seven or eight years. You can see Kelly there is a very competent stallion handler, and his disposition seems really pretty amicable towards her. You just wouldn't want a novice handling these stallions.

DePue: But, other than Nugget, the stallion's in here by himself.

Teefey: Right, and there's several paddocks, as you can see here. Each one of the stallions has their own paddock. They would be very aggressive with another stallion, so under no circumstances, or almost under no circumstances, would you put a couple of stallions together.

DePue: But right over your shoulder here, we've looking at another pasture and lots of mares in that pasture.

Teefey: Right. For the most part, there's no problem putting mares together. You can see there, there's a sizable herd of mares. Those mares have recently had foals weaned off of them. Those mares, by now, have all been bred back to foal in 2011.

DePue: If we were to find all of this in the wild, then, typically a herd is going to have just one stallion and a few foals that are males?

Teefey: In a typical herd in the wild, you would have a dominate stallion. You might have other stallions in and around the herd. Obviously, the male babies would grow up to be mature stallions, but there would be a dominate stallion, with a harem of mares.

DePue: I think they're cooperating a little bit more here, coming closer to us. Let's get another shot of them. Again, beautiful horses.

Teefey: Yeah, that horse made over three-quarters of a million dollars in his racing career, by Western Hanover, from one of the greatest brood mares the sport has ever known. He's a very, very popular horse and seems very content there with Nugget.

DePue: Did you mention the age?

Teefey: I don't know? Kelly, he's probably about thirteen or fourteen, isn't he? Yeah, right. His active life as a stallion can easily take him into the mid-twenties.

DePue: Well, thank you, Ed. I think we've got a little bit more to see, but this is great.

Teefey: Great. Thanks, Kelly. You've been a big help. [talking with Kelly] A long time? You get him up and leave Nugget out? Is that what you do?

Kelly: Yeah, he stays out most the time, but when I take him to brush him, Nugget doesn't have a very good brace<sup>2</sup>, or he makes a really funny noise.

Teefey: Okay.

Kelly: Until I start fly spraying Nugget, he was really friendly, but now he's like unh uh.

Teefey: He don't like the fly spray too much.

Kelly: None of these studs do. He walks up to him and he wants me to scratch his butt. (Teefey laughs) They're all pretty...I love it. Those mares are already being moved for foaling for next year.

Teefey: Right.

Kelly: They go by dates.

Teefey: You wean them at about what, four months?

Kelly: Yeah. We have to stop weaning, because of the yearlings, because we have them everywhere.

Teefey: Yeah.

Kelly: But these mares... Well, see, we just have such a high... We had eighty-six of our own mares that didn't get in foal last year, so we have a lot of mares that didn't have a foal.

Teefey: Eighty-six of your own mares? Wow.

Kelly: That's a bad year.

Teefey: Yeah.

DePue: A bad year.

Teefey: That's really unusual. Isn't it?

Kelly: They think that the company got their distilled water wrong.

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<sup>2</sup> The Lack of correct, full, voluntary and unimpeded movement in any able direction, demonstrated by a smooth, tension-free and willing response on the part of the horse.



Teefey: Really?

Kelly: Because bought the same brand. It had the same label and everything, but that's what I've heard. Rich was telling me that they think that the distilled water was wrong and it killed the sperm. So you figure eighty-six mares out of this farm. That's a lot of money.

Teefey: That's a lot of money.

Kelly: So, we have a lot of mares that didn't have babies, that have just been hanging out, and they've moved them. [speaking for a horse] It's like, what's up guys?

Teefey: He's getting pretty up close and personal there, Tony.

Tony: Yeah, perfect, perfect. He wants to come and meet Ed Teefey. That is not my horse. (laughs)

DePue: He wants to check us out.

Tony: He wants to look into the camera. (Teefey laughs)

Kelly: None of them are aggressive at all. One is a little pushy, but we've gotten over that.

DePue: Ed, we've moved over just a couple paddocks. Why don't you talk a little bit about what you've got behind you here?

Teefey: Well, here we have a bunch of Walker Standardbred mares and foals. There's eleven month gestation on a horse, and so these foals (horse noises) are foaled no earlier than the first of January, because irregardless of when a horse is foaled, they become a year older on January 1. If you're foaled on January 15, or you're foaled on April 15, you still become a one year old on the next January 1. The breeding season, with eleven month gestation, ends about the first of July, because you don't want a foal born very late in June, or its going to be too young to compete with its same class when they become two and three year-old.

These foals, some of them could be January foals. Most of the January foals, now we're in the middle of July, have been weaned off the mothers. So most of these foals are three or four months old.

DePue: In the wild, what would the normal foaling season be?

Teefey: Well, in warm climates, it would probably be year-round. In colder climates and climates where there was colder winters, in the wild, you probably wouldn't have too many foals in the dead of winter, but you might have a few.

DePue: I notice that all the mares have different colored collars on them.

- Teefey: Well, those collars tie in with the stallions they were bred back to, here in 2010. If you've got a green collar, they were bred to maybe Kadabra or to his son there, Pizzazz. [There are] different color collars for Sportsmaster, Incredible Finale and Yankee Skyscraper, Vaporize, all stallions that stand here. Those collars tie in with the stallion they were bred to this year.
- DePue: What's the difference in the price that you could get for a high quality breeding mare, versus the high quality breeding stallion?
- Teefey: Well, the mares can have one foal a year, obviously. Top mares, they can produce very valuable foals, but a top stallion can easily breed maybe 200 mares at \$3,000 a pop or \$4,000 for a live foal, so a top stallion is much more valuable than a top mare.
- DePue: Anything else to tell us about, here behind you?
- Teefey: No, it's just a typical setting at Walker Standardbreds, which is the largest standardbred nursery, here in Illinois. These foals will all be weaned off their mothers in the next month or so.
- DePue: How many foals do they produce in a typical year?
- Teefey: Typically, they would have about 100 farm mares, so typically they would have seventy to eighty foals of their own.
- DePue: I heard you talking a little bit earlier; they're a little bit down this year?
- Teefey: Well, last year they had some issues. The conception rates aren't always the same from year-to-year, and they don't have quite as many foals. They had more open mares, mares that didn't conceive last year, than common.
- DePue: How do you tell when you've got a high quality foal, versus one that maybe isn't going to bring as much money? What are you looking at, from the standpoint of a buyer?
- Teefey: Well, first, the thing that the buyer's going to look at, is going to look at the mare's racing record, to find out if the mare was talented, whether she won a lot of money, whether she was durable. Then you're going to be interested in the conformation, not only of the mother, but especially of the foal. You can't tell a whole lot at this age, but a year from now—we're going to look at the yearlings later—that's when they get ready to sell as yearlings, people are looking at the brothers and sisters, the accomplishments of the relatives and, of course, the conformation of the foals, whether their legs are straight, whether their sharp eyes and what the attitude of the colts are.
- DePue: Well, I guess we can get into that in much more detail when we do look at the yearlings.

Teefey: That'll be fine.

DePue: Anything else here, Ed?

Teefey: No, I think that pretty much covers it. These mares have a pretty good life of leisure out here.

DePue: It's just gorgeous out here, too. It's a beautiful day. While we're standing here, why don't you tell us a little bit about the Walker Farms?

Teefey: Well, the Walkers, Dr. Ken and Pat Walker...Dr. Walker was the state veterinarian, got involved in the business probably forty years ago, although he'd been involved as a veterinarian. They started a farm up at St. Charles, Illinois, on the west of Chicago, there, which they called Fox Valley Standardbreds. They were very successful up there, had a chance to sell that farm to a developer. When that happened, they were able to come back here, down to Springfield here, Sherman, north of Springfield, and pick up this farm. They've been here probably for twenty years now. As you can see, it's a beautiful operation.

DePue: Any idea of the size?

Teefey: I don't know exactly what the acreage is, but they've added on.

DePue: Do they grow their own grain, oats and corn here?

Teefey: They grow a lot of their own hay. They purchase a lot of their own grain, but they do produce a lot of their own hay.

DePue: Well, it's truly a beautiful setting he's got out here. As you mentioned before, one of the best stables, if not the best stable in Illinois?

Teefey: This is the largest breeding operation, currently, in Illinois.

DePue: Thanks, Ed.

(pause)

Teefey: (voice in background) These horses are all getting ready for the August 15<sup>th</sup> sale.

Voice: Correct.

DePue: Ed, we've obviously moved to another stable area here. I think this is the end result. This is the product end of the business that the Walker stables runs. Tell us a little bit about what we're looking at here.

Teefey: Well, we just left the mares and colts. Now, these are yearlings. These are a year later from those babies we just saw. Barb, there, is giving one of these

yearlings a bath. You can see, she hosed it off, and now she's soaping it down. She'll be trying to shed the dead hair off them. They keep them out of the sun during the day, so their true colors will start to shine through.

They handle them. They lead them like you can see, this one behind us here, trying to calm them down. They're not broke to drive, like we saw at the racetrack, or pull a cart yet. They're simply broke to lead and to handle and pick up their feet.

Then they'll go to sale here August 15. Over ninety of the farm yearlings will sell that day. People will come and look at the catalog and look at the pedigree and look at the conformation and make their choices.

DePue: What's the mood of the owners when they get closer to that sale date?

Teefey: Oh, it's very (background voice)... Auction is always exciting, but there is, like Barb said, there's anxiety on the part of the owners, especially in a tough economy like we have today, because this is the harvest. This is a big part of the income for the farm.

DePue: Are there good years, where the horses sell for a high price and bad years, when the price plummets?

Teefey: Oh, for sure. There's good years, just kind of like the stock market. There's years where the average is up, and there's years where the average is down.

DePue: Do you have any feel for why that happens?

Teefey: Well, I think it's got a lot to do with the overall economy. A lot of the owners are purchasing race horses with disposable income. When the economy's not good and the business segment's not real strong, then people feel like they have less money to spend on a speculative market, like a race horse.

DePue: In other words, since harness racing has falling on hard times recently, are these foals, the yearlings, going for lower prices?

Teefey: Yeah, there's a lot of anxiety for this year's sale, because of economy and because of the decline statewide of horse racing, the decline in purses that we race for. So, there's quite a bit of anxiety, as we approach the yearling sales.

DePue: How many of these yearlings that are going to be sold would end up staying in Illinois and racing, versus going to other states?

Teefey: Most of them will stay in Illinois, because they're bred to race in Illinois. They're bred by Illinois sires; they're foaled in Illinois for the most part, not all of them, but the majority of them are. So, although they have the type of quality that they would be competitive in other states, there's a program, sponsored by the Illinois Department of Agriculture, which encourages you to

buy, breed and race in Illinois. These horses are eligible to specific, sizeable purses in Illinois, so most of them will stay in Illinois, at least as two and three year-olds.

DePue: What are the other states that are competitive with Illinois in that business?

Teefey: Well, right now there's several states that have a sizeable leg up on us. New York has a good program right now. Pennsylvania's got a very good program. Indiana's got a good program. They've got a good program in Ontario. Our program is a little distressed right now.

DePue: Another beautiful horse. Do we know the name of the horse we're looking at?

Teefey: Do you know who it is, Barb?

Barb: Yes. This is Fox Valley Velvet. She's of Vaporize. Her mare's name is Big Swag.

DePue: Could you repeat that for us, Ed?

Teefey: Yeah. Well, Vaporize is one of their top stallions here at the Walker Standardbreds. He's a son of Supergill. He's been successful. He's sired some world champions. And this is one of his daughters.

Barb: In trotting.

Teefey: In trotting bred, right.

DePue: When a mare like this, would go to sale, what would they hope that she draws?

Teefey: Well, I'm not familiar with her mother, but she could bring \$3,000; she could bring \$15,000.

DePue: The stallions would go for more?

Teefey: The average boy colts will sell for a little bit more than the fillies. Some fillies will bring more than some colts, but the average at a sale, the colt average at a normal sale, is higher than the filly average.

DePue: And once they get on the racetrack, the fillies versus the— (water and other sounds related to horse bath)

Teefey: [They] don't race against each other.

DePue: They do not?

Teefey: No. The fillies race against the fillies, and the colts race against the colts, in most cases.

DePue: The colts faster?

Teefey: There's some fillies that are better than some colts, but as an overall average, the colts are a little faster, normally.

DePue: And the colts, how much larger in body mass would you expect?

Teefey: Well, some colts will get a little bit more muscular than the fillies, but there's some fillies that are bigger than the colts. There's a lot of exceptions to the rule.

DePue: Why did she get a little bit more skittish at this phase?

Barb: This is her first bath.

Teefey: Yeah. So that's the thing of that, first bath ever. She's just a little over a year old, has been running in the pasture, and they've just had them in the barn here for about a week or ten days now, so all this is new to them. She's doing very well.

DePue: I'm amazed at how calm she was when she was being soaked down then.

Teefey: Yeah. She's doing very well.

DePue: That's incredible.

Teefey: Barb's done a lot of this.

DePue: Yeah. She knows what she's doing, obviously.

Teefey: She does. She does.

DePue: We've seen an awful lot here at the Walker Standardbreds. Anything else you want to tell us?

Teefey: I think we've covered most phases of it, Mark.

DePue: Well, we've got much more to see when we move on to the fairgrounds and that will be fun to hear about at well. Thank you very much, Ed.

Teefey: Well, thank you, Mark.

(pause)

DePue: (Birds chirping.) We're back with Ed Teefey. We spent earlier today going out at Walker Standardbreds. My name is Mark DePue. Ed, we're out here, tell us where we're at now.

Teefey: We're at the Illinois State Fairgrounds at the Mike Brinks stable. Mike is one of the larger trainers here on the back stretch of the Illinois State Fairgrounds' mile race track. We're going to take a little tour of the barn. This is where the horses are actually trained, prepared for racing. A lot of these are shipped to Chicago to race during the week. Of course, they race at the Illinois county fairs and here at the Illinois State Fair. It's quite an active little community out here, with the owners that come out to watch their horses race and the trainers and the grooms. We'll give you a little tour.

DePue: This is what impresses me about it, Ed. I've spent a lot of years in Springfield. I come out to the fairgrounds quite a bit, every year. I didn't know this was all back here.

Teefey: Yeah, this is kind of behind-the-stage, so to speak, Mark. This is where it's at. This is where the horses are trained daily. Of course, their stalls are cleaned, and the horses are brushed up and exercised, and their legs are massaged and bandaged, and their feet are packed, and there's people cleaning out their stalls and training the horses. It's quite a little community there.

DePue: It's its own little world tucked away out here that most people don't even know about.

Teefey: It sure is. It's a sport that employs a lot of people.

DePue: What we want to do is to have you take us through the stable itself. We'll have lots more questions, but let's go ahead and take a quick cut. We'll start inside.

Teefey: We might take a look at these carts, before you go in there, if you want to, Mark.

DePue: Let's do that.

Teefey: Okay. There's two different kinds of carts that are used in the sport. One is, this is what we call a jog cart or a training cart, which is used day-to-day to work out the horses. These are called gaiting poles, which you can move in, as you can see the pegs there to kind of straighten up the horse in the shaft, so they go straight down the racetrack.

This cart probably weighs—if you pick it up—maybe 125 pounds or something like that. It's set pretty comfortable to ride. It's got the dust aprons on to keep the dirt out of the driver's face. You're not as close to the horse as you are with the racing sulky. The racing sulky's much lighter. It's aluminum, too. The weight of the driver is behind the wheels here, so there's not much, there's no down force on the horse. There's actually a little bit of an up force.

This cart weighs about thirty-five pounds. Not near as comfortable to ride, because the back end of the horse is right here. The driver's feet come

out into these stirrups here. It's much lighter and much more aerodynamic. And this is what they race in.

DePue: I love the specific terminology you have for the horse parts here, the back-end.

Teefey: Yeah, okay. The back-end, yeah.

DePue: I want you to say the name of this again.

Teefey: This is a sulky. s-u-l-k-y. We call them a sulky, or sometimes they're called a race bike. But the traditional name is a sulky.

DePue: Well, it's not pronounced the way I as expecting. I guess maybe there's a Midwestern twang in there a little bit?

Teefey: Well, I don't know. It's s-u-l-k-y.

DePue: I wonder if we can get you sitting in that?

Teefey: Yeah, sure, we can sit in that, hopefully here. You sit here in the seat; you put your feet in these stirrups, and the rear of the horse about here, about at your feet of a little bit behind your feet.

DePue: There's a big difference in weight between the practice and the race sulkies. Is one of the advantages that the horse has to work harder with the practice sulky? Is there an advantage there?

Teefey: Well, that's a little bit of it, but the training carts or the jog carts are more designed for the comfort of the trainer, frankly, because they'll go out, and they'll work a horse four or five miles a day. A particular trainer might ride behind fifteen or twenty horses a day. So, he literally could be out there for eighty or a 100 miles; it wouldn't be unusual at all. So they want to make it as comfortable as possible for the trainer.

DePue: In most cases, does the trainer also do any grooming with these animals?

Teefey: Well, in harness racing, really, as opposed to thoroughbred racing, there's a lot of part-time trainers. There's people that work jobs here in Springfield that come out here at 5:00, after they get off work. They've got one or two horses and, sure, they do it all. They clean out the stalls, and they exercise their horse; they bring it back; they give it a bath; they rub its legs; they feed it; they do it all themselves. There's quite a bit of that goes on.

Then there's other people like Mike Brink, here, that do it professionally. He's got probably thirty horses in here [that] he trains, and he receives a fee, a monthly fee, for training those horses. He's got quite a few people under his employment that help take care of the horses. So, in his



situation, he's got a lot more horses. It's a fulltime job. But there's a lot of hobbyists in the business, too.

DePue: People like yourself, who just are in it for the love it.

Teefey: Yeah, I've been in it for a long time, and I've done about everything there is to do with it. But, yeah, it's a great sport for somebody that lives out in a rural community that has a little time after work. They can participate in it quite actively.

DePue: Well, while we're standing out here, there's something right behind you, this cement enclosure. Tell us what that is.

Teefey: Well, that's a manure bin, Mark. (DePue laughs) That's a necessary part of the business, of course. Of course, the stalls are mucked out every day. These horses have a pretty good life, frankly. Their stalls are mucked out, and then the manure, whether they either bed them in chips... Sometimes they bed them in wood chips, and sometimes they bed them in straw, like oat straw or wheat straw. Then those stalls are mucked out, and the manure goes in those bins and is picked up, here at the Illinois State Fairgrounds daily.

DePue: Daily. Is there money to be made from horse manure?

Teefey: Well, some people use it for compost or fertilizer. Some of the area farmers like to still have it spread on their fields, and some of that is done.

DePue: Maybe not the question you were expecting from me, but I think we're about ready to go inside the stable.

Teefey: Let's do that.

DePue: (pause) Ed, tell us what we've got here.

Teefey: Well, we've got a typical set of standardbred racing harness here. Used to be, of course, that most of this was leather. Today it's synthetic, a lot of nylon is involved and plastic, quite frankly. This harness, this is the back part of it. Then this is the girth that comes underneath the horse and holds that on.

Any more, we've got what we call the quick hitch here that you snap in. We used to wrap leather straps around the shafts of the race carts and the jog carts to hold them in place, but now we have these little quick hitch steel things to keep the carts in place. It works really great. This particular set of harness has some hobbles on it. The pacers wear hobbles. Most trotters don't wear hobbles. The hobbles that the trotters wear are designed a little differently.

DePue: The hobbles doing what?

Teefey: The hobbles help a horse pace. This loop would go around the left front leg or the front leg of a pacer, and this one would go around the hind leg of a pacer. If you remember, the pacers shuffle back and forth, and those straps are there just to kind of steady them in that particular gait.

DePue: So, we'll see that once we get out to the racetrack itself.

Teefey: Absolutely. Here's a bridle, and this is a pretty typical bridle. These are called "can't see backs," which allow the horse to see ahead, allow the horse to see out to the side, but this little flap here prohibits the horse from seeing behind him. So he can hear the noise of a horse coming up on the outside of him. By not being able to totally see that horse, a lot of times kind of stimulates the horse to try a little harder. He hears the hoof prints, and he can't see the horse, so he kind of moves on to stay ahead of the horse.

This is called a "shadow roll" that fits on the nose of a horse. That keeps the horse from maybe jumping at the shadow of a light pole or jumping some type of a shadow that might be on the racetrack, when they were going in racing speed. If they saw that shadow, it's pretty dangerous for that horse to jump over the shadow. This kind of keeps the horse from seeing the ground directly in front of him. So, he can see straight out, but he can't see directly in front of him. So, he's less likely, with this shadow roll, to actually jump a shadow.

This bit here is the driving bit. This goes in the horse's mouth. The reins, or the lines we call them, hooks into each side of this. That's how you steer the horse, with this driving bit.

This bit here is called an "over-check bit." This bit also goes in the horse's mouth. This bit is designed to help keep the horse's head elevated, so the horse can't get his head down too low. They steer a lot better if you keep their head up a little bit. So, this is called an over-check bit that does that.

DePue: A couple of quick questions for you. How much would all of this equipment cost, do you think?

Teefey: Well, the hobbles can be about \$150. A typical set of synthetic harness, such as we have here, is probably \$400. So, we're probably looking at...

We've got some boots, here, actually. These are knee boots. These boots actually strap around the horse's knees. A horse has a tendency sometimes to brush their knees, we call it, with the foot on the opposite leg. This particular knee boot would go on the left knee. What it does, it protects the horse from any interference he might get from the horseshoe and the hoof on the right leg. So as the pacer goes very fast and that right foot comes through, with that steel shoe on there, sometimes it'll swing in a little bit. If it hit the horse's knee, his skin, without these boots, obviously, it would hurt. So, these boots fit there. They're called "knee boots."

You can see the little scars in this particular boot. That is from the horse's shoe. This is the left knee. The horse's shoe on the right foot actually interfering with this boot a little bit, causing those indentations there. So this goes on the knee.

These actually fit below the knee boot. These are called "tendon boots," and they work the same way, but they just protect the lower part of the leg, the section below the knee, which is the tendon. You can see, if you look very closely, there are some light brush marks there. You're a lot better off that foot hitting that tendon boot than you are, of course, hitting the bare skin. These would be another fifty dollars apiece, probably.

DePue: My other question was, just how uncomfortable all this equipment is for the horse.

Teefey: Oh, it's relatively comfortable. You've got a pad here, under the part of the harness that sits on the horse's back. The whole set probably weighs twenty-five pounds, with the hobbles and the boots and everything. It's always kept clean, so there's not sweat and hair that deposits under here that would have a tendency to chaff the horse. It's cleaned after every use.

DePue: I think we're ready for a little bit of a walk, then.

Teefey: Okay. We can do that. This is a pretty typical stable. These are called tack trunks. These trunks would have a lot of the stuff in them that you'd use to take care of a horse. You've got liniment here. You've got fly spray. You got bandages that would go on the horse's legs. These are called "bell boots." They go, actually, they set over the top of the hoof around the horse's pastern, and they protect the horse from interference at the bottom of their feet. So, this is a rather typical tack trunk there.

This here is a head pole. This is designed to go up against the horse's neck. It can either go on the left side; it can go on the right side; some horses wear them on both sides. This snaps into the halter that goes under the bridle, so it snaps in on the horse's head. This comes back and snaps in at the withers of the horse. It keeps that horse from turning its head to the right or the left. Of course, the horse will steer a lot better if he's going straight down the racetrack.

Sometimes the head poles are just like this portion of the head pole, which we call smooth. Then sometimes they'll put a plastic burr on a head pole, like we see here, wrapped around there. This would actually... When the horse turned his head, if you had this head pole on the right side of a horse, and the horse was to turn his head to the left, rather than hit that smooth surface of the head pole, by putting this burr on here—it's not particularly sharp, but it's sharper than the smooth pole—then that rubs up against the side

of his neck, and he doesn't like that. So that also is a prop to get him to carry his head straight.

DePue: Let's check into a couple of these stalls here, as well.

Teefey: Well, here's one. Obviously, we're here in the middle of July, so the weather's pretty hot, so a lot of the horses will have their individual fans on them. You've got a saw gate here. Rather than shut the door and prohibit ventilation, most of the stalls here have these type of gates on them, which are open. Of course, the horse can't get out, but it also allows the air to circulate better.

All the stalls will have a feed tub for the horses to be fed and a water bucket, of course, which is over here. Water is kept in front of them twenty-four hours a day, and these buckets are cleaned every day, too. So, they have fresh water, and the water doesn't get stale. This particular horse is getting ready to train.

DePue: Number One Kid, it looks like, is the name.

Teefey: In her case, they've braided the foretop. They do that just so it won't interfere with the bridle. The bridle will set there, and you won't get the foretop hair in a lump under the bridle.

DePue: You can tell they're a social animal.

Teefey: Yes, yes, yeah, they are. This is a stall halter, we call it. Most of these horses will wear these halters in the stalls, so you can catch them or hold on to them or lead them. These will come off, and a lighter halter will go under, actually, the bridle, when you go to race them. So, the horse is all cleaned up. This horse is ready to have the harness put on, and it will be taken out for a jog in a little while.

Most of the horses have some kind of a mineral. This particular horse has a salt block here, so it has free access to salt. All horses need salt from time to time. All these horses are shod. So you can see here—I don't know—this horse has a shoe here on all her feet. This happens to be a smooth shoe, half round shoe. It's got a little bit of a weld here on the toe, which is called "borium," which allows the horse to get a little bit more of a grip on the racetrack, so it doesn't just slip. There's little welds around the toe there to allow the horse to get a little traction, kind of like the treads on your car or your truck.

These shoes are changed on a monthly basis. All, like the toes, are measured, so a horse would have a three and a half-inch toe in front. Both feet would have the same, three and a half-inch toe. The same behind, the toes behind, between the two hind feet, those toes would be kept at the same length.

DePue: Do you have any idea how many horses are stabled out here?

Teefey: I think now there's about 300 horses stabled here at the Illinois State Fairgrounds.

DePue: Are there one or two blacksmiths, then, that work down here full-time?

Teefey: Yes, there is. That's actually something we could take a look at, if you wanted to. There's a blacksmith's shop here and a full-time blacksmith.

DePue: The other question I want to ask you, earlier today we were seeing the horses out in pasture.

Teefey: Right.

DePue: And now we see a horse in a stall. I guess I'm worried about the horse, that the horse is chained up. It doesn't get a chance to get any exercise in the stall here.

Teefey: This horse is just chained up because they're ready to put the harness on it and start to exercise it. We'll go on down through the barn. This horse is not chained up, unless they're working with the horse. It's loose in this stall, which is about a twelve by twelve stall. These horses are exercised every day, as opposed to the breeding farm we were at, those mares are not trained; they're not exercised, so they're outside all the time.

Now, some of these horses, they like to be outside by nature, so some of these horses are turned out from time-to-time for a short period of time to let them kind of get back to nature and to get out of the confinement they have here at the fairgrounds.

DePue: And after their racing career is over?

Teefey: If they have some reason, or if their owner feels or connections feel like their worthy of being broodmares or raising colts, then they will spend most of their retirement outside.

DePue: Well, let's move on.

Teefey: Okay, great. You can see every horse has his own harness, because all these horses are various different sizes. This particular horse here has already been out on the track and been worked. It's got a light blanket on. It's a hot day, so that's a—

DePue: Just by Design is this horse's name.

Teefey: Yeah, that's Just by Design. He's got a blanket on there to allow him not to cool out too fast.

DePue: You can tell that he's breathing hard.

Teefey: Yeah, when these horses work out and get real hot, you don't want them to cool out, we call it, or dry out real fast. You want them to kind of dry out gradually, so their muscles won't tighten up. That's what a light blanket...Here's some heavier blankets.

Thirty or forty years ago, the old-time trainers believed that you really wanted to cool them out slowly, so they actually put heavier blankets on them. Sometimes, even on a hot day like we have today, they'd put two or three of these blankets on, maybe walk them for thirty minutes, take one blanket off, walk them for another thirty minutes, take another blanket off, and they'd have one left for another thirty minutes. The cooling out process used to be a very lengthy process. It's evolved into a much shorter process now.

DePue: I imagine, for these owners and trainers, that's a science.

Teefey: That's a science. Everybody's got their own ideas. Everybody's got their own ideas. But the sport's evolved. The horses are better athletes, and the horses are better conditioned than they used to be.

[We've] just got that washing machine there to keep the towels clean, keep the blankets clean. Just another thing that we have to have before maintenance. Here's a horse here that's even closer to going out. Again, we're in the chains here, which are called "cross ties."

The first horse we looked at, she doesn't have the harness on yet. This one does have the harness on, but you can see he's not broke out in a sweat. He's got the shadow roll, which we talked about before, which doesn't allow the horse to see the ground right in front of him. He's got a hood on, and he's got...These are called "blinkers." This horse has a little bit more restricted view with this bridle and with the blinkers than the bridle we looked at a few minutes ago. This is a pacer, so you can see how the hobbles, the straps, are on the horse's legs, which kind of loosely tie the front leg to the back leg. Normally they're pretty loose, so they don't really hold the horse together, but they're just kind of a reminder to keep him on gait.

Here we've got a horse with a head pole in place that we showed you loose a while ago. This one has a burr. So you can see that this head pole's on the right side of the horse. If the horse wanted to turn his head, if the horse had a habit of turning his head to the left, this head pole discourages him from doing that. They drive a lot better if you can keep them going straight down the racetrack. The lines are hooked into the bit we talked about there.

DePue: How long does it take to put on the harness, the whole rig?

Teefey: Oh, these people put on harnesses so often that, probably, to get a horse totally equipped like this horse is equipped; you're talking a ten minute program.

They'll get the horse in the cross ties, in these chains here, clean out the horses feet, get the manure, get the straw and stuff out of their feet, so they don't track it in the barn. Then they'll put this equipment on them. It's probably a ten minute process for somebody that's done it a lot. Just as something you'd never think about, this is a lady's stocking. This is just like a—

DePue: Nylon stocking?

Teefey: Like a nylon stocking, okay? This particular horse is tied here temporarily. What they'll do with this is, they'll take this off the harness here, when they get ready to work this horse. We'll do it here. It's been a long time since I've done this, but I'll just show you how it works. They'll actually take the horse's tongue, and they'll wrap this nylon stocking around his tongue, like this.

DePue: Now see, I don't think I'd like that at all.

Teefey: They take it, and they tie it under the chin here. That keeps that horse from rolling its tongue back in its mouth to restrict the air flow. (DePue chuckles) So there's a little...But that's something that very many standardbred horses have done to them. They actually have their tongues tied, loosely. There's a lot of spring in this nylon stocking.

DePue: I'd be worried sticking my hand in the mouth.

Teefey: Yeah. You do it carefully. (DePue chuckles)

DePue: Tells us about the bedding in here.

Teefey: Well, this stall is bedded in a kind of a sawdust, wood chip mixture. It's pretty easy to clean out. You just kind of take the manure off the top of it. A lot of stalls are bedded in wheat straw. But either wood chips, wood chip sawdust or wheat straw is the normal bedding. You can see here, there's very little manure in these stalls. They keep them picked up and keep them clean.

DePue: Again, the horse just followed you right out. I assume it was thinking it was time to go do some exercising.

Teefey: Well, when I tied its tongue there, it thought it was ready to come out. Yeah, it sure did. They get used to their routines. Here's a horse that's just in a normal resting position—

DePue: Psychic Starlet.

Teefey: ...not in the cross ties, not harnessed. Most of them are kept free choice of a little hay. That's what we see there on the ground. They can pretty much have

all the water they want and pretty much all the hay. They're fed grain two or three times a day.

DePue: What kind of grain is it?

Teefey: Oh, you know, different trainers have different formulas. But basically, normally the basis of corn, oats, bean meal with vitamins and minerals added to it, sometimes pelleted, sometimes not pelleted.

Here again we see a jog cart. Here's an interesting situation here. Here's a horse that's already been worked out, and it's been cooled out, and it's been given a bath, and it's been an hour since this horse has been on the racetrack. So it's not hot; it's not breathing hard. They've taken a poultice, a mud poultice, and they've spread that mud poultice over its knees, over its tendons, over its ankles, to pull any fever, any heat that it might have in its legs. It's just a therapeutic type of thing that some trainers like to do.

DePue: It doesn't look like mud at all.

Teefey: Well, it is mud.

DePue: Is this a product that the owners purchase?

Teefey: Yeah. And this has probably got some menthol in it. It's something that dries relatively slow, as opposed to... Sometimes they used to go out in a creek bottom and pull out some clay.

DePue: It looks like we're about ready to feed the horse, too.

Teefey: There is some commercial applications, and that's what we have here. So this horse is about to be turned loose. He'll be given some hay here; his water buckets will be filled, and then he'll just be turned loose for the rest of the day.

DePue: Turned loose in?

Teefey: Just turned loose in a stall. This gentleman's going to turn him loose here. Then that's just the way he'll relax, until he gets out of there tomorrow morning and goes through the routine again. Excuse me. So he'll eat his hay, drink his water and get fed until it's time to work him out again.

DePue: Ed, one of the things I was hoping for, and maybe we can make that happen, is seeing a horse washed down.

Teefey: Yeah, we could probably see that happen. We're going to go out to the track in a little while. In this barn, there doesn't happen to be a horse washed down right now. But we can walk back up here, and I can give you an idea of what the wash rack looks like. (pause) Actually... I thought that's where it was.



Here it is, right here. This is a wash stall, about what you'd think. It's got a hose hooked up to hot and cold water, so the water's warm, about like our bath water would be.

This is a pretty typical wash stall. You've got different kinds of shampoo here, (DePue chuckles) iodine shampoo that, if a horse a little bit of an irritation or some kind of a little skin fungus or something like that, that could be real good. Here's a therapeutic mane and tail detangler, basically just hair conditioning to keep the kinks out of a horse's mane and tail. Here's a bottle of shampoo with a little liniment mixed into it, too, that would help them cool out.

Then most of these wash stalls would have some kind of a salve. You get a little crack in the heel or a little skin flake or something like that, then when they get done washing the horse, they would take some ointment, some kind of therapeutic or antibiotic ointment, and put it on any kind of an injury or sore that the horse might have.

DePue: Any differences in all of this, between mares and stallions and how you have to take care of them?

Teefey: Not much. No, not much. Actually, here's the cross ties again. (loud popping noise) Here's the typical wash bucket. You've got the sponge, got the soap in there. They'll soap them all down and then rinse them off with the water. Once they've rinsed them off with the water, sometimes they'll brush them out with something like this, just a brush.

Here's this therapeutic thing; hook this into just a regular garden hose; wrap these little things around the horse's leg, knee, tendon. There's little holes in here, and they stay in place, so you could let a horse stand here and let the cold water from the hose run down its leg. It's the same idea, sort of, that we had with the poultice. It's just a therapeutic type of thing to allow the leg to cool out and for that hot horse to feel that cold water running down its leg. The way it's designed, put a hose in here; put these...there's a couple of them here, so you can put them on two different legs. There's a couple more here. You could do it on all four legs, if you wanted to do that.

DePue: Every time the horse is exercised, they're going to end up taking a shower, getting washed down.

Teefey: Almost every time a horse is exercised. There would be few exceptions. Maybe if you had a real cold day, and you had a horse (loud noise) that didn't sweat too much, you might just rub him down and not give him a bath. But in modern day training of standardbreds, they're pretty much given a bath every time they've worked out.

This is called a "scraper." These go back well over 100 years. Now they're aluminum, of course. Actually, there's one here that is quite old,

which is made out of wood. But even in the olden days, 150 years ago, with our grandparents and great-grandparents out there on the farm with the work horses, when they'd come in, they'd be full of sweat. Back then, of course, they didn't wash them. They had no way to wash them. They'd take these things, sweat scrapers. You just use them to scrape the sweat off the horse. They'll do that now, after they give the horse a bath, they'll do it to scrape the water off, to get the water pretty much scraped off, to start the drying process. Years ago, they just did it to take the sweat off. Then they'd take a burlap sack or something, back in those days, and actually rub the horse dry.

DePue: You mentioned something earlier that hadn't occurred to me, but it's obvious; horses are stabled here year-round.

Teefey: Year-round. Yeah, year-round. Standardbreds are pretty much raced year-round. Cold weather—

DePue: We're looking at the windows, obviously, it's as cold inside as it is outside.

Teefey: It's pretty cold. Most of the windows can be shut, so you won't have them open like we have today, in the wintertime. But it's chilly in here, no doubt about it. It's sure chilly to train them in the wintertime.

DePue: Do the horses get a little bit heavier coat in the wintertime?

Teefey: Yeah, they will. The horse's hair, here in the north and Illinois, of course, will get a lot longer. But oftentimes—and I don't see them really, a stall blanket that we'd use in the wintertime—but often, to keep the horse's hair shorter in the wintertime, to make them easier to take care of, so they don't get so dirty. Then a lot of these horses will actually wear blankets in the wintertime. If they wear a blanket in the stall, [it's] all the time. Wearing those type of stable blankets, it will have a tendency to keep their hair quite a bit shorter.

DePue: How about taking care of the teeth?

Teefey: Yeah, that's a two or three times a year process, too. There's equine dentists that come around and they float<sup>3</sup> the teeth, make sure they get the sharp edges off. Some horses will grow caps on top of their teeth that will have sharp edges, and those caps will be knocked off. So horses that are in training, seriously, they have their teeth worked on at least a couple times of year.

DePue: Well, they're getting as much tender loving care as a human being would, if not more.

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<sup>3</sup> Once a horse is in its late 20s or early 30s, molar loss becomes a concern. Floating involves a veterinarian or equine dentist wearing down the surface of the teeth, usually to remove sharp points or to balance out the mouth.

Teefey: It's not a bad life, Mark; it really isn't. It's not a bad life. These horses are taken care of very well, very well throughout the year. Some of the horses will actually be rested during the winter. Most horses, you can't race them twelve months out of twelve months. Oftentimes they'll be on an eight or nine month schedule, and those last two or three months of the year they could be turned out in the pasture.

DePue: Anything else to show us in here?

Teefey: I think we've covered it pretty good.

DePue: That was great, very interesting. Again, you don't even begin to understand the complexity until you talk to somebody who's lived it for their entire life.

Teefey: All you can say is these guys do a lot of work around here, and this industry employs a lot of people. As you said, Mark, when you just go to the races, you don't think about what's behind the scenes, but we're getting a taste of that today.

DePue: Well, while we're strolling on out, tell us about the kinds of people who end up working in the racing industry.

Teefey: Well a lot of them have it in their heritage. A lot of them do them do it because their dad did it or their grandfather did it, and they've just got a love of the business. They grew up with it. But, a lot of young people come out here during their college summers and work the horses and help with the stables and do it year after year. Then some of them, more permanent.

DePue: Well, I notice that there do seem to be a lot of Hispanics here. Is that something the immigrants are drawn to?

Teefey: Yeah, there's quite a few Latinos, a lot of Guatemalans, and they do a great job, got a great work ethic.

DePue: Thank you very much, Ed.

(pause)

DePue: Ed, we're out here at the racetrack. This is the mile track. We've been leading up to this for a long time. Everything we've been talking about comes right down here, doesn't it?

Teefey: That's right. This is the Illinois State Fairgrounds mile track, considered by many to be the fastest one mile dirt harness racing track in the world, Mark.

DePue: What is the dirt that we've got here? Where'd the dirt come from?

Teefey: Well, it's clay from... It's been here; it's redone every five or ten years, historically. It's been quite a few years since it's been overhauled, with the current state budget conditions. But still, when it's good, it's a very, very fast racetrack.

DePue: Now, the trainers have been cooperative here. They are just going to be going back and forth in front of us. Tell us what we're watching.

Teefey: Well, here's a couple of the local trainers, Mike Brink and Tim Bredberg, who are stabled here at the Illinois State Fairgrounds' back stretch and train here year around and race their horses throughout the Illinois county fair system and also at the Chicago pari-mutuel racetracks.

As we said earlier, there's some 300, 350 horses that are stabled here at the Illinois State Fairgrounds on the backstretch, year around. These horses are normally worked out five to six days a week, usually jogged to four or five miles a day. Then, a couple days a week, they'll actually be trained, go faster, shorter distances and faster miles.

DePue: I just noticed, in the process of trying to turn around, they had to rear back. I bet the horses are thinking, we're just going to make a regular loop here.

Teefey: Well, these horses are horses of habit. These are well-trained athletes, but they do get into some habits. It's a little bit unusual that we're going to have them turn short here several times, so we can kind of look over the horses and the drivers and the equipment they have. Both of these horses are pacers. Both of these trainers are experts at what they do. Both the horses are in the jog carts that we looked at earlier, as opposed to the race bikes that are much lighter and used for racing. The horse on the inside, the first horse by, has that black shadow roll that we talked about on its nose, which prohibits it from seeing the shadows on the ground right in front of it.

DePue: How much work is it for the trainers themselves?

Teefey: Well, typically these horses would be jogged at the pace you're seeing here for four or five miles a day. It depends on the horse, but it's not overly rigorous to work them out. But, by the time you take five or six horses out there for four or five miles, it can be a pretty tiring experience.

DePue: What are the occupational health hazards of your average trainer?

Teefey: Well, if you train long enough, you're going to have accidents, as you are with any sport that involves speed and sometimes the unpredictability of the animal. They can trip; they can fall down; they can get their wheels tangled in a race or in a training experience. You can take a pretty hard fall sometimes. There's more dangerous sports, but there is an element of danger in it, Mark.

DePue: Are back problems one of the issues?

Teefey: Well, back problems can be an issue, obviously, by sitting there and leaning forward and pulling with the upper part of the body. A lot of times they do develop some back problems.

DePue: What's the average training routine once you do get a horse out here? How long do you warm them up? How long do you actually let them run at full pace.

Teefey: Well, a lot times, just on a normal jogging day, they might jog them three, four, five miles. Different trainers have different ideas. Different animals have different sizes and different characteristics, so it's kind of tailored.

DePue: They're jogging now, I take it?

Teefey: They're just jogging along here, now, right, uh huh. They're just going along at a leisurely jogging clip of about probably a four minute mile. Whereas, a racing clip would typically be at least twice as fast as they're jogging along there now.

They're going what we call the "right way of the track," which is the counter clockwise. That's the way the horses will normally race or train faster miles. When they're just jogging, getting more leisurely exercise, they go clockwise, and they stay on the outside of the racetrack. So, the horses [that] are going faster on the inside don't interfere with the horses that are going slower on the outside. They go in opposite directions.

DePue: Maybe I wasn't paying close enough attention. How much time would they spend at full pace?

Teefey: Well, at full pace, they're not going to spend more than a mile, yeah, which is the standard distance that we race harness horses, is one mile. It would be unusual for a horse to even be asked to go full speed for a mile. It's just like a sprinter or like a mile runner, they pace themselves. There's a lot of strategy. It's not just speed; there's strategy. Sometimes you've got to save that energy for the stretch run.

DePue: For the race day, how much warm-up are the horses going to do?

Teefey: Well, typically, typically, up until the last twenty years, there was a lot more warm-up than we have today. The sport's evolved, until we've got a lot more athletic individuals that need less warming up than they used to. But on a race day, they would probably come out here and go two to three miles and be brushed a little bit. So, maybe for a quarter of a mile or so, they'd be asked to extend themselves a little bit, in preparation for the race.

DePue: Let's talk about the psychology of the race, if you will. I know we're just out here practicing the horses today, but do the horses get in their minds that they're competing with each other, even in a practice mode?

- Teefey: For sure. Now these two horses are going along at a leisurely jogging pace, so they're pretty relaxed. But if they were turned the other way around, and the trainers kind of got their attention, they would definitely pick up the pace. The horses know that they're competing. In a race, when they go behind the mobile starting gate and there's more noise, most horses get really fired up and ready to go. They realize that they're in competition then.
- DePue: Well, I think, in thoroughbred racing the whip can be used. Is that ever used in standardbred racing?
- Teefey: Sure. Yeah, sure. The drivers will carry a whip, and a lot of times those whips are used. You might just tap a horse to get its attention, to make it pay attention, to mind its manners. In harness racing, most often the whip is used in the stretch. I think sometimes we get a bad rap, because of the whipping, but normally the whipping is used to make noise. It's to hit the shaft of the cart or to hit the rubber number pad on the back of the horse. It makes noise, and that popping sound has a tendency sometimes to motivate them.
- DePue: We're going to do one more pass here and watch them come in. Then we'll take a pan of the stadium area. But, I want you to just kind of talk us through, as these two horses are coming down the track here for us.
- Teefey: Okay. Well, again, now we're going the counter clockwise way, which is normally the way you would go faster. We're still not asking these two horses to extend themselves. We will a little bit later, where we get them to step out a little bit. You can see that they're, both horses, are very comfortable. They've got their ears up; they're paying attention. They know they mean business. But again, they're just going at a very leisurely pace there. You can see the mud aprons on the carts, the dust aprons, which keep the dirt and the clods and stuff coming off the horse's hoof from hitting the drivers in the body and especially there in the face.
- DePue: We've had a lot of rain here the last couple of days, especially yesterday. It doesn't seem to have affected the track that much.
- Teefey: Well, John Cisna, as we talked about, just got the track crew to come out here and open the track, and it's drying very quickly on a humid day like today. The track, being clay, is not really an all-weather track. If we do get a rain, it will get muddy and sometimes will cause some postponements.
- DePue: What I'd like to have us do is have the camera pan on this area. As the camera's panning, tell us what we're looking at here, Ed.
- Teefey: Okay. Well, they're turning the horses back there again. They're going to jog them back past us here. Again, you can see both of the horses are pretty relaxed here. They've got a couple of veteran trainers, and the horses are used to going through the paces, so they're just going to jog back past us here now.

When this track is dry, on a typical morning like today, you'd have several hundred horses out here, maybe forty or fifty at a time. It just happened that we're a little late here in the morning.

DePue: So you need a traffic cop on those days?

Teefey: Yeah, it gets pretty busy out here, frankly. But today, because they just got the track dried out, and we've just got a couple of them working out again. They're both pacers. The horse on the outside has what we call a blind bridle. (sounds of horse passing by) It's got blinds coming out to the side of its head. The horse on the inside, with the red bridle, has a hood on with blinders, a little more vision obstruction there than the horse on the outside.

DePue: What I'd like to do here is just get a shot of some of the buildings in the background, Ed, and have you explain what we're looking at there. Let's start from the left of the camera.

Teefey: Well, the Exhibition Building is over there, with the dome. I think that building is one of the oldest existing buildings on the fairgrounds and probably the most notable building on the fairgrounds. Right to the right of the Exhibition Building is the Coliseum, where they have a lot of horse shows. That building is quite a landmark here on the fairgrounds. Then, of course, you've got the amphitheater, the Grandstand, there that they use for the harness racing, for the night shows during the Illinois State Fair.

DePue: I know you announce the races. Where are you in the grandstand?

Teefey: Well, it's right there in the middle of the grandstand, where you see the aisle way that goes downstairs there, right in the middle about, above that yellow walkway, is where the judges and the announcer stands.

DePue: I think our next step, then is to mount up into a vehicle and follow along with a couple of these horses.

Teefey: Alright.

DePue: I've been looking forward to that for a long time.

Teefey: Alright. Sounds good.

(pause)

DePue: Ed, we're obviously on the track. This is the fun part for me. Tell us what we're looking at.

Teefey: Well, we're right now going through the home stretch of the Illinois State Fairgrounds mile harness racing facility, considered, as we said earlier, as one of the fastest, if not the fastest standardbred track in the world, Mark. We've

got a couple training there. Tim Bredberg's on the outside with a horse by the name of Davis. Mike Brink's on the inside, up against the hub rail with a horse named LO Love. They're both pacers, and they're in full racing gear, pulling the training carts.

DePue: I can see what you were talking about earlier, when you were tying the tongue up.

Teefey: Yeah. Yeah, you can. You can see on the horse on the outside there, the nylon stocking hanging out of the bottom, and the horse's got his tongue kind of hanging out of his mouth there. It doesn't look real comfortable, but it is. The horse is feeling no pain. It keeps the horse from swallowing his tongue back in his throat and blocking off his air.

DePue: Now the inside horse looks like he's pulling back on the reins a little bit to slow him down.

Teefey: Well, he is. It's the game of strategy, and you've got to rate these horses a little bit, which means you can let them go full speed all the time, or they'd be like any athlete, they would wear out. So, these two horses are going a very comfortable pace right now. They could go several miles at this speed.

Now, when we go back around to the homestretch, they're going to pick up speed, and you're going to see them sprint a little bit and brush out. These horses would jog about a mile every four minute clip, but both of these horses will race at a clip twice that fast, at a clip better than two minutes a mile.

DePue: Well, this has absolutely nothing to do with harness racing, but, as we are going around that portion of the racetrack, I notice the gardens. The state allows people to come out here and plant a little plot of land.

Teefey: Yeah, I guess the last few years they've been allowing people to do that. Some days you see quite a few people out there.

DePue: You can see the stands in the background. That makes me think, does the noise of the crowd bother the horses any?

Teefey: Not too much. They get used to it and are pretty much oblivious to it. They're more interested in the horses around them and the attention that their driver's giving them.

That pole right there, that red and white pole, with a little cap on top of it, that we just passed, is the half-mile marker. So it's a mile racetrack, and that's halfway around, where that red and white pole is.

DePue: In the race itself, then, when do the jockeys really want to open it up for the home stretch?



Teefey: Well, it depends upon what the strengths of the individual horse is and what the strategy of the driver is. Obviously, your goal is to have as much pace as you possibly can have in that home stretch drive, hoping you've got something left to out-sprint the competition at the end of that mile.

DePue: Well, I'm sure it's all about strategy. Moving to the fence would be part of that strategy, wouldn't it?

Teefey: Good point, especially on a half-mile track. We've got a mile track here, so you only have two big turns. On a half-mile track, which we see at the county fairs, you've got four turns. But it's obvious, as you watch these two horses jog along, that the horse on the outside has farther to go around these turns. So, that is an important strategy. An important part of harness racing is to try to spend as little time as possible on the outside.

DePue: I'm sure there are rules about how you get to the fence and how you can cut each other off and what you're not allowed to do?

Teefey: Oh, yes. Obviously, you cannot impede the progress of any other horse in the race. You've got to make sure that there's always clearance, whether you move in or you move out. The other thing, when you sit on the outside as we have, Tim Bredberg with Davis there, we call that, in racing nomenclature, being parked out. You're going a long mile when you're parked out.

Now you can see the pace is picking up considerably here, as we get into the home stretch. The horses know when the home stretch is. We're going at least twice as fast as we were here a few minutes ago. As you start to step them out, the horses are more up on those lines and on the bits. They're taking hold. They know right now that the trainers mean business.

DePue: You know, it just occurred to me, how much more beautiful it is seeing them at full pace.

Teefey: Yeah, they do. They stretch out. At times you'll see all four feet off the ground at the same time, when they're really stretching out.

DePue: They're magnificent animals.

Teefey: Yeah, they are. They're very beautiful, and they've got the temperament that a lot of people can train these things on a part-time basis, as we talked about earlier. These two gentlemen are professionals. They do it for a livelihood. They train a lot of horses. But there's other people in the standardbred sport that work 9:00 to 5:00 jobs and do it in the twilight and do it quite successfully.

DePue: I see the numbers that they have stenciled on both of the horses.

Teefey: Oh, good observation there. Those are United States Trotting Association John Cisna, here, is one of the directors of. They have the registry for the whole industry. They keep track. All these horses are registered with the United States Trotting Association, which has got its national headquarters in Columbus, Ohio.

Those numbers, those freeze brands we call it, under their mane, on the right side, are... On every registered standardbred in North America, they have that number there. Before they're raced, there's an identifier that comes around at the track and makes sure that horse is the horse it's supposed to be, checks that number against that registry.

DePue: Well, our speed right now is just over twenty-five miles an hour. Is that about the right pace that you'd want them for a race? A little bit faster?

Teefey: Well, they'll go a little faster in a race. We're going a nice pace right now, but a two minute mile is thirty miles an hour. Both of these horses are very, very capable of going a mile in two minutes, which would be an average speed of thirty miles an hour.

DePue: How do you find that horse that has that competitive edge?

Teefey: Well, you can't see their heart, obviously, but people look at conformation; they look at breeding. That's the two things they look at, mainly, when they go to buy a horse that hasn't raced.

Now we're seeing them step up pretty good here, as Tim's bringing Davis up alongside Mike with LO Love on the inside here, as we get close to the finish line, here on the mile track. Now we probably are going... John's going right at thirty miles an hour. Right now we are going at two minute shot, which years ago, was kind of the standard we all shot for. Now it's not unusual for a horse to go a mile in one fifty, a minute and fifty seconds. But we were going a two minute clip, right there at the wire.

DePue: I think I'm just going to hand it over to you, Ed, and just make some final comments, as we do the back side of the track.

Teefey: Well, we're finishing up here, and these guys will be slowing these horses down and taking them back to the barn and giving them a bath and cooling them down, probably put blankets on them and pack their feet and put the liniments on their legs and give them some hay, and then their work's done for the day. They'll be taken, as we looked at a while ago... In the stable, they get excellent care.

These horses really have a good life, and these horses will normally race once every week or two, probably twenty-five or thirty starts a year, much, much more often than the thoroughbreds do.

DePue: In the cool down, are we going to let him do another lap?

Teefey: Yeah, they're cooling down. They're done for the day. These horses are now backing off. They'll come back, and they'll slow down and go out the draw gate here and back to the barns to be cooled down.

DePue: What I wanted to finish with, Ed is just let you reflect on the state of harness racing, as far as a sport, as far as a business concern right now.

Teefey: Well, here in Illinois, we're in a difficult time. We've got some pending legislation that we have high hopes that we can get passed this fall, which would allow for video gaming in the racetracks. The states that have done that, Pennsylvania and New York and Indiana, our neighboring state, have been very successful at revitalizing the sport and causing people to buy more horses, bring more brood mares, bring in more stallions, raise more horses. That is our connection with Illinois agriculture.

The connection with this business, as opposed to other forms of gaming, is that these horses use Illinois agricultural products. They eat hay, and they eat corn, and they use Illinois pasture ground. And, obviously, as you can see today, Mark, we employ a lot of people in the industry. You don't see that with other forms of gambling.

DePue: I hate to ask you this, but is there a chance that, a few years from now, we won't see this out here?

Teefey: Well, through the efforts of a lot of a lot of people like John Cisna and myself, we work hard to see that that doesn't happen. It's a sport that needs some help right now, but there's still a lot of attraction. We're still bringing in some new owners. We're not ready to write it off. We still have thirty-five county fairs that race harness horses here in Illinois and the Illinois State Fair in Springfield and the DuQuoin State Fair, where we still have top-notch racing.

DePue: Thank you very much, Ed. That finishes it.

(end of transcript #3)

Interview with Ed Teefey

# AI-V-L-2010-023

Interview # 4: August 4, 2010

Interviewer: Mark DePue

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(racing noises; announcer calling a horse race.)

DePue: This is Mark DePue. I'm out at the Brown County Fair with Kent Johnson. How are you today, Kent?

Johnson: Doing fine, doing fine.

DePue: The reason we're here is to learn every aspect of harness racing. We're getting the actual race day events. Kent, why don't you tell us exactly what you do.

Johnson: I check the tattoos before they go onto the racetrack. I have a program and USTA has a freeze brand on each horse, on the right side. Before they go on the track, I'll make sure that it's the right horse with the right tattoo.

DePue: So, that's permanent tattoo you're looking at?

Johnson: A permanent, freeze brand tattoo. It's kind of a white color. It doesn't really hurt them; it just freeze brands and colors it white a little bit.

DePue: I see you've got an Illinois Department of Agriculture [tag]. Do you work for them?

Johnson: I'm a colt inspector is what they call me. Most of my work is in the springtime. I look at the quarter horses and the thoroughbreds and the standardbred babies when they're roughly two to three weeks old.

DePue: What keeps you busy the rest of the year?

Johnson: Before that, I guess I also check stallions and mares that are being bred. About June I start doing county fairs.

DePue: How long have you been doing this?

Johnson: Been doing it about twenty-two years.

DePue: How much do you like what you do?

Johnson: I like it real well. It's fun.

DePue: Is this the culmination, coming out to the county fairs and the state fair?

Johnson: I would say so, yes, yes.

DePue: Are there any other aspects of the job that you really like?

Johnson: I like to work the state fair, also (trumpet call to the post) and the DuQuoin State Fair. It's a lot of fun, too.

DePue: Tell us again why this is an important step in the process.

Johnson: Well, this is pari-mutuel gambling at the Mt. Sterling fair. We want to make for sure that it's the right horses that are racing. They usually won't try to put one in, but they could accidently get, you know, just make a mistake and be in the wrong race or something. But we want to make sure the betting public is betting on the right horse that way.

DePue: Thank you very much, Kent.

Johnson: You're welcome.

DePue: I appreciate it.

Johnson: Thank you.

(Johnson checks tattoos)

(pause)

DePue: This is Mark DePue. I'm with Jim Hannon. We're out here, still at the Brown County Fair. Jim, tell me what you're role in pari-mutuel wagering and this sport is.

- Hannon: Well, we operate pari-mutuel wagering for not only the Brown County Fair, but also the Springfield and DuQuoin fairs, as well. Basically, it's running pari-mutuel, where people can go actually up to the windows and place a wager on a horse they think is going to win the race.
- DePue: Who do you work for?
- Hannon: I work for Balmoral Park. I'm the general manager at Balmoral Park.
- DePue: And Balmoral Park, for those who don't know about it, is?
- Hannon: Is in Crete, Illinois, south suburb racetrack that races standardbred racing.
- DePue: Not thoroughbreds, but standardbreds.
- Hannon: Standardbreds, which is a little different breed, yes.
- DePue: Absolutely. Tell us why this is so important, to have this relationship that you've got.
- Hannon: Well, pari-mutuel wagering, it's a French word that means "betting amongst themselves." So, really, the patrons that are here today are betting amongst themselves who they think is going to win a race. So a percentage is taken off the top, twenty cents out of every dollar, and out of that twenty cents, ten cents go to one, the fairs, and the other ten cents goes for the purses that are going to these horses that run and earn money in order to compete. It supports the breeding program; it supports the horse racing industry in itself, ancillary income regarding breeding farms, where people have to grow hay; they have to have horseshoers, who shoe the horses, et cetera, et cetera. So, pari-mutuel is very, very important.
- DePue: Why is it that people like you need to be involved, that the county themselves, that the state itself can't be doing this?
- Hannon: Well, we're a little bit more experienced, because we operate pari-mutuel on a day-to-day basis. So, we have to bring in the equipment, in order to run and take the bets, and then you have to have trained people who know how to accept the wagers and help the people who need to know how to wager itself.
- DePue: How many counties in Illinois do you do this for?
- Hannon: Well, really, it's Brown County is the only county fair that we do pari-mutuel wagering, but also the Springfield is in Sangamon County, and they have the Springfield state fair. Then the DuQuoin State Fair is in Perry County. So, it's really three counties.
- DePue: Does having you here allow this to be part of the off-track betting [OTB] process, as well?

Hannon: Right. Well, not here in Brown County; they don't have off-track betting. But when the Springfield state fair races and the DuQuoin State Fair races, there is off-track betting. You can watch and wager all those wagers from those OTB locations. The money that is generated from betting goes to raise and for the breeding program, the Department of Ag [Agriculture] program for purses for which the horses are going to be racing and, therefore, sustain them and make them a living.

DePue: How long you been doing this thing, Jim?

Hannon: Thirty years.

DePue: What do you do for the rest of the year?

Hannon: Well, Balmoral Park races year around, so we get away for the summer and then go back, right back to Balmoral Park.

DePue: Is it in your blood?

Hannon: Yeah. It definitely is.

DePue: It sounds like you kind of grew up with the business.

Hannon: Sure, yeah. I started when I was going away to college. So, horse racing's been very good to me.

DePue: Probably not the typical summer job that a college kid has, is it?

Hannon: No, it isn't.

DePue: Were the other kids jealous that you had such a neat gig?

Hannon: Well, yeah, probably. See, I went with two of my friends, when we were going away to college. I worked up in the press box, and they had to work outside on the track in the heat (DePue laughs). So, I stuck in the press box, and I guess I've been there all my life.

DePue: What's the favorite part of your job?

Hannon: Well, meeting people. Coming out to the fairs, meeting the great people that are participating in the horse racing, Department of Ag people, even the clerks. It's a whole variety of different people in the horse racing industry, all the different types of jobs that are available, very, very important, and then great people to work with.

DePue: Well, here's a little tougher one for you. What's the future look like?

Hannon: Well, that's a very, very tough question, but we're optimistic. We think that there could be some legislation that would help us. We are competing with

other gambling businesses and, therefore, in order to compete, we want a level playing field and to be able to compete. So, we want slots [slot machines] at the racetrack.

DePue: I'm guessing that twenty years ago, you might not have been saying that?

Hannon: Twenty years ago there wasn't the lottery and then there wasn't slots, where we had to compete. Therefore, we didn't have to worry about [them]. But now, in this economy and this competition, we definitely have to be able to compete. So that's all we're asking. We're an ag business. We have 40,000 jobs. We're a \$1 billion industry. Therefore, we need the help and support to continue to grow.

DePue: Any final words?

Hannon: No. We thank you very much. Come out to the state fairs.

DePue: Well, it's a lot of fun. It's fun to take in the assignment of the fair.

Hannon: Thank you very much.

DePue: Thank you, Jim.

Hannon: Bye. I'm sweating like a pig.

(pause)

DePue: (public address system in background.) This is Mark DePue with the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. Today is August 4, and we're here at the Brown County Fair with Jamaica Patton.

Patton: Yes, sir.

DePue: It's always good to have your name on your blazer. Jamaica, tell us where you're from.

Patton: I'm from Clinton, Mississippi. It's actually a little, small town, right outside of Jackson, west of Jackson, Mississippi.

DePue: You're here at the Brown County Fair because you're driving, right?

Patton: Right, correct.

DePue: How long have you been doing that?

Patton: Well, I was raised up on a little farm in Clinton, Mississippi. Then I moved to Illinois in, like, 2005. I've been doing it pretty much all my life.

DePue: Did you grow up on a standard farm or was this a—



- Patton: Well, my grandfather, he just had standardbred horses, you know. I raced around home and got to reading up on the races, about the Illinois program and eventually joined the Illinois program and been stuck here ever since.
- DePue: How many years in Illinois, then?
- Patton: I've been racing here twelve years, here in Illinois. I've been living in Illinois six years.
- DePue: Excellent. What was it like when you first got into the sport, those first couple races that you were in?
- Patton: Well, my first couple of races, actually, was amateur racing. It was pretty fun. I was a young kid then, and back in Mississippi we had a lot of matinee races, which was always fun. I started coming to Illinois; going to the different fairs was making it very exciting.
- DePue: Walk us through a typical race, from start to finish.
- Patton: A typical race from start to finish.
- DePue: I put you on the spot, I'm afraid, Jamaica.
- Patton: Yeah, you put me on the spot. Me, my type of racing, from start to finish, a lot of times here at the fairs, I like to be on the front, cutting the fractions, you know, inside. I'm just reining my horse properly and trying to get cross to the wire first.
- DePue: So there is a lot of strategy involved.
- Patton: Yeah. It's different strategy. I race a lot in Chicago, but here at the fairs, a lot of times, you get to the front, you can have a very good shot at winning.
- DePue: How many different horses would you be driving in a particular year?
- Patton: I would say anywhere from forty to fifty different horses.
- DePue: And tonight, how many are you driving?
- Patton: Three. I'm driving three horses tonight.
- DePue: I bet this is a number you know. How many races have you won?
- Patton: I'm pushing towards 500. I'm right at 480. I just looked last week. I'm pushing towards 500.
- DePue: Excellent. What part of the sport do you love the most?

Patton: The driving part. I love driving the horses. I also train at a stable, but nothing [is more] fun than driving.

DePue: Some adrenalin rush in doing that?

Patton: Yeah, it is, especially when you're win a big race; you feel an adrenalin rush.

DePue: Excellent. What happens when somebody calls you a jockey?

Patton: When they call me a jockey, I tell them I'm a driver. A jockey rides thoroughbreds, and I tell them I ride the buggies behind the horses.

DePue: Any doubt in your mind that harness racing's better than thoroughbred racing?

Patton: Well, in my mind, I think it's a lot safer. Thoroughbreds, you're up on their back, and plus, you've got to weigh them. You've got to weigh a certain amount, and you've got to have very strong legs to stay up on them.

DePue: Well, that's one of the obvious things for people who are stuck in the idea that it's thoroughbred racing, and the jockeys are small. I wouldn't say that you're a small guy.

Patton: Well, I'm not. In the harness racing, you really don't have to be a certain size. I've seen them up to close to 300 pounds.

DePue: So, tell me what it does take to be successful, doing this sport.

Patton: Well, for trainers, for me, I drive for different trainers. You got to give them what they want, what they ask for out on the track of their horse. You can't go out there and be no maniac. Just try to give them a good drive every time, and listen to the trainers.

DePue: Can you tell, when you first encounter the horse, the ones that have the heart and the drive to be winners?

Patton: Well, some you can... Well, not really. You can kind of read the program and read how they've been racing and kind of get an idea from there. But some that I drive could be better than what they really show.

DePue: With almost 500 wins, you probably have lot of owners that come looking for you, don't you?

Patton: Yeah. I've got a few owners I drive for, a few trainers I drive for. Fortunately, I'm lucky enough to get a chance to drive for those.

DePue: Any final words for us, Jamaica?

Patton: No, sir.

DePue: Well, good luck tonight.

Patton: Hey, thank you very much.

DePue: You bet.

(pause)

DePue: This is Mark DePue. I'm out at the Brown County Fair and I'm standing in front of Dick Hull. How are you doing tonight, Dick?

Hull: I'm doing great, Mark.

DePue: Dick is an old friend of the oral history program. We've interviewed you, and you've interviewed several other people for our program. Tell us about why you're here at the Brown County Fair tonight.

Hull: Well, I'm blood testing horses to see if there's any violation in the drug residues that might be in those horses that would give them a competitive advantage over any of the other horses that don't have that competitive advantage of extra drugs.

DePue: We're here watching the pari-mutuel betting process, watching the horse races, obviously, involved with that. Is this testing done for races where pari-mutuel betting is not a factor?

Hull: Yeah. It's also involved with the county fairs. We've been doing this for the last three years at county fairs to see if there's any violations involved in the racing.

DePue: Does that mean you get to go to an awful lot of Illinois county fairs?

Hull: Well, probably more than I'd like to sometimes (DePue chuckles), yeah.

DePue: How many do you think you've gone to so far this year?

Hull: I don't go to all. I just go to the ones that's in the central Illinois. We've gone to about five altogether, I think, and they're picked at random.

DePue: Are there several people who do what you do?

Hull: There's another veterinarian in southern Illinois that does this, yes.

DePue: Are you going to be working at the state fair, as well?

Hull: I'll be what they call the state veterinarian, track veterinarian, at the state fair, for a couple of days, anyway. That involves checking the horses when they come out of the paddocks to make sure that they're sound enough to race.

- DePue: But what you do tonight is a little bit different kind of experience, isn't it?
- Hull: Yes. This is strictly drug violation testing that we're doing here.
- DePue: We're going to be filming you as the next horse comes out. Is it right after the race is done that they're brought over here?
- Hull: They're brought over here immediately after the race. They're cleaned up, the harnesses taken off of them. They're washed down. Then they're put in a paddock where we can test the urine.
- DePue: That might be what we're seeing behind your shoulder here, isn't it?
- Hull: Probably so, yeah. After the urine is collected, then an hour and thirty minutes after the race, then we collect the blood sample.
- DePue: Do the horses get skittish when you do that blood sample?
- Hull: Some do; some are used to it. But these horses, at most of these county fairs, are two year-olds. A lot of times, that's the first time they've had a blood test.
- DePue: Any particular drugs you're looking for? I'm assuming that we're talking steroids. Is that the case?
- Hull: Well, steroids, but there's a lot of drugs that enhance the performance of these horses. Some of the guys prefer to push them as hard as they can, and they'll take a chance on injecting [them] with some type of a drug that would give them an edge above a horse that doesn't have that drug.
- DePue: Do you test all the horses that are in the race?
- Hull: No. This race we're testing only the winners. Then sometimes we random test, just to pick them here and there. Generally, the fair judge, the racing judge, picks that particular horse for some reason or another. Sometimes we don't have anything to do with the selecting. There's a pre-test that we do to test for blood gases, to see if there's any, what the trade calls it, juggeting (??) horses.
- DePue: Juggeting?
- Hull: Well, giving them a milkshake.
- DePue: Oh, okay.
- Hull: They call it a milkshake. It actually gives the horse more oxygen in the blood and gives them an advantage over a horse that doesn't have that extra punch that it needs to finish that line.
- DePue: Do you have any idea what the percentage of horses that fail some part of the drug test are?

Hull: Not really. It's low. Actually, we're looking at not that many violations. But we don't know. When we go to a race we've had a lot of guys that participate in a race say, "We're glad to see you here. We know we've got a chance on winning." So, they are aware that are drug violations out there, and our presence, a lot of times, prevents that.

DePue: Well, I would assume that part of your involvement with the sport that maybe you don't enjoy is all the travelling and being away from home. What parts of the sport do you really like?

Hull: Oh, I like the horses. I just like animals, and I like the horses. These race horses just have a personality of their own. They're very much fun to work with.

DePue: Do you have any final comments for us, Dick?

Hull: I don't think so. I think that this drug testing thing, unfortunately, is something that has to be done to kind of level the playing field for everybody that wants to be out there and participate.

DePue: Well, thank you very much. I think we're going to have a short shot of you while you're drawing some blood from the next horse that comes through here. We've had a very enjoyable night here at the Brown County Fair and look forward to wrapping up the project. Thanks, Dick.

Hull: Thank you, Mark.

(pause)

(Ed Teefey calls a race)

(pause)

DePue: Well, Ed, we finally got here, didn't we?

Teefey: Well, yeah, we're here at the Brown County Fair. I got a night tonight, beautiful weather and good horse racing, Mark.

DePue: Well, we had quite a bit of rain, right before this about two hours ago. It didn't seem to affect the track, though, did it?

Teefey: We've got pretty much a limestone all-weather track here at Mt. Sterling. It's in pretty good shape tonight.

DePue: You and I have been talking quite a bit about harness racing, over the last couple of months. We probably have close to four of five hours on it. But this is where it all comes together, isn't it?

Teefey: That's right. We've been out to the breeding farm and seen the babies, looked at how they did the breeding and been to the fairgrounds, where they're trained, but this is where it all comes together.

DePue: Is this one of your most enjoyable parts?

Teefey: Oh, this is a very enjoyable part. I've always enjoyed it. This is the 141st Brown County Fair, and I've been coming here since I was a little one. I always look forward to it.

DePue: How many years have you been announcing the races?

Teefey: Oh, I've been announcing the races here for about twenty-five or thirty years.

DePue: We've already seen quite a bit of the rest of the operation here, as well, the sport. I think, with everything put together, we're getting a real good feel of exactly what harness racing is about. So, I'll kind of close it with this one. What is it that you love the most about this sport?

Teefey: Oh, I think it's the racing; it's the people; it's the competition; it's the horses. It's a combination of a lot of things, but it all comes together when it's race night, like it is tonight.

DePue: We've talked about this a little bit before, but the future for harness racing's a little bit uncertain.

Teefey: A little bit, a little bit uncertain. We need a little help from the Illinois legislature.

DePue: And if you get that help, you've got a solid future?

Teefey: I think we have a solid future, if we get the help.

DePue: And if you don't get the help?

Teefey: It might be about over. It's that serious.

DePue: Yeah, a sad state of affairs for harness racing.

Teefey: I've got a horse in the winner's circle here, so I've got to break away.

DePue: Thank you. Thank you.

(end of transcript #4)