
This transcription, approved and edited by Virginia Norquest, contains minor orthographical changes from the original transcription done at the Border Studies Archive in collaboration with the students that conducted this interview.

Discovering the Rio Grande Valley: The Natural and Cultural History of South Texas

Transcription of the Virginia Norquest interview

By: CHAPS Team A: Oscar Ysasi and Aaron Pena

This is the interview for CHAPS class that was done on October 28, 2011. The parts of the interview that were discussed or focus of the interview was on the plants, animals, garbage, human waste and architecture. The interview was conducted by Aaron Pena and Oscar Ysasi. The person interviewed was Virginia Norquest. The interview took place at a conference room at Neil Norquest's law firm.

Aaron: Let's go ahead and get this started. For the record uh, please state your name.

Virginia: Virginia Fankhauser Norquest.

Aaron: And your relation to Mr. Norquest?

Virginia: And I am married to Neil Norquest. We got married in 1972, we had I lived here in Edinburg from the time I was 4 years old until I went to high school here, and I met Neil in high school Edinburg high school. We both played in the orchestra. I played cello; he played violin. We dated until I went to the University of Texas at Austin for college. In 1967 I started as a freshman, 67, and I was there until I earned my Bachelor's and my Master's at UT Austin. And then we married in that summer of 1972 after I graduated and he graduated from law school that summer. We moved back here to the valley, and he began working in McAllen and I began teaching and I worked at UT Pan Am, well Pan American College at the time for a couple of years and then I taught in the McAllen school district.

Aaron: We thank you, this is rediscovering the Rio Grande and we are archiving the history and in particular the biology section of this area with your memories and your stories that you remember. So we have several questions here that we are going to ask. And try to remember what you can.

Aaron: What memories or stories of the Rio Grande being used for fishing or recreational use?

Virginia: Well, I do remember going to the river when I was in junior high or high school. Because a friend's family had a little lot, a river front lot down south of mission down south of Conway... around the Conway area where that meets the river, and they had a trailer like a mobile home out there and, we did go out there. I think we spent the night once and then we also sometimes would water ski...on the river, in a boat that they had there. That's really my only memory of using it for recreation at that time.

Aaron: Do you remember any stories of the river being used for food, to bring in for fishing?

Virginia: For fishing.... I know there were people that did go fishing in the river. My family wasn't really....fishing wasn't something my father did so I wasn't really involved in that. I do remember going to Delta Lake. Also, for water skiing purposes....and Hargill Lake there were people fishing there.

Aaron: The canal system was built in the early 1900s, ah to, to transport the water for irrigation and what do you remember the canal system used for recreational use or fishing as well?

Virginia: Well I do remember people going to the canal and fishing, Sometimes as kids we would go down there and play. It was always kind of a wild and kind of a very interesting area to go somewhat forbidden, by one's parents because of it being dangerous but that of course that doesn't stop kids from going when they can. I remember playing there and collecting specimens of different kinds of animals in water and going back and looking in the little microscope and seeing what kind of - microscopic things were swimming around in the water and collecting little toads and things like that.

Aaron: What types of foods were collected by your family for ah like natural plants or animals for medicinal purposes or for food?

Virginia: Well for food I think really only the only things you might consider, would be the, we had, we had tough little hot peppers, chili piquin bushes that would grow up and we would use have those sometimes. Let's see what else, what was the other thing,.....I know people did use the nopales for food, but my family didn't eat that. Although I know sometimes they were used for the cattle, when it was about dry times they would take the thorns off the cattle, I mean thorns off the cactus and feed it to the cattle.

Aaron: You had mentioned earlier in passing ah that you all used to use aloe Vera?

Virginia: Yeah that's right. Yes aloe vera was I think the most common plant we deliberately grew the aloe Vera for to use it for like um... to use it for burns and skin problems. I know now they use it for all kinds of things, high blood pressure and, and I do

remember some people would mix it in water, the aloe vera juice and drink it for different problems like high blood pressure or different maladies like that. I didn't ever do that personally, but I did use it as a skin, on the skin particularly for bad sunburns in the summer.

Aaron: Ok, do you remember any animal species or insects that you used to see back then, that that you do not see anymore?

Virginia: Right, Well I think, the thing I remember the most as a child were the horned toads that we had all over, and you know every time you went outside you were likely to see horned toads, and then I realized- later when my own kids were young, in the 80's that there were not any around much anymore. I remember of course the cicadas where deafening. In the summers they were so loud even now they can be very loud, but I remember that- there were a lot of those around. It seems to me that there was a lot more variety of butterflies and moths of all different colors and sizes, and there were other species of birds. I know one thing...ah... was when I was young, and it would have been in the 50's I think, that it seems like there were a lot more varieties of colorful birds, that were here in the valley throughout the year. Uh and then I, I think as the Grackles became more and more common, they kind of took over and drove them out, but we had beautiful blue birds that would come around, blue jays at our old house on Hollywood Drive. We had a chinaberry tree that had all kinds of berries on it. I think that it attracted a lot of birds at that time.

Aaron: So do you think the Urbanization of the valley has decreased the, population of the birds and..

Virginia: Yeah, I think so definitely. And the increase of the Grackle population, I think. That is what I've heard had a big effect on that. Ah, but even though I lived in town both of the places I lived growing up were right on the edge of town. So there were orchards behind and around the house you know, so we were, I was never right in the middle of the town.

Aaron: Let's go into the Sal del Rey, What memories or stories do you remember of the Sal de Rey being used for commercial use or, for personal use?

Virginia: Right, Well there is the story in the Norquest family ah in my husband's family, his mother, my mother in law, remembered as a young girl a teenager she, her father, came to McAllen in around 1915, and she would work, at his scale. He had a commercial scale, on old 83 somewhere around McColl Road and old 83 right along where the rail road is there now in McAllen, and she would help record the weights as wagons would come through. and Wagons of grain or corn I mean or corn or cotton, or whatever and apparently as a girl when as a young girl, there were still wagons coming through of huge salt Blocks that had been mined out of Sal del Rey. And they were being taken in these wagons, down into Mexico to sell the salt and so she would weigh sometimes she would record the weights on there, of those wagons. As a teenager or maybe I was younger than a teenager, but I remember going with my Girl Scout troop, north of Edinburg to a ranch and we camped, and we were having

a camping outing up there. One of the things we did was to go on a little hike, and we did hike on to see Sal de Rey, but at that time it was private property. So, you it was readily accessible but we had gotten permission for us to hike in there and see it. And I just remember viewing it at that time and being amazed at the salty smell like at the beach.

Aaron: Um, Going to the Norquest ah property, Virginia. Were there nonnative trees planted on the property? Do you remember, Do you remember locations and?

Virginia: Well sure there most obvious one is the huge oak tree, that's was there on the west side of their house the old farm house, and which is, is supposed to be like the second largest around girth, girth wise of oak trees in Hidalgo county. It's a huge tree, beautiful tree. And the story is that, that tree was brought to Edinburg by Neil's father. He had purchased it or dug it up I think maybe in ah near Falfurrias. It's a live oak tree and brought it and planted it there outside the house and so I am not sure what year that was, but by the time I started dating Neil it was already a fairly large tree.

Aaron: Ah let's see, what ah did the community do to respond to flooding and water runoff during storms?

Virginia: Mm...Well the..ah.. Course drainage, water drainage, for Edinburg. Was a big problem. Um. And particularly where the Norquest property is there is a lower area than some other parts of Edinburg...Uh ..Edinburg downtown would always flood after big rains and especially um hurricanes of course and the water would flow north and west and across around the Norquest farm. And additionally water from McAllen flowed, flows north, and flows into that area north of UT Pan Am, so drainage is a big issue and especially after hurricane . Beulah = During which time during hurricane Beulah the whole farm area was flooded very deep with water. Such that I mean the Norquest-- I wasn't here that fall that September of 1967 that flooded -- but um....they had to you know even after weeks they took a little boat, (laughter) down to where ah...107 highway, 107 and Sugar road are right now. The county and all the cities had to get together, there in the 60's and 70's. They realized they needed a master drainage plan. And they went into quite a long process of expanding the floodway the drainage systems such that it would drain out into the arroyo. Up north of Hidalgo County. The cities had to negotiate you know, how they would get this water from one place to the other. There was a lot of work and planning that went into it. And then one of the other things was the holding pond that was built for Edinburg was built, right across Sugar Rd. from the Norquest property. The idea there was that water from downtown Edinburg could be pumped into that holding pond and held there until it could be taken father north along the drainage ditch the big drain that was over by that was over between Um Jackson and McColl road the big drain. . . .

Aaron: ok

Aaron: Ah what effect of the flooding, what effect did the flooding have on the land and, and uh particularly the Norquest property and , on the plants and the animals? What, what did they do with all these?

Virginia: Well one thing also to know about the Norquest property is that Neil's father Carroll Norquest Sr. was something of an engineer too. You know People would be all kinds of things right. And he installed tile drainage tiles under all that property. After he and his father had bought bought it and he moved here, there were a lot of salty areas because the water you know because the land, was not well drained. They still have a lot of that tile and drainage system that is under that property. But um the whole idea is that when you drain, when it is properly drained after a while even land that is salty will what they call sweeten up. You know And so he put in a major system of tile drainage under all that property. That was before that was many years ago, that was probably in the 30s or you know 20s or 30s that they started on that project.

Aaron: Going more into..ah.. Environmental impact. What do you remember of any heat waves or bad winters or freezes?

Virginia: Well I remember clearly you know, freezes that um froze out orchards, I had in fact two uncles, Glenn Fankhauser and Delmar Fankhauser, out west of mission who were in the, the orchard business so it was always very touch and go. Right (laughs) and ah I do clearly remember the really bad freezes of the 1980s that took out a lot of the citrus orchards that were existing at that time. Because you used to drive down country roads and there would be orchards on both sides you know, it was a large orchard area, grapefruit and orange orchards. After that time it was very noticeable that many of them were pushed out and most of them were not planted again. And the Norquest property itself had -Neil's father planted a small orchard there south of the house. There is an area right now where there are some hackberry trees south of the farm house, and that area was an orchard on it but my understanding is that after he planted it, it was not there more than a few, few years because this severe freeze came along and wiped it out, and they, they did not replant it so.

Aaron: I see.

Virginia: And the drought there was a lot of drought. You probably need to talk with Neil or Kelly about the 50's. Drought was very hard on the farmer on, on their family and their ability to make any money out of the farming. Of course after the WWII there were some fairly good years for farming and cotton and so forth but then when they hit the drought in the 50's um it was very difficult to make a crop that made any money.

Aaron: Let See, What memories do you have? Ah, you had mentioned that ah you dated ah Neil?

Virginia: Ah ha.

Aaron: For a while before you were married. What are your first memories of him taking you to his family's property and what do you remember of the landscape. The city wasn't very much there yet and...?

Virginia: No, Sugar Rd. and Chapin Rd. were still dirt gravelly roads you know dirt roads, and I remember him taking me on a date one time which is kind of our family joke because we were going to a prom. I had this really pretty long white dress, and he came to pick me up for that date in the field car. Which was a (laughter) station wagon, an old Ford station wagon which was missing the rear window. The glass had been broken out. So the result of that of course was driving down a long dirt road with no rear window all the dust you know all the dirt just piled in the car. (sigh) So here he drove up and here I come up to get into the car in my white dress and he took out this old towel (laughter) and starts beating the dirt, you know off the seat (laughter) and like there was all this dirt flying everywhere and I was like mmhm ok (laughter). But I went anyway we went anyway so. It worked so but um yeah lots of dirt roads. The country dirt roads were where we all learned to drive as 12 year olds. I received my license at 13. In fact, Neil's brother Mark was a big kid and he drove at age 8 or 9. Received a ticket from an officer lying in wait along Sugar Rd one time. And then the ditches, you know along the road would always have water or high grass and weeds. I mean as a kid you were always going into ditches looking for tadpoles and you know all the frogs that were around and, always a wealth of wildlife. What was the question?(laughter)

Aaron: You have mentioned ah about, about the fajita you were telling us about the story you were talking about?

Virginia: Oh the fajita story

Aaron: Yeah ah mention a little bit about that.

Virginia: Yes, because I had a friend and there was a grocery store here in Edinburg called the Valley Store which was owned by the Trevino family Ruben and Rodolfo. There were two brothers ah Trevino's who lived here I can remember Rodolfo and Ruben I think Trevino and one of their kids was Eddie Trevino. He was around my age in school and had played orchestra with us. And after we married in 1972 we moved back here to Edinburg, and I would go to the Valley Store to shop and they had a nice meat section and, and some of the Trevino's were butchers. They did their own butchering there and sold the meat. And it was over on east University. Ah Across from that shopping center like a just a few blocks east of the courthouse square. And ah so in for some reason in 72, 73 ah there was a big spike in beef prices. And ah the cost of beef went way up. And so there was some creative butcher somewhere in the valley someone decided that these strip of the beef around the ribs called the faja the beef skirt in English you know. The faja or fajita was normally just ground into the hamburger because it wasn't considered worth that much. And somebody decided to take that strip off of the rib and start grilling it. Right? And so, any way one day I went in and I

was looking for some meat and so my friend Eddie said well, have you tried these fajita? I said, "No, what is that?" you know and he said, well see its and they had taken a strip of fajita, kind of a long strip and they would wrap it like a pinwheel fajita and so that's ~~why~~ what he told me to do. He wrapped it he made a pinwheel and said, "Just put it on a fire, and BBQ it and it's great", and we did and of course it was delicious. And Um my understanding is really this area is where fajitas came from. Of course now you know some places they claim to have shrimp fajitas which is really impossible but fajitas now means any little piece of meat that's been grilled no matter what kind of meat.

Aaron: Let's see. Ah. I know you were considered a city girl?

Virginia: Yes

Aaron: Lived. Ah, inside the city limits and the Norquest property was, was outside the city limits a ranch area, do, do you know what you all did with you all's garbage compared to what Norquest did with their garbage?

Virginia: With their garbage.

Aaron: Where were you all's land fill

Virginia: My gosh. Edinburg landfill, the dump of course we called it the dump. At that time probably um. I am blanking out I thought it was over in the east side of Edinburg, but we had, you know, we had garbage service where I lived, because we were, we were, in town now they had to. Um I am not sure how they took care of their garbage. Out there I think they had to bury their own you know their own garbage. Had some area that was there uh for that. Ah You probably need to talk to Neil about that and see what they did. I am pretty sure that the city garbage dump was on the east side town but I can't remember now exactly where. Of course there were large areas where you would have people would develop unofficial dumps right which was always ah, ah problem, and ah people would start dumping something on a certain cite and so others would follow suit. And pretty soon you would have ah dump going on there but ah , um because a lot of things were not taken care of you know not really allow a place where larger items it think to get rid of.

Aaron: Well that's ah pretty much actually I have one more we didn't really talk about this but going into the Rio Grande Wet backs, story, What type of effect did the illegal immigration have on this community? When dealing with trash, infectious diseases was that a problem when you were, when you were young?

Virginia: No, and of course I didn't grow up on the farm, but from my understanding the ah families that and usually they were extended families that would come return each year at the same time you know for the harvest or when the work was needed, and um they had um they would have a camp area that they would live in. and um You would have ask Neil or Kelly

exactly where it was but I think it was somewhere to the west of the property of, of the Norquest property. And um But Neil remembers going, you know, out to visit or to talk with them, and of course they would have a fire, and he would always love eating the tortillas or what they were cooking, and they would offer him things to eat, and ah so um they had an area they lived and as far as diseases, I don't recall any problems about diseases really from at that time you know. Um and At least when I was growing up there were you know we didn't do things like drink water from the river or that kind of thing directly. We knew not to do that,-but I think that's about it.

Aaron: What about colonias? Were there any colonias in Edinburg?

Virginia: Um well, There called colonias, yes there were, but no, I don't think you could consider what we call colonias in Edinburg you know, the colonias were something that was maybe located out, outside of the city. In the rural area where they would start a colonia or, or there would be somebody had gone and sold lots you know in an area without good water or sewer or whatever and Um that was a colonia you know those were colonias but. They were generally outside of the town.

Aaron: Well that is all I have Oscar do you have anything?

Oscar: Ah, Did, Did we go over the ah some of the animals like the migration patterns of the birds birds did you noticed or the ah butterfly's or dragonfly's at this time?

Virginia: That's right we didn't talk, the dragonflies toughs were seemed to me like there were a lot more dragonflies around. I remember swarms of dragonflies coming through the yard of course as a kid. In the, in the 50s you know there was no air-conditioning in the house there was really no T.V and so what you did was you played outside. The kids you know later my own kids they did not want to go outside when it was 100 degrees. When we were, when I was little when it was 100 degrees that was when you wanted to go outside (laughter) because it was more comfortable outside than it was in the house. And um that was interesting thing to architecture wise, you were asking me about that, the houses, had screen porches because of the heat, and also the house we lived at on Hollywood dr. had been built with a screen porch and um also it had a lot of open door such that it would catch the breeze going through the house, so the houses people were very conscious of having windows on the southeast and the northwest so that you can get the flow of air though your house to be comfortable.

Oscar: So at this time the house didn't have central air or any kind ?

Virginia: Well they by, The house I lived in on Hollywood St. did not have no there was no central air, now there was one window unit air-conditioning in my parents' bedroom but that was it and of course everyone wanted to sleep in my parents' bedroom. (Smiling)Uh but and I know from Neil's stories it was the same at their house. When they did get an air-

conditioning unit it went in the parents' bedroom and that was it, so but no central air. And uh people stayed outside in the evenings, people used those screen porches to sit out on the evenings and things.

Oscar: Do you remember any like ah mosquito bites at the time?

Virginia: Oh yes mosquitos were all over the place yes, and one thing about mosquitos, You might be interested in environmentally, ah, in Edinburg they would go through with the ah big spray machines and they would come and fog the whole area, the whole neighborhood. And ah of course we thought that was great so we would be outside in the fog in the pesticide fog. Which probably was not very healthy. And ah, but ah you know after big rains or flood or hurricanes they would go around doing that in the city. I don't think they do that anymore.

Oscar: Last time I saw that happen was a few years back.

Virginia: I think they did some spraying overhead, when there was a lot of water, standing around yeah maybe Hurricane Dolly yeah, um to try to get rid of the um the larva, but these were really more than just getting rid of the larva it was just, just kind of fogging the whole area. Mm hm So.....which always helped, (laughing). Yes but there were a lot of mosquitos like I said, a lot of colorful birds, and lot of more colorful birds than you see, just even in town you know there would be a lot of them around.

Oscar: You also you remember that specific name for that frog we were talking about?

Virginia: Yeah bufo marinus.

Oscar: Wow.

Virginia: That is what I remember anyways and that is called bufo and that is that giant toad species, of toad and they had one at the Norquest home there that lived, it had a special hole under the sidewalk there. So I know when I first met Neil maybe after we were married I remember seeing that large toad at night if you were happen to going out there late at night you, you might run into him, him or her on the sidewalk, (laughing), and ah, but at some point it disappeared. And they had big snakes um we had for many years ah haven't seen it recent but he's seen them in the last few years but even as much as when was that, four or five years ago, we had a very large they there were some big holes out there that were large um black snakes ah not poisonous or harmful but in fact we had one and we were irrigating our yard there which is our house next to the old house and this snake I guess had gotten pushed out of its hole because of the irrigation water and it came up onto the back porch of our house. And um It was crawling along the back porch and I saw it and I went ahaha. (Laughing) so I got Neil and he started chasing it off and that snake, ah I remember very clearly because it got into the irrigation water and then took off swimming. It was very fast so I was glad I was not in the irrigation water at that time. Yeah

Oscar: You also said that as a kid ah you would go, you wouldn't do it for some, but people would go out to the canals and swim and fish and ah you know explore and stuff like that and ?

Virginia: Right Yeah canals were very an interesting area to go and explore there was a lot of brush especially in the bar ditch side on the side of the canal and they really didn't keep the canals mowed you know like they mow the grass along the canal there . There was like a just a track you know pickup or a car could drive on top of the canal, but it would be pretty weedy and grown up mostly around there and then there was a large pipe going across the bar ditch I remember right down the street from our house and so the kids in the neighborhood the big dare was you know to dare somebody to cross that pipe walk across it it was about a 15 or 20 foot drop down into the bar ditch it was a pretty large pipe and people would walk across it but nobody ever fell off(laughter) But um that was always you know kind of a mysterious spot. You know kids will find a mystery spot to go play.

Oscar: Oh ah, You had mentioned the freezes and hurricanes?

Virginia: The Hurricanes. I remember hurricanes, many of them Carla for some reason. was it think in 64 or something like. That was a major hurricane and there was lot of wind and rain. I remember standing at the window and watching the trees being whipped around and rain tremendous rain and, and lightning and all that. During Beulah Neil saw out there at the farm at the Norquest farm big probably what was a tornado came through near the area and um and the wind. He at one point they during Beulah that was in 67 and the wind was coming from the northwest and it blew in the windows upstairs on the house so there were just holes you know. And the water was coming in so he decided you know he had to go out to the barn to get some canvas and some boards to nail it down, and uh he remembers going out of the house, and he went out the south side of the house so the wind was blocked but then when he started trying running toward the barn, he said he just couldn't even breathe because the wind was so hard and blowing probably 100 miles an hour or something. He was trying to run and he couldn't get anywhere you know and it was kind of like the wind the air got sucked out of his lung. But he did finally eventually make it to the barn got some supplies and then went back in. And they nailed up some makeshift things just to try to keep the water from coming in. So they had major damage and ah, his dad loved to read, Carrol Norquest loved to read, He was always reading history and everything and he ah, had a lot of books that got wet and were destroyed so he had to ah, Neil remembers him shoveling a bunch of books and shoveling them and burning them you know after things dried up. But they were underwater for a long time now their house the old house the water in Beulah just came up to the bottom of the wood floor. Cause it was a wood floor that whole house was built on, And it was just to the point where it might have come up thorough the floor boards. And it stopped right there so they had and it took weeks to get back for all of that water to go

away. –The cattle at that time all went to east end of the farm and ah, ah because the water was so deep around there.

Oscar: Now This was before they made that ah

Virginia: The holding pond,

Oscar: Yes the holding pond

Virginia: Mm hm Yah , Yah That was in 67 and so I think it was after that sometime in the 70s that or especially in Beulah I think that was one of the worst floods that they had that they started you know getting their master drainage plan for the county together. And started working and it took a long time to accomplish all that.

Oscar: Do you know kinda like the date that they established that pond?

Virginia: you know I can't remember I should know that I think that it would have been before the 90s it would have been in the 80s. Because we built our house in 89 and we moved in, in June of 89. And The pond was already there but it hadn't been that long but I would say early 80s. Because really the pond was a later part I think it was the city of Edinburg's you know drainage plan and, ah and so they put those pumps there the pumps were on the southeast corner of the drainage pond. And so they could pump the water from downtown Edinburg into that pond. And so they put a larger large drainage down sugar road when they widened that they put a much larger drain down the middle of the road. To, So they didn't have a large enough pipes it was kind of difficult situation because the pipe I can't tell you the exact size but the pipe that went into the drainage pond was much larger than the one going out of the drainage pond on the other side. (Laughing) and so it was a like a major bottleneck because you could not get water out of there as fast as it was coming in. so it didn't really I think they eventually corrected that, but ah It really never we saw water got up the sides of the pond but it never got in major rain, but I don't think we had as major as a flood after Beulah . To test it out as Beulah was yeah. And of course when you ever pave parking lots and stuff like that you're going to have more water than you had before because water runs off faster.

Oscar: You also mentioned the palm trees how there were dirt roads ah and lined up with palm trees?

Virginia: Yes that was I remember in the valley in the 50s and early 60s were all the dirt roads were lined with orange groves and grapefruit groves on each side and lined dirt roads with the lined with Washingtonian palm. I think the Washingtonian is that tall thin, skinny one. And they were beautiful I guess the land developer had planted those and it was very beautiful and you see old photos of those trees, and palm tree lined orchards and I saw them, and of course when they started paving the road they usually had to make it wider and it

wound up taking out the palm trees. But a lot of people got killed with those palm trees too in cars because palm trees don't bend, I mean they don't break because they really are a grass the palm trees are a grass I guess its absorbent enough that if people run into them going very fast, It's not going to break down it's not going to give it smashes the car and the driver (laughter). There used to be a lot more roadrunners or chachalacas. I remember in the canal areas chachalacas were in around the towns and were a lot more common.

Aaron: I think they are now protected.

Virginia: Oh are they

Aaron: I remember try to shot them with my BB gun as a kid. My dad would tell me no can't do that you will go to jail.

Virginia: Right, They used to be a lot more common. All over and then a And now you mostly have to go to a bird refuge right, to see chachalacas,

Oscar: and what about the jack rabbits ah?

Virginia: Right, The jackrabbits have long ears right. I remember the short ear rabbits and in fact right now in our place, we have a lot of rabbits and it depends on how um you know much food there is around and everything. We have coyotes come to the place still yeah and ah, we had one come up right this last winter there from that drainage pond that developed its own ecosystem right. They have been pushing it right out of there, And we had coyotes show up try to come up and eat the dog food from the back porch. And depending how hungry they are they dogs were setting up a racket and everything and we went out and there was one out there, so every so often they come out especially if it is very dry and they are running out of food. And We've had, had a chachalaca in that little brushy area between Neil's house and our house and the old house. Ah We had one in there for a while oh you know and the other animal is the tortoise.

Oscar : Oh yes We used to have a lot more of those

You could go out in the field like behind our house when I was growing up and you could find a tortoise, the land tortoises all over

Oscar: Tortoise I have seen one a long time ago.

Virginia: Tortoise and armadillos used to have more armadillos in the valley I don't know if you if we have them anymore

Oscar: I never seen I have never seen one out there.

Virginia: I remember seeing some armadillos, I mean you know you didn't see them all over but just every so often you would it was common to see one by the road or something. Mm hm So

(laughter)

Oscar: Well thank you so much for the interview. We appreciate it

Virginia: Ok

To conclude, the interview provided very useful information. Information gave a better insight into the conditions of the valley and the events surrounding the Norquest farm and family in Edinburg throughout the years. The new information such as the fajitas and the animals, hurricanes and events will help bring a better picture of the Rio Grande Valley and its history.