

Diana: Today is May 24th, 2018. What is your name?

Randall: My name is Randall Spare.

Diana: Where do you live?

Randall: I live north of Ashland about two miles.

Diana: And what's your occupation?

Randall: I'm one of the local veterinarians.

Diana: And how old are you?

Randall: I am fifty-seven.

Diana: Okay, so when did you first become aware of the Starbuck Fire, hereafter referred to simply as "the fire".

Randall: I actually was working that day in Guymon, Oklahoma. About noon, my office manager, Deb Fox, texted me and said there was a bad fire west of Ashland, Kansas. I didn't think much of it because it was so far away.

Diana: So when did you first find out that it was moving faster than what people first thought?

Randall: So at 3:30 or three o'clock that afternoon, she texted me back, and she said Ashland had been evacuated. So that signaled to me that it was moving faster. Shortly after that, they evacuated the veterinary clinic and took the six pets that were boarding at the veterinary clinic to my barn two miles north of Ashland. At that time, I had no idea about the fire that started 18 miles northwest of Ashland.

Diana: So when you were in Guymon, could you see the smoke?

Randall: I had no idea. It wasn't until I was actually on my way home about 5:00 o'clock when I went through Meade that I could see smoke in the east.

Diana: So did you have any trouble getting home? Did they stop you?

Randall: I knew a number of backroads, but I stayed on the highway, knowing that if I needed to be diverted from Meade that I could. But the last 10 or 12 miles, I was going quite fast. It would have been hard to stop me.

Diana: So when you were on your way home, was that about when the fire from the north was coming down close to your property?

Randall: Actually, by five o'clock I learned that the fire was north of our house. Somebody had driven out to my house and said, "Randall, your house is in quite a bit of danger." They couldn't see a hundred yards because of the smoke. So I actually asked them, "Could you take those pets that we just took out here and take them back to Ashland and put them in your garage?"

Diana: At that time I knew it was going to be safe because the fire turned out of the north. As I

drove up to my place, Mike Harden was pulling out from behind my house, and he had literally saved our home by within 100 yards by farming the pastureland behind my house to the north and to the west of my house.

Diana: Was anybody home at that time?

Randall: My wife had left that day at mid-morning. She was going to be gone for a few days, so nobody was home.

Diana: So when you made it back home and found out where the fire was and that Ashland was safe, what type of action did you take after that?

Randall: So actually I drove down the road to my neighbor Dave Bouziden's place just to see how he was doing because I had talked to him several times on the phone. I knew that his place was in danger, but I had no idea. So when I drove down there two miles from my house, his home was completely engulfed in flames, and there was no firemen and nothing around. So I knew he was losing his home.

My pasture with our cattle was just east of his house in the pasture land. And I looked out there, and he was out euthanizing cows and calves of his own. I knew he had lost a significant amount that were north of his house. So he was out putting cows and calves to sleep, and I drove through my pasture and looked at my cattle. It was awful. I didn't stay; I went and did some other things.

Diana: So the fire had already gone through your pasture?

Randall: The fire had already moved through the pasture it was already... Well, at that time it would have been almost skirting to the west side of Ashland.

Diana: So did you have any wheat pasture that you had cattle on?

Randall: Actually, I had 80 acres of wheat that I had my calves, fall-born calves were out on wheat, and they were weaned. There was probably 35 head of pregnant cows out there also that were safely out of harm's way.

Diana: So when you left your pasture, did you go back to town?

Randall: I drove up and down that road and went to town and actually picked up two cats at my place, pets, and put them in a pet carrier and carried them around with me for a while that evening. I went back to town and met somebody that needed to board their dog there because of their home being destroyed.

So I took that dog in, and I kept watching to make sure that my place wasn't destroyed and the fire didn't come back up. There was still quite a bit of fuel that could have been burned directly north, a quarter mile north, of my house. I was concerned about that, but at that time I was basically driving down our road and also watching Dr. Kellenberger's home to make sure, to see if it was okay.

Diana: So did you spend most of the night/early morning in town?

Randall: Actually, I went into town a number of different times and checked on people and actually checked on somebody's pet that was involved in an accident. Basically, I started... my thought process was the coordinating of what we were going to do. I probably went to bed at 2 o'clock. I was exhausted. I went in the house and fell asleep. Then it was about 3:30 in the morning

and the electricity was off, and a car drove in. It was our son Mark who had driven home from Manhattan. He brought a friend with him, and he came and stayed the rest of the week. He was in veterinary school, and he chose to ask permission later or ask for forgiveness. He just came home, and he stayed the rest of the week and helped us out.

Diana: At the veterinary clinic?

Randall: He helped a little bit at the veterinary clinic; he helped with our cattle, and he actually helped with some neighbors and just came alongside people.

Diana: So on Monday evening when the fire was still burning, were you starting to get calls from patrons yet? Or did they wait until Tuesday?

Randall: Actually no, a lot of people didn't call us, so when we woke up and got to the clinic early the next morning at 6:00, by that time Dr. Kellenberger had driven home. He had been trapped in Coldwater, so we formulated a plan. He went out in the country and took care of helping people assess their cattle operations and the cattle and what their particular needs were. I stayed at the veterinary clinic and fielded calls and directed traffic. It was at that time that we started calling people that we knew their operations were in harm's way and people that may not ask for help.

We felt it was our responsibility to field those and just to check on people because we knew where they were. We knew who they were and how they would ask for help.

Diana: Did most of your staff evacuate? Then did they return Tuesday?

Randall: Oh yeah, most all of them returned by Tuesday, and some of them didn't evacuate. I know that Deb Fox was there in Ashland really late and she used a wheat field south of town to be safe. So by Tuesday morning, we'd all come into town. Most of our efforts were all directed towards fire relief.

Diana: Did you have a lot of volunteer veterinarians come and help?

Randall: Yes, so on Wednesday we had a lot of veterinarians call and ask what we needed. Our heads were still trying to get around the situation and what we needed to be doing. By Wednesday, we were starting to get a few calls from people saying, "Could you help us. I need some help here."

So we actually had a veterinarian from K-State show up on Wednesday morning at about 10:00. He'd been out west speaking at a meeting, and he came by and said, "What can I do?" Just shortly before that, we'd gotten a phone call from an older lady who was worried about her husband. And they said, "Can you come and help us?" So we actually sent him out because he was an individual that had practiced. His father was a veterinarian and grandfather was a veterinarian, and we knew he would know how to interact with people.

It was so hard to go out and see people's operations when you knew that 90 percent of the cattle needed to be maybe destroyed. But some of them didn't look as bad as they were going to be in three or four days because those cattle that were euthanized, put to sleep, their feet were going to fall off. The hoof walls, they'd lost a lot of hair, and they weren't able to eat, or they were blind. And we knew that was going to be a progression. But our goal was just to put those cattle to sleep. In some places, we actually went out two or three times that week as the animals progressed. So we were there to help, to kind of come alongside people.

Diana: So were you also involved in where they had to have the records before they could bury

them?

Randall: We were in constant contact with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. We helped people understand that the things they needed to do when they got ready to bury their cattle were to have them counted, to account for farm service payments for disaster relief, to make sure they were buried in a high place, not near water, and not more than a hundred per hole. And we were also in contact with people that owned excavators and many people came in and volunteered and opened up those holes, and we did some coordination with the county. The county workers that had heavy equipment, they helped cover up those holes.

Diana: So did you find yourself spending a lot of time on the phone finding out regulations?

Randall: My phone time passed... my office manager Deb Fox, I said, "What do I normally spend on the phone?" And she said normally I spend about 4000 minutes a month. In March and April, I spent about nine thousand minutes a month on the phone. So by Wednesday, the other thing was starting to come in, was people wanting to bring hay. We were coordinating some of that hay relief. People started calling and saying, "I want to help out with some cattle."

And one gentleman showed up on Thursday morning and said, "You know, I live in eastern Kansas, and I'd like to bring some cattle out."

I'm thinking, "Okay that's nice. We don't have any money, and we don't have any grass. I'm glad you want to bring them out." And he said, "No, I'd like to give them to somebody." And I'm thinking, "Oh, what are you going to give? Two or three?" "No, I'm getting ready to wean my calf crop, and I'd like to offer them to somebody." "So how many would that be?" And he said, "About a hundred."

So during the summer, we couldn't take them right away. Later in the summer he brought them out and donated I think 40 or 50 head of heifers for an individual. So many people started calling us and asking us who we'd like to donate an animal to here or there, or we wanted it to go to a young person, so we helped coordinate those donations of animals. And there were times that people wanted to donate something that probably wasn't useful. We kindly and gently, tactfully, said that maybe they could sell that animal and just send us the money.

We didn't need to be using non-virgin bulls or Beefmaster or a Brahman bull that wouldn't do us much good in this country. So we spent so much time answering those calls and then actually calling people back. When an 80-year-old rancher said, "No, I'm fine." We knew he lost a lot of his ranch land; we'd call him back in two or three days. Some of them changed their mind.

One story was we found... The fire was on Monday, so Friday night we heard of a guy just near where the fire started down there in Forgan. We do work for him, and we said, "Do you need any hay?" He said, "Well, I've got a little bit." "How are you getting along? Did you lose a lot of grass?" "Yeah, we lost a lot of grass." Just in a matter of... By 10 o'clock that night, he'd had four or five loads unloaded at his place. Then we asked a gentleman out of Nebraska who said, "Hey, I'd like to bring a load of hay down." I said, "Could you take it to this gentleman?"

And I said, "In a day or so after you deliver it, could you call him back and see how he's doing?" We knew that a lot of times our pride gets in the way of accepting help. And we wanted to encourage people to accept that help.

Diana: So when they were missing their pasture, they also probably had burned fences. So where were they able to keep their cattle?

Randall: It was a little bit like Open Range.

Diana: Yeah.

Randall: So many of those fences, they started to put up some hot wires, or they moved them to a part of the ranch that wasn't burned. Our neighbor to the north of us, he had 250 cows, and he had 13 left. So he moved his virgin heifers, he moved those to a growing yard. And so people also in neighboring counties and Comanche County called and said, "Hey, I've got some room for some cattle." So that was probably the first thing. Those cattle that weren't harmed, they were moved out of the way.

Diana: Were they gotten out pretty quickly?

Randall: I personally, it dawned on me on Tuesday night that I needed to find a different place for what I had left, so I called a client of mine that has a feedyard. I said, "Could you take my cattle in?" And before I could get it out of my mouth, he said, "Send them." So I called three truckers, and they moved the cattle and didn't charge me anything. So many people, the vendors that our clients have done work with, were so compassionate and probably the most challenging thing that we all did was accept help, accept people unloading hay, and all we could do was say, "Thank you."

Diana: So on Monday, there were a lot of people that were using either three-wheelers or their horses to gather cattle and happened to be in pretty heavy smoke. Did any of those horses that were being used by cowboys have trouble?

Randall: You know, I would say that the horses that had the heaviest trouble were horses that were exposed to the fire itself. I don't know of any long-term detriment to any of the horses that lived through it without being burned. And that probably reminds me that, you know, the cattle were in three different conditions. Those that were alive and healthy, those that were dead, and those that needed to be euthanized. Many of those ranchers lost 90 percent of their cattle.

Diana: Is that mostly in the western part of the county or all over?

Randall: Actually, there were nine ranches that lost 90 percent of their cattle. So it started to the north, it moved down south from north of Ashland and then to the west and south of Ashland, mostly to the southwest. There was nine of those that probably lost 3,500 head of cattle.

Diana: So most of the cattle within a few days, you knew that they had to be either be put down or they weren't going to survive. What about some of the survivors? Are there some of them that are now showing...

Randall: Actually, those cattle that survived the fire, that didn't have any long-term effects, are okay. Even just today, I was on a ranch that had lost quite a few cattle, and I saw a cow that had a big scar on her back. She'd been burned and had a burned scar on her, but she is going to be all right. She's all right. So most of them either were dead or needed to be euthanized right away. Those that lived, we haven't seen any long-term effects from it.

Diana: So the cows that were expecting calves during that time, that survived, were their calves born okay?

Randall: The calves were born okay, but some of those cows had burned udders and couldn't produce any colostrum. So some of those calves were actually orphaned, and there were some

health effects from those because there were times that those cows didn't give colostrum. If they weren't right there to take that calf, then some of those calves had some health issues that weren't really from the fire. But it was due to the fact that they didn't get good colostrum.

Diana: So were there a lot of calves that were orphaned that were picked up and taken other places? I don't know the exact number, but I'm guessing about 200 of those calves. There was a veterinary colleague of mine from Johnson that arranged for some calves to go to a Holstein heifer yard. And that worked out really well, they took great care of them at no cost and then people went and picked them up when they kind of got things gathered up.

Diana: So most of them came back home?

Randall: All of them came back home. There was a project at Meade where those 4-H'ers took cattle in, calves in. You know, no one charged us for that cattle care at all.

Diana: So since you weren't here and your wife was gone, and there was nobody actually at home because all your kids are gone now too. So you didn't have any chance to really do any protection for your own place, you were kind of depending on neighbors and stuff, and they pretty much took care of everything?

Randall: We were at the mercy of God and our neighbors. There was a wheat field a quarter mile north of our house that probably slowed the momentum of the fire down, and we had mowed last summer west of our house just to knock some weeds down lightly, and probably there wasn't the fuel available just immediately west of our house. But if it would have gotten any closer, it would have gotten into some cedar trees and the way the wind was blowing we would have suffered quite a bit of damage.

Diana: So you lived out here for a long time, and you know what regular prairie fires or grass fires are like. How would you compare this to that? What was the main difference?

Randall: The main difference is, it was so all-consuming. One rancher said that it burned his 35,000 acres in 50 minutes. Whether it was prior, early in the day, with the fire coming from the west/southwest, or the fire that had a 30 mile run and then blew south, both of those fires were so vast, and there was so much fuel to be burned, that was probably what made it worse was that so many of these ranches that had the greatest losses were the best stewards of their land because they left grass that had grown. So the more grass that was there, the hotter the fire and the more fuel to burn.

What we're seeing now, 14 months later, is we're seeing some of these grasses will come back, but the crowns have been destroyed. It will take three or four years for it to get thick again.

Diana: Although it has come back pretty well because of the rains right afterward. So did you lose a lot of pasture and fence and cattle yourself?

Randall: I lost probably all but six acres, or 10 acres of grass, were all burned. I think I counted up, in all, about 20 miles of fence that needed either repaired or replaced.

Diana: So did you take advantage of the cost share and the KLA and the community foundation?

Randall: The community foundation was very helpful, and the Kansas Livestock Association and the Working Ranch Cowboy Association. That fund was started by Farm Journal and the Buffet Foundation and a matching fund. Those all helped us. They obviously didn't heal us but are making

it so many of the people can be in business today. I would say that the agricultural community throughout the United States came running to our aid.

Diana: Did you take advantage of the volunteers that came to help take care of your fence?

Randall: We had some help early on to help pick up some of our fences.

Diana: So Mark being here made it possible for you to go ahead and do different things for your customers and make sure everybody was getting along right, so he kind of took some of the load off you?

Randall: That's right.

Diana: And then he could do some veterinary things for you also?

Randall: Yes. He did some assessing and euthanizing of quite a few cows of our own.

Diana: So were they mostly shot?

Randall: Yeah, these cows were all shot by gunshot and after three or four days of that, shooting those cows looked apparently healthy that were chewing their cud but their feet were falling off. Those were really, really difficult, and they started to wear on the people that were doing that. There are still pictures of piles of cattle put in one place and getting ready to be buried in your mind that you'll never leave but helps us understand the enormity of the problem.

Diana: Was there a lot of wildlife that was burnt also that had to be taken care of?

Randall: Actually there were a few wildlife that were still alive that weren't killed but lots of deer that we saw in pastures that didn't get out of harm's way. And you don't see them, but I imagine there were quail and birds. One thing that was noticeable, that week to ten days after that, was you just didn't hear any birds.

Diana: So when you were driving around that night and checking and making sure things were going right or better, did you notice the temperature change?

Randall: Oh yeah, by one o'clock in the morning the temperature was almost freezing. So as time went along, the sun went down, and there was in my mind also... There's a picture of fire, a ring of fire all the way around surrounding. You could look south, you could look north, east, and west and there was just fire that still remained to be burning where there was fuel to be burned. It wasn't blowing, the wind wasn't blowing, but it was burning those areas that were down in the draws where there a lot of dead timber.

Diana: What about the wind?

Randall: The wind had gone down at maybe dark. It was more just out of the north, a little bit northeast because I remember there was some CRP north of my house that was... The wind was pushing the fire along. But it wasn't anything dramatic. I knew I couldn't go to sleep until that fire was either put out or stopped because if it got far enough west, it would go down in the ditch.

Diana: Were you surprised when Mark showed up?

Randall: Oh yeah.

Diana: You didn't think he was going to come?

Randall: I had no idea.

Diana: A great help though.

Randall: He sacrificed hugely. He was in the spring of his second year of veterinary school. His willingness to enter in and to be a part of it... He brought a friend that stayed for three or four days, but then he had to go back. Then somebody else, another one of his friends came for the weekend.

Diana: Did K-State send down vets? Did people come down from there?

Randall: No. People came down individually. I had a veterinarian call me, e-mail me on a Tuesday or Wednesday and said, "I can't come this week but next week I'm going to come. Can I come and help you out? I've got a skid-steer and a trailer and a pickup, and I'll do whatever I can." He actually stayed with us the following week for a week, and he spent his time just unloading hay.

Diana: So on Tuesday, when you went back to town, what did the landscape look like?

Randall: It was so stark. It was so... it looked Like the moon. When you looked at these pastures, and there was nothing there. As I look back at it, sometimes I didn't imagine the severity of it. It would take three or four or five days, a week or 10 days for it to really sink in.

Diana: What's your most vivid memory of the fire?

Randall: The memory I have is when I was... I also had a feedyard manager from a feedyard in Montezuma call me up and say, "Hey, I'm coming over, and I'm going to bring some food" He showed up about dusk with some food and some water and a generator. I remember driving up and down the road, driving, and he just wanted to be with me and was helpful, but I remember just the ring of fire. It was dark, and it was 11:00 at night, and there was a fire in the draw west of my house. There were some cedar trees that the fire kept coming into about a mile north of my house and it looked like Roman candles going off when the fire hit them. So that night, that was a surreal feeling with the ring of fire all the way around us.

Diana: So how long were you without electricity at your house?

Randall: We were probably without it till Wednesday morning or Wednesday night.

Diana: So who were some of the people or agencies that were most helpful?

Randall: Actually it was the people, individual people who came to us. There were some people there that I don't even know who showed up to help us individually. Me personally, some people from our church in Meade came and helped. Once we kind of started to get our hands around it... You know, an agency, there were people from the fish and game that came and helped us euthanize cattle because we have to remember that we were trying to euthanize, but we didn't have any corrals to hold them in. If we started to shoot something and we missed, they'd run off. So it was really important to be a good marksman. That's why I stayed at home. I don't do guns very good.

Diana: So when they were shooting, what did they have? A herd of 50 or more?

Randall: It might have been 50, or it might have been 30. It might have been 10.

Diana: It might have just been what they found together. So did they take care of them where they found them?

Randall: Yes.

Diana: Because you couldn't really move them anywhere.

Randall: Right. It was easier the first few days when you found those that weren't moving; they were completely burned. I have a vivid picture in my mind of a cow and calf that were up near Mount Jesus. That cow was standing over the top of her calf, and both of them were badly burned. And as we pulled up, the coyote ran away and the coyote was burned.

It was so hard to euthanize them. The people that came and helped us, when it really all unfolded, one of the things that I had a state veterinarian, Dr. Bill Brown, come to visit on that Friday evening. He said, "I think I'll come back tomorrow morning." I really didn't know his mission, but he had a purpose there. He came and he said, "You can't keep this pace up." He encouraged us to get a working group put together. I called Kendal Kay on Saturday morning, and I said, "Kendal, can you come out and listen?" At that time there were many people doing different things, and we were doing a good job of working together. But we knew we could work better together. And so he encouraged us to get a working group of about 12 people. He showed us how we could communicate with each other on our phones. We get a meeting together that Sunday night at Gardiner Angus Ranch and then in that meeting we invited 12, but I think we had 18 people there, most of my staff.

We divided up all the responsibilities. Somebody to be responsible for the fences, somebody for fence donations and hay donations. And the money, people from the foundation were there, and we talked about how to handle money donations, and we talked about volunteers and volunteer housing and feeding the volunteers. All those people got divided up so if people called us and said, "I'd like to give some money." We could send them to this person, or we could e-mail them something immediately. If they said they wanted to deliver hay, we could send them here. Most of the cattle that were to be donated were sent towards us. So we handled that because of Dr. Brown saying, "Hey, make a working group." Those people from our community that didn't own a cow and didn't own an acre of land, they came and served animal production or production agriculture for weeks tirelessly and selflessly.

So our community banded together and helped one another out. There will never be a dollar figure put on our friendships and that sense of responsibility from our own community. And I know there are many things that took place that I never knew about. I never will, but it's how our community served one another.

Diana: So when you get everybody together or when you think about it later, what's the emotional cost on the community from all of this and how have we dealt with that?

Randall: You know, the emotional cost was tiring. But when we as people serve another, that's therapy. That's encouraging. That's seeing people succeed in the midst of difficulty and that was energizing to me. Even though we had losses of our own, I just knew that God would provide and that as we served other people, we would see them not just survive but to flourish in the midst of these difficult challenges.

So there are people that would react in different ways, and I think that calling back to check on people a month later made a difference. Once they started to make a plan, ranchers need a plan, and

once they had a plan, then they started to heal a little bit. It rained a lot last summer after the fire until the first of August, and that was encouraging.

Diana: Do you remember the smell of the fire after the fire?

Randall: Yeah, I remember the smell now, because I remember going to Dodge City on Thursday night for that basketball game. I remember getting north of Minneola and saying, "It doesn't smell up here." It was something we became accustomed to and didn't notice until we drove out of it.

Diana: Talk about the basketball game. Was that helpful for the community?

Randall: I think that just took our minds off it. Even though the kids were worn out and they were spent, and it was difficult for them, I think it was good for us to get away.

Diana: So what about the physical and financial effect that the fire has had on the community?

Randall: Well, we're all very private people, and people don't talk about all their losses, or they'll do it in different degrees and in different venues, but it has to be costly. We know one ranch estimated their total losses were between five and eight million dollars. One of the things that I see is those ranches, three of the largest ranches that had the most difficulty and the most challenges, their sense of otherness about fellow ranchers and neighbors and they helped one another out. They came alongside their neighbors, even though they were hurting, and said, "What can I do for you?" That level of service permeated other people.

There's never a time when I saw, even one time demonstrated, people go, "Oh, poor me." Their willingness to continue to persevere...

Diana: Can you perceive that anything positive that's resulted from the fire?

Randall: I think that working together as a family, as a community. I also see that those emergency preparedness people did a tremendous job behind the scenes. There were very few times of people ever getting antsy because somebody else did something out of pride or out of humility. And people were able to serve the best they could with the skills they had. You know one of the things that I think the community did was serving one another. The emergency management people out of Topeka were surprised they didn't have to give us nearly the amount of help. And I think that service to one another was so beneficial. It was modeled.

Diana: So what have you done or can you do to prepare for another disaster, emergency, or fire? And what has the community done?

Randall: Well, I imagine there's a tremendous amount of... even this year we saw a fire on March the 5th. There was a very quick response to put that fire out! I know the emergency management people have been taking some more training and have talked about what went on. I know the firemen have taken measures to strengthen their own efforts to get out after a fire early. They've used Oklahoma trucks a little more readily. But you know I think we as a veterinary community understand that we can't do this alone. When people ask us, "How can we help?" let them come and help.

We think, as veterinarians, that we know the people in our community better than emergency management people from outside the area and we can come alongside and help one another better than any sort of government agency.

Diana: So you're involved in a lot of veterinary organizations or groups around the state and the nation. Have you been asked to speak about what happened and how you've handled it?

Randall: I've actually been asked to speak. I've spoken to the American Veterinary Association national meeting in Indianapolis in July. I spoke at the Academy of Veterinary Consultants meeting in August, and the Oklahoma Veterinary Association has asked me to speak at their annual conference this fall. Mark Gardiner and I'll be sharing our story at a National Bovine Practitioner's meeting about the relationship veterinarians have with their clients and how indispensable we can be in a variety of ways. It has been very humbling and honoring to do those talks.

Diana: So have you've been getting some interesting questions about how this all unfolded and how you handled it?

Randall: I think one of the things that's happened since I started to give those talks is that I think I'm doing pretty good. I think I'm doing okay. Then some of those emotions can come back up. Some people said, "It looks like they have post-traumatic stress syndrome." One topic that Mark, Kendal Kay gave was at an Ag Summit meeting. We each individually... We knew each other's story, but we never heard each other's story. It was during that meaning that it was the most emotional for me to see my friends and how they served and gave selflessly to others, as well as trying to manage their own chaos.

Diana: Do you feel like you've learned something from this that makes your veterinary clinic better and makes your practice and how you deal with your clients better?

Randall: Well, I think this is one of the things. It's all about relationships. Whether we're selling veterinary services or have a bank and have money to sell, or insurance. It's still about relationships and probably what's been cemented in my mind is the importance of those relationships. They can be leveraged at any time, any challenges we can come alongside and help people.

Diana: So how do you think our community has prepared better or is prepared better?

Randall: I think that we as a community, we can get a handle a challenge like this again. We never ever want to, but we know that we can come together and manage that and we know how to do it a little bit better.

Diana: So do you have any other thoughts about this experience that you'd like to share? I have one for you, Michelle had some friends that wanted to...

Randall: They need to come down and share that story sometime. They're friends from Minneola. That's a whole other story, too. She would like to share that, how those people wanted to come to help us in another part of the county. I'll let her do that some time.

Diana: Sounds good. So any other thoughts or things you'd like to share? Okay, thank you very much.