

Transcript of Interview with Nancy Campbell by Karen Kilby

Interviewee: Nancy Campbell

Interviewer: Karen Kilby

Date: 05/22/2020

Location (Interviewee): Owings, Maryland

Location (Interviewer): Eau Claire, Wisconsin

Abstract: In this interview by Karen Kilby, a government contracts manager Nancy Campbell discusses how the COVID 19 virus has affected her life. She discusses the toilet paper shortage, the changes in her family dynamic, social isolation and the shortage of hand sanitizer and cleaners. Nancy also discusses her life as a senior citizen living in a rural area, the economy and her opinions on how government has dealt with the virus.

Karen Kilby 00:01

Okay, I am recording. And this is for the public history seminar COVID-19 project. I'm interviewing Nancy Campbell. It is May 22 2020, around 1:24pm and I am in Eau Claire, Wisconsin and Nancy, where do you live?

Nancy Campbell 00:23

I'm in Owings, Maryland.

Karen Kilby 00:27

And what is your job,

Nancy Campbell 00:29

I still work as a contracts manager for a government contractor. Our customers include NOAA, the Census Bureau, Idaho National Laboratory. And that's it for now.

Karen Kilby 00:50

So how has the pandemic and COVID-19 affected your job?

Nancy Campbell 00:56

We were lucky because everything is available electronically. So all the employees are still on the job working from their homes. And so in that regard, I only have to go to the office one day a week to pick up mail, print out checks if bills are due that sort of thing. Which is good because I live 58 miles from the office

Karen Kilby 01:28

So is there any concerns you have about how the COVID-19 was gonna affect your job?

Nancy Campbell 01:36

No, we were able to obtain one of the PPP loans the protection payroll plan where we were able to get enough money to cover eight weeks of of salary and so that will definitely help out

Karen Kilby 02:04

Let's see here say have you or anybody you know have been sick with the COVID-19?

Nancy Campbell 02:15

No, we've all been isolating

Karen Kilby 02:23

So what have been the biggest challenges you have faced during the outbreak?

Nancy Campbell 02:28

Finding toilet paper. I found a package last week and that is the first I have seen since January. And I elected not to be a hoarder. At that time. It was getting to the point where I wished I had a little bit extra and a friend found some extra at her supermarket and pick some up for me so I'm not so worried about that anymore. It that's a common problem with it around here anyway. Other than that, keeping my husband safe and keeping me clear of bringing the virus home to him because he has some underlying conditions.

Karen Kilby 03:20

What else has been out of the the stars besides toilet paper?

Nancy Campbell 03:26

Well, I have haven't seen hand sanitizer and for a while you could not find facial tissues. There are no alcohol wipes no the sanitizing wipes that you can that we can find them at the doors of the supermarkets but can't find them on the shelves at the supermarkets. And for a while. Eggs for very expensive. They went up like \$1 a carton of milk was in short supply for a while but that seems to have evened out.

Karen Kilby 04:13

So how has it affected your community in the area that you live in?

Nancy Campbell 04:18

We have 315 known cases in Calvert County at the moment. Five people have died. We're a rural county. So we don't have a large population center. Everyone is spread out but our population contains a lot of federal workers. And so they've been staying home schools are closed and daycare centers are closed so everyone is home, which is unusual, which I think is one of the reasons why we're short on toilet paper. Because normally people would be at their jobs and not be at home. So far, the hospital has not had problems, they've been able to handle the cases that have come in. We don't know how many people are not reporting. If a person has a mild case, they don't go to the hospital, there have been no public testing sites, where one could go without having a doctor's basically prescription to go get tested. So we only know about the ones who have been in the hospital.

Karen Kilby 05:37

And as a senior citizen, how does that affect how you react to the COVID-19, since senior citizens are more susceptible to the virus?

Nancy Campbell 05:51

Will my organize the organization that sponsors the craft shows that I take part in was prohibited from meeting Maryland just under a stay at home order. We have just now this week, are authorized to go to a few places that are open. And those are mainly the supermarket's, obviously, but some specialty stores have opened. So there really hasn't been that many places to go. The craft show sent out a notice a couple of days ago saying that the town that it's in, has given them permission to have the first show on the 30th of May, it should have been the 16th of May, and there should have been one in April, that they had to be cancelled. So that affected me. Other than that, because it is a rural community, and we live out in the country, I could work outside and not be under the kinds of restrictions that people in towns and cities were under where they couldn't even go outside. But my biggest concern is just been not bringing it home to dawn. So I've been going out one day a week, just save up all the errands that have to be done, and do them on a single day. I've got hand sanitizer in the car, if it's available at the door of the grocery store or the post office. I use that when I go in and I grab one on the way out. Most I use the hand sanitizer that's in the car, which I read today, you're not supposed to leave in the car during high temperatures because it tends to explode. And I didn't know that but I guess it's alcohol. And beyond that, just trying to be very, very careful and learn as much as possible. Like I had questions for a while about was the male safe. And they were talking about how long the virus could survive on various services. I don't know who the mail carrier is on any given day. I don't know if that person's wearing gloves. But even if they were wearing gloves, Where have those gloves banned, what they touched. So all of those things just made us super cautious with John has not been out in public since January, just to give him first line protection.

Karen Kilby 08:31

And to clarify John as your husband

Nancy Campbell 08:33

Yes, he is just turned 82. So he's even older in that regard, more susceptible than I am.

Karen Kilby 08:48

And how has he been taking the quarantine?

Nancy Campbell 08:53

Doesn't bother him a bit. He's a sits front of his computer writing and barely notices that there's a virus going on. Except he's very careful. And I say do you want to go out? Are you getting cabin fever? No, I'm fine right here. And so he lets me could do the running of the errands.

Karen Kilby 09:17

How do you think that the the pandemic is going to affect the income economy? What concerns do you have about that?

Nancy Campbell 09:27

Yeah. Just because our as of this morning, the national statistics for unemployed was 25% which means a quarter of the people are out of business. Some of them are out of business permanently just because the small mom and pop businesses don't have the capital to continue staying in business and overall. I think the big companies are going to do okay Particularly with government loans. And it's going to be a long while to come back, it took over eight years to recover from the the housing crash back in 2008. And so I suspect it's going to be at least five years if not longer, to get back just to where we were when the virus showed up. Because because it's a world crisis, it's affected every country's markets. And getting the supply chain moving again, is going to take the time. Didn't do much for the retirement portfolio either. Every time the stock market crashed, everybody's 401k plan took a hit and dropped in value. Economists keep saying it'll come back. But it took a long time for it to come back after the housing bust.

Karen Kilby 11:07

Have you seen any like for sale signs pop up around the community for restaurants or businesses we've seen that are no player here.

Nancy Campbell 11:17

Not for sale, because they've rented buildings. It's so far, most of their restaurants around here, I do curbside pickup. Or you could go in to some other fast food restaurants. He couldn't eat there. But you could take things out. So no, I haven't seen for sale on restaurant. Okay.

Karen Kilby 11:46

How do you think the COVID-19 will affect society as a whole mentally?

Nancy Campbell 11:52

Well, for those people who are out of work and who don't have great prospects of being called back, I suspect it's, it's going to be very damaging mentally. I've been watching interviews on the evening news for people, single mothers, for instance, with children to feed, they have no clue as to where they're going to get their next paycheck from. They interviewed a man last night or showed the bank his bank statement, it had 69 cents in it. And so this mental state, but what status is not great, I think there's going to be a lot more depression, a lot more anxiety, certainly. I think people are going to be very short tempered with one another. That was getting to the point where the joke around here was sales that gun stores were up because the availability of toilet paper was down and they were protecting the stash that they already had. That's just people trying to keep their humor intact. But I don't think it's going to be very good for everyone's mental status.

Karen Kilby 13:09

So how's your experience with a pandemic transformed how you think about your family and friends in the community?

Nancy Campbell 13:18

Not all that much because we've always lived cautiously. And so far it was there was not an issue of being separated from just because our family is very widespread. John and Lisa, for instance, are 74 miles away. We haven't seen them since Christmas, but we talk on the phone. I have a friend here that is also been isolating. And so because she lives alone, and Don and I live alone, we interact carefully. We still see each other. We just don't go out shopping together. Like we used to.

Karen Kilby 14:09

Knowing what you know now, what do you think that individuals communities or governments need to keep in mind for the future? If this happens again.

Nancy Campbell 14:19

They have to stop pretending that these sorts of things are going to happen again. Dr. Fauci has been saying for years that a pandemic was inevitable, and he was right. He never profess to know exactly when it was going to happen. But it's inevitable when you're dealing with science to know that things come in cycles. I think our leaders need to stop fighting wars and spending all the money on military gear and put a little bit more money into the warehousing of supplies so that there are available I really fearful that they're not going to pay attention and somewhere down the line, this is going to happen all over again because they don't believe it's going to happen again. And individuals, we need to believe in science and what science tells us and not what's politically correct.

Karen Kilby 15:28

Okay, that's all the questions I have. Would you like to add anything?

Nancy Campbell 15:32

No, but I think this is a great project. It's interviews like this, that maybe just maybe someone will be able to pick up information from and use in terms of watching out for future trends and make more toilet paper.

Karen Kilby 15:54

Okay, thank you so much.

Nancy Campbell 15:56

You're welcome.