

People of the Sturgeon: Wisconsin's Love Affair with an Ancient Fish

Darlene Czeskleba Oral History

Date of Interview: Unknown

Location: Home of Darlene Czeskleba

Length of Interview: 01:12:20

Interviewer: KSK – Kathleen Schmitt Kline

Transcriber: NCC

Kathleen Schmitt Kline: So, I am just going to leave it here. You just do not have to worry about it. It should pick up.

Darlene Czeskleba: It should pick up.

KSK: Yes. It is pretty good mic.

DC: Now here's –

KSK: So, Darlene, can you just say your name –

DC: Oh, my name is –

KSK: – and where we are?

DC: Oh, we're in the den of my house. My name is Darlene Czeskleba. My husband used to be manager of the State Fish Hatchery at Wild Rose from 1956 until 1987. Before that, he was at Nevin in Madison, is where he started.

KSK: Wow. That must have been a long time.

DC: All these papers pertain to when he was Wild Rose supervisor, recognized manager of the year. He has several awards up there. The picture, the (Owen Growney?) picture was an award for this supervising manager of the year. I forgot who presented him with the award from Madison.

KSK: Oh, with that?

DC: Yes.

KSK: Wow.

DC: Yes.

KSK: That was from the DNR?

DC: Yes.

KSK: Okay. That is a lovely –

DC: Anyway, the award up here reads – well, we can take it down.

KSK: Oh, okay.

DC: I'll let you read each one of them. But it says he was the first in the nation to do cesareans on sturgeon.

KSK: I had not really done a whole lot on the research side of sturgeon. So, I have done more reading up on it. Yes, I have learned a lot. It is a really interesting story.

DC: It is. Yes.

KSK: So, we have –

DC: See, I'm trying to sort these out.

KSK: Darlene, you say your last name is Czeskleba?

DC: Czeskleba. Z is silent.

KSK: Okay. Is it Czech or Polish?

DC: Bohemian.

KSK: Bohemian. Oh.

DC: Bohemian. My husband's aunt said that she was told that years ago, when they came over from the old country, that the name had a Von in front of it. That meant they were very rich people.

KSK: Oh, really? They dropped it when they –

DC: Yes.

KSK: Probably because it was just easier.

DC: I don't know. But –

KSK: That is interesting.

DC: – I believe they probably were because my husband's grandfather's father set all his sons up in businesses. Donnie's grandpa had a hardware store in Montello. There was another one, I believe, in Shawano. There was a Gray Czeskleba oil company up at Waupaca Phillips 66.

KSK: So, they were all established.

DC: So, they could have been. I'm trying to look back in the genealogy and see if I can –

KSK: Oh, that is interesting.

DC: – find anything. Then because his aunt had said that the family had originated around Amherst, so I drove a school bus here for twenty-three years. This one day, I had to take

wrestling kids up to Amherst on a Saturday. I didn't have much else to do. So, I went down to the library. I found all kinds of the old Amherst advocates that told about coming out parties and debutante balls. The Philip Czeskleba family came from Montello to these big weddings. Oh, so, they must have been very rich at one time.

KSK: That is interesting. So, Mr. Czeskleba began his state service in 1949 as a conservation aide for Fishery Operations and Habitat Development at Nevin Fish Hatchery in Madison. He was promoted to assistant hatchery foreman at Wild Rose in 1956 and hatchery foreman in 1960. Mr. Czeskleba assumed the position of Lake Michigan District fish production supervisor in May 1981. Wow. During his distinguished career, Mr. Czeskleba was widely recognized as an innovative and extremely productive hatchery manager. Mr. Czeskleba has been responsible for finding ways to continually increase production of both cold and warm water fish species at Wild Rose. A few of Mr. Czeskleba's most noteworthy accomplishments include the pellet rearing of true and hybrid muskies in northern pike, hatching and rearing striped bass hybrids and lake sturgeon, raising pellet-fed walleye fingerlings and largemouth bass, and hatching white bass eggs. Mr. Czeskleba is the only person in Wisconsin who has hatched sauger. Mr. Czeskleba was recognized by Sturgeon for Tomorrow for his dedication to sturgeon propagation methods and techniques. He was the first person in the nation to spawn lake sturgeon by cesarean section without killing the fish, along with successfully hatching and rearing the offspring. In 1986, Mr. Czeskleba was recognized by the Department of Natural Resources as the agency's fish manager of the year. The Fish Manager of the Year Award was an honor for Mr. Czeskleba but a greater honor for his peers to recognize a truly outstanding individual in the fisheries profession. Oh, that is beautiful. So, this was the state of Wisconsin Natural Resources Board Retirement Resolution. This was in January 1987.

DC: Yes. That's when he retired.

KSK: Okay. So, I have talked to Bill Casper from Sturgeon for Tomorrow. He told me a little bit about how, first, Sturgeon for Tomorrow started, then this whole – it sounded like in the beginning of everything, Sturgeon for Tomorrow really wanted to learn how to artificially – well, not – but to propagate sturgeon in the lab. So, he and some others at Sturgeon for Tomorrow must have contacted your husband to try and –

DC: Well, there was a DNR office over there in Oshkosh that Russ Daley – this was one of Donnie's bosses. Dick Harris – Richard Harris was another boss of his from Oshkosh.

KSK: So, they must have been talking with Sturgeon for Tomorrow –

DC: Probably.

KSK: – and then decided, "Let us give this a try at Wild Rose."

DC: Yes. I don't remember how it –

KSK: Yes. Because this would probably be the most sensible place to give it a shot, the cold-water rearing.

DC: Well, Martin Schreiber introduction also was one. The top one, that award thing too. This is the same. On the back, it's – [laughter]

KSK: Right.

DC: Oh, and (Claire Moore?) too. Claire's passed away too. That was his assistant manager.

KSK: Oh, okay.

DC: So, this is funny. Apparently, they went on a fishing expedition.

KSK: [laughter]

DC: It says, "There are several outstanding bills that still are unpaid from the last conference of 1972. I will review and itemize them. One outward motor ran bad and needed an oil change. So, we had to buy a new motor. First night at the cottage, the weather got real cold. So, we got two ladies to stay over that night to watch the furnace and cook."

[laughter]

Oh, this is funny. Here's his old boss, Dick Harris, and another article on Dick.

KSK: [laughter] With his pipe.

DC: Yes. Let's see. Bob Henning, Dan Folz, Howie Wenzel, Pat Klein – Pat Klein was a boss of Donnie's too. I don't know if Russ Daley is still – I haven't heard that he's passed away. Oh, this is from his boss, Dick Harris. The letter is really –

KSK: [laughter] Oh, what a nice letter.

DC: Yes, ma'am. He has had volunteer groups such as Sturgeon for Tomorrow and Muskies Incorporated donate various equipment and money for operating costs. I should have had all these copied, so you could have copies.

KSK: Well, Darlene, I could take them with me back to the office and bring them back to you. But that is up to you because – I mean, I would take good care of them, but –

DC: Well, if you take good care of them, because I'd hate to lose any.

KSK: No, I would not. No.

DC: You probably would rather do that and look at them at your leisure.

KSK: Because there is a lot here.

DC: Yes, there is. See the picture of that baby sturgeon.

[laughter]

KSK: I think they are so cute. [laughter]

DC: Here's where we're going today. This is the old –

KSK: Okay. So –

DC: – office building.

KSK: – they are in the middle of a big renovation?

DC: Yes. This is the old office building. We'll be going there.

KSK: That was Don's office up there?

DC: Right. Yes. That's where we're going. We're going to have lunch at the Vintage Garden Cafe.

KSK: Oh, [laughter] lovely. [laughter]

DC: It used to be a bowling alley. We never –

KSK: Oh.

[laughter]

DC: Well, anyway, there are lots and lots and lots of – oh, I've got several copies of these. So, those ones you can look at. I'll keep these here. You know what? At one time, I had – oh, I go to a knit club up to Stevens Point. There was, in the newspaper up there, that Stevens Point was going to build a gallery to recognize conservation leaders at the University of Wisconsin. Stevens Point featuring displays depicting the lives and times of the state conservation leaders will be on Thursday, October 17th on campus. Well, I was trying to get him in there, but – there's an article. You can take that to read. I should have brought a pen.

KSK: Oh, Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame. Huh.

DC: Yes.

KSK: Interesting idea.

DC: Here's the governor's special citation. I think one of the awards he won was given to him by Tommy Thompson. This here is a picture of a bunch of these guys that worked for the DNR.

KSK: Great Photo. [laughter]

DC: This is Les Peters. Oh, I can't think of his name. You know, time goes by. This is Ted Schwochert. He still lives in Oshkosh. Dan Folz, he was a great big –

KSK: I have met him.

DC: Have you?

KSK: Yes. [laughter]

DC: Well, it's him.

KSK: He used to play – did he play basketball or –

DC: I don't know. This is Dick Harris. This is Donnie, and that was Mike Primising.

KSK: Okay. Heard his name before.

DC: I'm not sure, somebody thought –

KSK: Dick Harris looks like a fun guy. [laughter]

DC: He was. The one with his cigar or his bike. Yes. Here's a story about my husband retiring. These are pictures of him. I got pretty upset by this article because it was written by (Arlene Bottles?) [00:17:56]. This whole story, I mean, as far as – most successful men have a wife behind them that's raising the kids and cooking the meals and doing the laundry.

KSK: All of them do. [laughter]

DC: Well, we were not mentioned in this article at all. He had moved here from Madison. He had just come back from a trip to Florida. Then one day, he said to me, "Well, you didn't really help me with my career." Well, I didn't work at the fish hatch. No. I did one day when they were on strike, one or two days.

KSK: Really?

DC: Yes. Then Donnie and I had to work because all the other ones were on strike.

KSK: Oh, wow.

DC: Yes. So, I had to go and feed fish and clean ponds. But anyway –

KSK: You did? [laughter]

DC: Yes.

KSK: Well, I guess because it had to be done.

DC: Well. Yes. It had to be done. So, we'd been across the road or come back – because there were ponds on both sides of the road – come back, and these yahoos from [laughter] other state departments –

KSK: [laughter]

DC: – like up at King there, sitting outside our gate with their grills and whatnot. They'd parked there all day. Anybody that worked at the hatchery or come in, they'd sit there and holler, "Scab, scab, scab."

KSK: [laughter]

DC: Well, anyway, it's –

KSK: Well, otherwise, you would lose all those fish. I mean, they –

DC: Well, they had to be taken care of. Yes.

KSK: Right.

DC: But anyway, this is quite an article, and I got little upset. I wrote this to Mrs. Bottles. These are all pictures of him. There's him with his big northern that he caught.

KSK: Okay. That is it right there?

DC: Yes. That's the big northern that he caught on Pine Lake, forty and three-fourth inches. It weighed 24 pounds.

KSK: Wow. So, Darlene, were you married in Madison, or were you married –

DC: Yes. Yes, we were married in Madison.

KSK: Did you meet in Madison?

DC: No. I met him up at Waupaca, in a little restaurant. [laughter]

KSK: Really?

DC: The Bratwurst –

KSK: [laughter]

DC: – next to the Rosa Theater.

KSK: [laughter]

DC: Yes. That was something.

[laughter]

There were like six young guys came in this one night.

KSK: Oh, were you working there? Were you waitressing?

DC: Yes. I was waitressing. I just barely turned seventeen.

KSK: [laughter]

DC: I was working in there. These six gorgeous, young guys come in. [laughter] It makes your tongue get thick and all that.

KSK: [laughter]

DC: Anyway, it was near my quitting time. Anyway, they came in. So, I waited on their table. The one, Donald, that's him up there –

KSK: [laughter]

DC: – first time I saw him, flashed through my mind, "Someday, I'm going to marry him."

KSK: [laughter]

DC: We did.

[laughter]

KSK: How old was he when –

DC: He was nineteen. Well, he was born in [19]31 and I was in [19]33. This was in 1950, the end of September or October 1950. So, I had just turned seventeen in June. So, he'd turned nineteen in September.

KSK: Then when did you marry?

DC: In [19]51, the next year, November of the next year. It was three days before Uncle Sam hauled him off to the Marines.

KSK: Wow. Then how long was he gone?

DC: Two years. But I went and joined him out in California. So, we lived out there about a year and a half.

KSK: Then came back to Wisconsin.

DC: Came back and his job was waiting for him.

KSK: Wow.

DC: Yes, the fish hatchery. They counted those two years in.

KSK: Okay. So, he started off in Madison and then –

DC: Yes.

KSK: – you moved up here.

DC: Yes. Then we had – well, I had Gordy during – he was in the service then two more boys before we moved up here. But that story – because I had given up lots of jobs to follow this man around the country. I used to work at Rayovac in Madison.

KSK: Oh, you did?

DC: In a battery factory.

KSK: Yes.

DC: Yes. I was a punch press operator. I made the bottoms for the regular flashlight. Took me two weeks to get used to that job. Because you had to feed this strip of metal, about 8 inches wide, into this big thing that came down. It had a cage in front of it. So, you couldn't get your hands in it. But it came down, I don't know, two-ton press, bang, bang, bang. You had to feed this in here. They had a stopper here and fed it so far in there. Anyway, two weeks, it took me two weeks. I'd come home just like this. I was pretty much shaking for [laughter] –

KSK: Well, yes. I mean –

DC: – shook for two hours.

KSK: – just over and over and over again.

DC: Yes. I shook for two hours. [laughter] But after a couple of weeks, I got used to it. Then I didn't shake anymore. Well, anyway, so, I had left there to follow him out to California. Then I got a job out there in a real nice department store, Buffums of California. Anyway, I loved the job. He comes home this one night, and he says, "Well, better start packing. We're leaving. We're leaving Friday night."

KSK: Just like that?

DC: Yes. Well, he was all done. So, I had to tell my boss the next day. I cried because I loved my job. She says, "If you ever come back here, your job's waiting for you," which was nice of her. Never been back there since. So, then it was there. Then I got a job with the Highway Commission. They were doing road surveys. So, I worked there one summer as a – what do you call it? Not a limited – well, LTD or –

KSK: Oh, an LT, yes, for the summer.

DC: More or less. Then they called me back the next year. While I was there, they called me up to fill an aide or clerk one position in Bascom Hall at the Office of Admissions. So, here, I had a nice state job also.

KSK: On campus and –

DC: Yes. I walked at Bascom Hall every day, even though I was pregnant with Teddy.

KSK: [laughter] Oh, my gosh, walking up that hill.

DC: I remember when [laughter] I went to work this one day, Thursday – I think it was a Thursday. I kept kind of having to run to the bathroom. I knew I was due time [laughter]. Anyway, I just told my boss, "I won't be in tomorrow."

KSK: [laughter]

DC: So, that night, I had my Teddy and –

KSK: [laughter] I won't be in tomorrow. [laughter]

DC: I won't be in tomorrow. That was that too.

KSK: So, how did you –

DC: Then he was so tiny. He only weighed 3 pounds and 9 ounces. So, we had to leave him in the hospital until he got to be 5 pounds or better. Well, they wanted me to come back to work so badly. So, I went back to work for almost a month. Then I took off a couple few weeks –

KSK: When he was released from the hospital.

DC: – when he was able to come home.

KSK: Wow.

DC: Yes. [laughter]

KSK: How did you feel about moving up to Wild Rose?

DC: Well, I didn't want to really, but – and we didn't discuss it. I didn't know he had taken an exam for it. I guess, I don't know, he just wanted to surprise me or [inaudible]. There again, came home from work and said, "Start packing. We're moving in two weeks." I said, "What?" Yes. So, then I had to give my notice there. I had just been put on permanent in July. This is August, September. So, here we go again.

KSK: Then to pack up the house and to do all of that?

DC: Yes. Anyway, here, I had a state job too. Imagine if we'd have discussed this, whether we did – I don't know. Sure, it was great for his career, but – so, after this, oh, I wrote to this Arlene Bottles. I said, "You know what? As far as I know, behind every successful man, there's a woman that's taking care of the house and all this and that. I don't think he would've gotten this job if he'd been single." Because he had responsibilities. I don't think a single person would have been chosen for such a job. Anyway, I told her I gave up many good jobs to follow him around then to not even be mentioned. I said, "Me and my sons moved up here to become nobodies. We're just nobody. According to this story, we're nobody." Well, I said something to Donnie this one day, and that's what he said, "Well, you never really helped me with my career." I told him, I said, "Well, you wouldn't have got the job if it wasn't for me and three little boys that showed you we're responsible and dependable."

KSK: And that he had support –

DC: That's what they were looking – right.

KSK: – back at home. Yes.

DC: That's what they were looking for, somebody dependable and reliable.

KSK: Stable and –

DC: Yes. So, anyway, then after that, he says one day – and this is a month or so before he passed away. He says, "What'd you do with that article from the resort anyway?" I said, "Oh, it's over there on the bench under the organ over there." Well, then after, he died. The next month he died. A couple months later, I went to look for that. It was gone. Never did find it. So, I think he destroyed it. But I got this when I went to (Argus?) and got the copy of that too. Because it was a nice article about him. So, anyway – but he left me well taken care of here. So

–

KSK: Relationships are tough, are they not?

DC: Yes.

KSK: I am getting married in a couple of months.

DC: Are you?

KSK: Yes.

DC: Well, congratulations.

KSK: Thanks. But I mean, it is a tough –

DC: Oh, yes.

KSK: It is – yes.

DC: My son that I just lost –

KSK: I am sorry.

DC: – he had two marriages. They were both terrible.

KSK: It is a hard thing.

DC: I think that's what pushed him over the edge, this last. For ten years, she had to control his life with her. Even though she remarried and had two more children, twins, with her new husband, couldn't live in peace. She always –

KSK: Could not let him go and –

DC: No. Always got to make him beg for visitation and grovel for – so, that's my next project is – you should see my living room upstairs. I've got [laughter] boxes of pictures all over in there because they had to set up a collage or whatever for – so, they're all over. Then there are photograph albums that might as well start filling them instead of hauling the boxes back down in the basement. So, [laughter] the dining room is full. This is full of this stuff. That in the boxes there, I'm going to have to go through them next because I am going to haul her to court. She won't let me see the granddaughter – his daughter.

KSK: Your granddaughter.

DC: My granddaughter. Yes. So, I'm going to have to haul her to court. I wrote a letter last week asking if she could let Ashley come and visit for a couple hours on Saturdays or something. I haven't heard back. I sent it registered and certified. Must be \$5.20 just to send a little letter right here in town.

KSK: Is she here in town?

DC: Yes. She lives four houses down. Then she's got a Dollar Store down on Main Street. She slapped Tom with a restraining order. So, this amounted to that he was not to drive past her house nor past that store for four years.

KSK: The town is not that big, is it?

DC: No. But because he'd hauled her in a month or two before for not letting Ashley come – he was supposed to pick her up at 6:00 p.m. They say, "Come back at 8:00 p.m. or something. This last time that he got her, the stepfather comes running out to the car at 6:00 p.m. and says, "You can't pick her up now. She's got softball practice. You can come back at 8:00 p.m." Well, Tom would've loved to take her to softball practice. It was his hours.

KSK: His time.

DC: So, that upset him. He was just on the brink of – he took her to school that morning and came home. An hour later, he did that.

KSK: I am so sorry.

DC: So, I shouldn't even be talking about it.

KSK: No. It is just fine. I do not know why people have to be so terrible to each other.

DC: Oh, I don't know. Well, let's see here. What was in here? Oh, must have been that letter. No. Oh, this was an article about Stevens Point.

KSK: This one? Okay.

DC: Yes. You probably don't want that anyway. Okay. Let's see. That was from Stevens Point. This is just something that was in the paper a few weeks ago. But this is so good. This is what they're going to be doing with that fish hatchery there, which they've already started. Let's see. You had [inaudible]. Let's see. I don't know if you – [inaudible] about that Dan Folz. Oh, he lives in Oshkosh now.

KSK: I have met him a couple times. When they are doing taggings – when they are tagging sturgeon –

DC: Oh, sturgeon, yes.

KSK: – he still helps out with that.

DC: Is he? Yes. Oh, and this was a letter from –

KSK: I did not realize that so many people worked at this hatchery.

DC: Well, only ten.

KSK: Oh, the hatchery system probably. So, that is a couple of other –

DC: What does it say? How many –

KSK: It says in here, "Some of these facilities are over eighty years old. The hatchery system employs sixty-seven permanent staff and about twice that many seasonal staff." The system though –

DC: What?

KSK: – that might mean – I do not know what they mean by the hatchery system. That means all the hatcheries in this state?

DC: Gosh, I would think they'd be more than that for all the hatcheries.

KSK: Yes, but not that many here at Wild Rose, sixty-seven.

DC: No.

KSK: That is a lot of people.

DC: Oh, no. Some of these facilities are in the hatchery system. Yes. Well, that would be the whole system.

KSK: Okay. All right.

DC: Yes.

KSK: That is quite an overhaul that they are doing, renovation.

DC: Oh, it is. It is. Did you want that?

KSK: No. I probably do not need that. But that is nice to read. Because I have not really read much about it.

DC: Oh, well, that's all right. Oh, you can take all of this.

KSK: Okay.

DC: Here's the old fish hatchery. I think I have maybe some more. Now, these aren't in order. December, this is [19]86. This is [19]85. I still got more here.

KSK: Oh, my God. That is great.

DC: Oh, this was the article that I called you about. You've seen that.

KSK: Yes.

DC: Yes. Let's see. Do you have one?

KSK: I have one of those. Yes.

DC: Yes. Okay. I'll just put this over here and this. Okay. This is the same. Okay. Oh, that's [inaudible]. Oh, Jim Moore, he was another one that was a –

KSK: Jim Moore.

DC: Jim Moore was another one that was one of the guys in that picture.

KSK: In here? Okay.

DC: Yes, I'm sure. Okay. Here's Moore, another – this one's really old. There's a house up here, and this was the little park out in front. We lived in that house for –

KSK: Oh, you did?

DC: Yes. We lived in there for about twelve or thirteen years.

KSK: When you first moved up here?

DC: Well, when we first moved up here, there was a house across the road on the main twenty-two. Now, it's torn down. All that's left there is a little garage. Then this here too is the hatchery. Oh, this is what's going on now out there. Here, he was – let's see. What is this? This is Wisconsin Conservation Bulletin, 1958. There, he's sitting there in class on the end there.

[laughter]

KSK: He looks very attentive, absorbing, book learning [laughter].

DC: Yes. We've had cougars out –

KSK: Really?

DC: – near where we lived out in the country. Because I've seen them twice.

KSK: You have?

DC: I did.

KSK: I have heard stories.

DC: My husband says, "You better not be telling that around. Everybody will think you're nuts."

KSK: [laughter] No, I have heard that a lot.

DC: Oh, yes. This was in the *Appleton Post-Crescent*, another article. Oh, I don't know what date this is, but it's efforts to raise purebred muskies. So, it mentions his name. This is the *Milwaukee Journal*. Oh, here.

KSK: Oh, terrific.

DC: [laughter]

KSK: Oh, that is great.

DC: "Sturgeon Survives This Area." [laughter]

KSK: Oh. Darlene, do you remember – Bill Casper told me how things started getting rolling with this project was Bill Casper contacted this professor from New Hampshire, from Dartmouth University, Ballard, William Ballard. He must have been in his seventies or something during –

DC: I don't know. The only professor I heard about was – well, there may have been, but this one came from Russia.

KSK: This professor from New Hampshire, he had worked with the Russians. He had been over there quite a lot, and he had learned how to –

DC: Oh, is he the one that –

KSK: This might be the same guy.

DC: Oh, it might be.

KSK: I am still learning more about him. I do not really know that much. But from what I have learned, he had done a lot of research over in Russia and had learned the techniques from the Russians. Bill Casper somehow had heard about this and invited him. First, they flew him to Oshkosh to talk at a Sturgeon for Tomorrow meeting or something. But then from what I have heard, he came up here. He must have shown your husband how – I think the big thing was using some sort of clay with the eggs to keep them from sticking together.

DC: Oh. I don't know.

KSK: Then I have just heard stories. Bill Casper said that this professor slept at the hatchery overnight. Well, do you remember that?

DC: Well, I know there was one that stayed.

KSK: Okay.

DC: Yes. He stayed right –

KSK: Maybe that is the same guy.

DC: That could be then because –

KSK: He stayed there in the hatchery overnight.

DC: Yes. He stayed right in this – I think it'd be this building here.

KSK: So, did you meet him? Did you meet the –

DC: No, I didn't.

KSK: But you heard about him coming and –

DC: Yes.

KSK: Okay.

DC: Donnie said, "Well, he wouldn't go and stay at a motel. He was going to sleep right there, so he didn't miss –

KSK: Anything.

DC: "– anything." [laughter] It was here too, probably. I've got a valise or something upstairs that I could get that you could put all these papers in.

KSK: Oh, that would be terrific.

DC: Let's see. What's going on? See, now, this, well, the problem has been identified and corrected, and the mortality has been virtually stopped now. Steve Pfeiffer, that's the manager now. So, this was April 24th, 1989. But they lost a lot of fish. I wonder where the rest of this is.

KSK: Darlene, what is the story with how this whole idea about using the – what was that – the hospital stitching to doing sutures on them.

DC: Oh, sutures.

KSK: You said, I think, before, your friend was –

DC: Well, Claire Moore, his wife worked at the hospital –

KSK: Okay. She was a nurse?

DC: – in the nursery. She was a nurse's aide or whatever, but she worked in the nursery. So,

Donnie asked Claire to ask Gail to get some sutures, swipe some from the – [laughter]

KSK: Right. Borrow some.

DC: Borrow, yes.

KSK: [laughter]

DC: Borrowed some.

KSK: So, did Gail sew up the sturgeon then?

DC: Oh, no. Just Donnie did.

KSK: Oh, he did?

DC: Yes.

KSK: How did he know how to do that? He just figured it out?

DC: He was a smart guy. Yes.

KSK: [laughter] Just needed the right materials.

DC: Yes. Well, this does not pertain to anything here, but this shows a big picture of a big sturgeon. It was apparently floundered somewhere. Where is –

KSK: [laughter] Oh, the police found this fish floating dead. Can you imagine? [laughter]

DC: Oh, yes. I don't see any – yes, this is another. That one doesn't belong in there, I guess. Now, something's missing. This is from the end of some other one, that spawn, the title is Spawn.

KSK: Oh, okay. That might be from this one.

DC: Oh, yes. They're here again as excess nitrogen.

KSK: Oh, yes. That is terrible.

DC: Well, it's spawn. Oh, no. Maybe this didn't pertain to it. No. I must have saved it because of this. Did you want that?

KSK: Sure. I will take that. Thanks.

DC: Okay. "Hatchery Story in the Town on page 5." Oh, yes. Oh, here. See, this is in this resort. Here's the batteries where the eggs are in. So, this would've been the area that that

professor stayed in –

KSK: Okay, just watching.

DC: – to watch these. This is my husband here overlooking the railing that would be where the tanks are. Here he is with a – this is 1982 with that little sturgeon.

KSK: Oh, that is terrific. Could I borrow this to scan this?

DC: Sure.

KSK: That is great to have him holding a sturgeon.

DC: "Lake Sturgeon Important to State." See, there's my husband standing there.

KSK: Oh, this is great.

DC: That's why I just didn't like that other guy saying he started all this. Oh, "Fish Hatchery's Newest Building," oh, that's on the next page.

KSK: Oh, this?

DC: Oh, and the resort are here in there where the fish are, the jars.

KSK: Got it. Okay.

DC: So, on the next page is a picture of the newest building. That one is up here. This is – where was this? This paper is green.

[laughter]

Where does it come from? *Fon Du Lac Commonwealth Reporter*, Friday, May 28th, 1971. That's him there and lots of pictures of the hatchery. Now, this was in there with that. So, "Scenic Site: Birthplace of Multitudes of Fish." This was folded up in there. I don't know where this was being done, but that's my husband here. They must be spawning fish somewhere.

KSK: They got the microscope right out there.

DC: "Top State Award to Hatchery Boss." Little article there. This is June 4th, 1970. "Would Trout Fishing Disappear without Output from the Hatchery?" That's trout.

KSK: Sounds like your husband was always coming up with new ideas of how to do things and –

DC: Yes. It must have been. There's Dick Harris. That's his boss out there fishing.

KSK: [laughter]

DC: So, I don't know. Well, you'll read through and see what – there we go. Oh, here's Vern Hacker. There went a fine biologist and hardworking friend. Hacker left a tear in the eyes of all fishermen. Well, he worked with Donnie too. I don't know if you want that to read. I'm sure –

KSK: Heard his name.

DC: Vern Hacker. These are some pictures of him. Let's see. (Gordy Pregel?), that's another name.

KSK: Yes. I have heard his name a lot too.

DC: Yes. I'm not sure what he looks like. That's Howie Wenzel. They must have been at a – well, that's the ones presenting the picture of what? Oh, they grow. [laughter]

KSK: Oh, neat.

DC: Do you want to put those pictures in this envelope?

KSK: Sure.

DC: "Primising's Era Draws to a Close." Well, he's retired, Mike Primising. This is Mike. "A Club Gives Hatchery Tanks to Raise Muskies." Well, [laughter], they gave them those tanks, but they never were able to use them. There's more pictures of the old hatchery and the more modern when it – the old postcards. I gave you the –

KSK: Yes.

DC: Yes, the whole header. That was his retirement party.

KSK: Oh. [laughter]

DC: Him and Ted Schwochert. They retired together. They had their party together.

KSK: No ties, no speeches, really.

[laughter]

DC: This is in this one. Harris again. Apparently, he took in – that's him fishing.

KSK: Japanese child?

DC: Yes, a family or something.

KSK: Oh wow.

DC: The Harris Cottage at Point Comfort. It was about the ship in the harbor when General Douglas MacArthur signed the Peace Treaty at the end of World War II. Must have been Harris. Harris had gone to Japan as part of a tour that included China and Hong Kong. I don't know if you want that.

KSK: I probably do not need that one.

DC: Probably not. Oh, well, I think you probably have this, I don't know. This was in Argus, June 11th, [19]86. Here's, "Fishing for Sturgeon: Hooked on Greed."

KSK: Oh, I will take that.

DC: Well, that's an interesting article. [inaudible] There's White River. Well, this is Main Street in Wautoma. In fact, you can see them there. There's a place right on Main Street that you can get down and see the fish. It's usually [inaudible]. You probably want to read that.

KSK: Oh, that is where they put them in.

DC: Well, they only put a few in there for – and people can't get at them to fish them out because –

KSK: So, they cannot just wade right there. [laughter]

DC: No. They're more or less for entertainment. That's just to go –

KSK: Go and look at them.

DC: Congratulations. That was his letter from – Mary L. Dooley, attorney at law. Well, she got my name wrong, called me Donna. It says "It was a pleasure to meet you, your charming wife, Donna, and two of your sons at your place last Saturday afternoon." [inaudible]. Oh, well, it's just sort of a nice little – an attorney visited. It's kind of nice. Professor Jacob (Shapiro?), School of Letters and Science. Mr. LP Voigt, he was the director of DNR in the [19]60s, [19]68. "Tricks Trout into Spawning." Two months earlier.

KSK: Okay. Probably with light?

DC: Yes.

KSK: Needed more light or –

DC: Less light.

KSK: Oh, okay.

DC: Less light covering up those tanks – those big tanks, an hour earlier in the daytime. Here's

a –

KSK: Oh, imitating fall conditions. Okay.

DC: Here's an article about the trout. There's an aerial view of the hatchery.

KSK: Oh, big facility.

DC: Here's my house. Here's Dick Harris again. [laughter]

KSK: [laughter] With his –

DC: That's my husband.

KSK: [laughter] Oh, okay.

DC: Yes. There's a couple of these. So, I'll just put that one here. "Largest State Coldwater Hatchery." See, here, they're dumping pike eggs in one of these jars. But they would do the same for the other ones. In the beginning, this is the first crew to work on the Wild Rose Fish Hatchery. The foreman was a man by the name of Zalsman. Other workers were Frank Ramsdale, Jimmy Faye, Roy Burch, Frank (Randolph?), Emma Pritchard, Lonnie Pearson, Bob Jones, John Luther, and Martin Korleski. The boy and girl on the right were not identified. That's one of the first, I guess. "State closing something else in its hatchery program. Turn to page eight, column one, hatchery program is being cut." Well, you have to read that. I don't know what it's about really. [inaudible] It was performance and development reports.

KSK: Oh, I am sure he had to do a lot of those.

DC: Yes. We used to live in the fish hatchery. So, our rent was \$20 a month –

KSK: [laughter]

DC: – back in – what year? It doesn't say what year? Oh, November 1st, 1956. That's when we moved up here. That was for the first little house that we – here's a couple of signs. Well, they're the hatchery, one of the buildings in – oh, this is January, [19]87. Oh, this is my husband.

KSK: Okay. Could I just –

DC: Yes. You can take that. Let's see. I thought you would like an extra copy and find a story about Wild Rose. CT Smith, Louis Clyde, Clyde Smith, 5/30/71. I don't know. This is the last [inaudible]. Oh, that's the grounds, some hatchery, the ponds, fish. I don't know what they're doing. Counting a bunch of – this must have been an old, old picture of our house.

KSK: Oh, wow.

DC: Did you want any of these?

KSK: I pulled that one out of it.

DC: Okay.

KSK: Did I see the others?

DC: The rest are more or less on the same –

KSK: I will just take a peek.

DC: Yes, go ahead. My box is empty. So, I'll go up and find a –

KSK: This is great, Darlene, with all the old newspaper stories. Because I have been trying to do a lot of newspaper searches, but it is tough to do.

DC: Oh, I know.

KSK: Sometimes you get some things out of it. But it is more people who have clipped things and kept things. That is where I am getting most of the information from.

DC: Yes, right.

[end of transcript]