

ARKANSAS EXTENSION HOMEMAKERS COUNCIL

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Official transcript of:

Linda Tanner

Retired Sharp County Extension Professional

Original recording made April 4 2012

at Highland, Arkansas

Recorded, transcribed and edited by:

Bernadette Freigy

Sharp County Extension Homemakers Council Treasurer
Hardy Country Ladies Extension Homemakers Club Treasurer





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Oral History Program

Bernadette Freigy, Sharp County Extension Homemakers Council Treasurer
and Hardy Country Ladies Extension Homemakers Club Treasurer

4 April 2012

This is an audio recording of Linda Tanner, retired Sharp County Extension professional. This interview is part of the Arkansas Extension Homemakers Council Oral History Program, and Linda is answering questions asked by Sharp County Extension Homemakers Council Treasurer and Hardy Country Ladies Extension Homemakers Club Treasurer, Bernadette Freigy.

Questions and comments by Bernadette Freigy are in boldface type; Linda's responses and comments are in lightface type.

I am Bernadette Freigy. This is the interview with Linda Tanner, who is a [retired Extension] professional, for the Arkansas Extension Homemakers Council Oral History Program. This is being done April 4, 2012, at the hometown radio KSAR, KFCM, and KOOL in Highland Arkansas Sharp County .

The audio recordings and transcript of this interview will be donated to the David and Barbara Pryor Center for Arkansas Oral and Visual History at the University of Arkansas.

The recording, transcript, and any other related materials will be deposited and preserved forever in the Special Collections Department, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville, and the copyright will belong solely to the University of Arkansas.

Are you willing to give the Pryor Center permission to make the audio file and transcript available to others?

Yes, I am.

First, I would like to give you—I would like you to give your complete legal name, spell it for me, and then tell me the city and county in which you

presently reside.

Linda Gaye Mooney Tanner—L-i-n-d-a, G-a-y-e, M-o-o-n-e-y, T-a-n-n-e-r. I live in Ash Flat, Arkansas, and reside in Sharp County, Arkansas.

This is going to be a very formal interview; I want you to share your memories of your involvement with the Extension Homemakers program—the good times and the challenges.

What has been your association with the Extension Homemakers Program?

I started to work for the Cooperative Extension Service in January of 1972. I was at that time the Extension secretary and I worked for 37 ½ years and retired in June of 2009, and I retired as administrative office supervisor. I was associated with the Extension Homemakers through the office doing programs, helping them with activities, anything that required, you know, secretarial responsibilities. I assisted them with through the agents.

Did you not also help with any of the club activities, or did you have anything to do with the Fair?

Yes, I worked with the Fair and the club activities. If the individual clubs required assistance with their handouts or patterns, or anything that, you know, educational materials that they needed, you know. I was always willing to help them and I worked with the Fair Association in the same way as the clubs.

What has Extension Homemakers taught you about the organizations themselves, the people? What do you feel you've gained with your association with Extension Homemakers?

I've learned a lot through the Extension Homemakers Clubs and their activities and their programs that they did back in the day they were allowed to do more. I don't necessarily say craft when I mean craft; I mean educational crafts where you could learn to actually learn how to quilt to put a quilt together. You could learn to—your financial management skills and—but I learned a lot of things through them, and there was always such a nice group of ladies to work with

and they were really supportive of the Extension office and if you needed volunteers to help with any activities, they were always there on the forefront to help.

What changes have you experienced in the organization?

Well, they have gone to from learning what I called fun things, which was really educational at the time, too, to more educational and planned things for them and [*hesitates*] . . .

Can you give me some examples?

Well, I hate to go back to the crafts 'cause [because] a lot of people think of crafts as—as not very educational things, but we at, at one time we taught—like quilting, how to quilt, how to piece a quilt, how to, you know, how to finish the quilt. We did needlework—count and cross stitch, sewing classes, canning classes and seems like though the years they kind of got away from those things and went to more family financial management, family economics, more things along that line and—but maybe they're kinda come around to some of those things from the beginning because now people are going back to wanting to learn how to garden, how to can. And those things really are important and the quilting aspect is also because you can use that finished product to keep warm, or, you know, different things and so I think that they've kind of come almost full circle.

Are you saying that maybe because of the way today's economy is going that people need to learn more about how to safely prepare foods? Would—could you expand on that a little?

Yes, I think that's important. A lot of people don't realize that—that the food safety aspect—and we did teach a lot of that—and the later years that I worked because food handling is very important because we can transfer a lot of diseases by mishandling our food. And so it is important that we learn how to when you cut up a chicken on your kitchen counter that you don't need to follow through and cut your salad up on that same counter or you're going to be seriously ill when you get through eating that meal. And so those things—those things were good and it's kind of surprising sometimes that the amount of

people that don't realize, you know, food safety aspects and so, so that—and the economy does play a part in that. You see more people in the later years learning to garden, learning to can, and so [*hesitates*] . . .

Well, Linda, I think, is there anything else—is there any special memory that you would like to share?

Oh, gosh, there probably is but I can't off the top of my head—the ladies have always been so supportive of me, and I guess one of the highlights—twice in my career—once kind of midway through—I had, had been off for some surgery and when I came back, the ladies had a nice party for me to let me know that I was missed and appreciated. And then the other one—they helped with my retirement party and they made it extra special and so I have appreciated them throughout the years and I hope I conveyed that with my willingness to help them and so it was a good time and I enjoyed them, and I kind of miss them in my retirement, [*gets a little teary eyed*] but I get to see them occasionally and so that's nice.

And also we, we appreciate seeing you because you do come back to the office and help and, and we enjoy seeing you again and really do appreciate the help that you have been to us. We never have felt that we were being an imposition and we really enjoy having you.

Well thank you for all your contributions to the Extension Homemakers and sharing your time and memory with us.

Thank you.

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