

INTERVIEW OF NANCY LOUDEN

BY ABBY JOHNSON

EUREKA COUNTY

LESSONS LEARNED VIDEO PROJECT

held in

CRESCENT VALLEY, NEVADA

April 21, 2011

1 (15:36:13 Begin Tape 2)

2 MS. CLANCY: Okay, the tape is rolling. This is  
3 Gwen Clancy from behind the camera. I'll be doing the video  
4 today. It is April 21, 2011, and we are in Crescent Valley,  
5 Nevada. Interviewing today is Abby Johnson.

6 MS. JOHNSON: My name is Abby Johnson. I'm the  
7 Nuclear Waste Advisor for Eureka County. We're doing the  
8 Eureka County Lessons Learned Video Project, and we're  
9 interviewing Nancy Louden.

10 (15:36:47 End Tape

11 (15:36:36 Begin Tape 2-1)

12 MS. JOHNSON: Nancy, how did you come to live in  
13 Crescent Valley and what is it about Crescent Valley that is  
14 special to you?

15 MS. LOUDEN: Well, my husband makes necklaces out  
16 of turquoise and he always would come out here, and he worked  
17 for an old guy named Eddie Mossie (phonetic), and then he  
18 finally decided that he wanted to move out here so he could  
19 be around turquoise. And, then when that hot springs ended  
20 up being for sale, and so that seemed like a good place, you  
21 know. I fell in love with that.

22 MS. JOHNSON: What's that like, the hot springs?

23 MS. LOUDEN: The hot springs? Well, it's this old,  
24 it was that old A-frame building that a chiropractor used for  
25 treatment, health for people. And, then, he built a swimming

1 pool there, which it's still usable, and there's a couple of  
2 different pools that you can soak in. So, that's what I like  
3 about it. And, I did my stained glass for a long time, too,  
4 but that's what we like about it.

5 I also like it because it's out here in a place  
6 where there's not a whole lot of traffic and people and a lot  
7 of stuff going on.

8 MS. JOHNSON: Much quieter than--

9 MS. LOUDEN: Quieter, emptier, yeah.

10 MS. JOHNSON: So, when you heard that the federal  
11 government might build a railroad for nuclear waste to be  
12 transported to Yucca Mountain, what was your reaction?

13 MS. LOUDEN: I just visualized a railroad track  
14 going through the middle of the Valley, and we have a shop in  
15 town here in Crescent Valley, and we drive out there a couple  
16 times a day. We sleep out there a lot, and we go back and  
17 forth all the time, and here I'd be stopped at this train  
18 track pulling canisters of nuclear waste, and who knows if  
19 one of them would be leaking or not, because I've heard of  
20 them leaking, and then I'd get nuked. And, I didn't want it.

21 (15:39:11 End of Tape 2-1.)

22 (15:35:48 Begin tape 2-3)

23 MS. JOHNSON: Nancy, what else bothered you about  
24 the proposed rail line through Crescent Valley?

25 MS. LOUDEN: Well, I don't like nukes because my

1 nephew died from nukes at ten years old. And, my husband's  
2 brother died from nukes, and I don't trust the people that do  
3 the work with them, because I don't know how--you know, they  
4 do make mistakes, and nothing is perfect, and there can be  
5 accidents. And, I just don't want to be around them, because  
6 they can cause death, and, it scares me. And, the people in  
7 town here, none of them wanted it, not one of them, whether  
8 they were on the right side of politics or the left side of  
9 politics, nobody wanted it. And, that kind of tells you how  
10 people really feel about it. When they're threatened with  
11 nukes being near them, you know, maybe if you're rich enough  
12 to be able to afford a place somewhere off and you're not  
13 going to be near them, you might want them. But, when you  
14 have to live with them, you don't want them. Nobody does.  
15 Nobody wants to be close to them.

16 MS. JOHNSON: Let's move on to the next question.

17 (15:37:19 End Tape 2-3)

18 (15:40:04 Begin Tape 2-4)

19 MS. JOHNSON: You indicated that you have family  
20 members that were downwinders that died as a result of atomic  
21 testing. Can you tell me a little bit about that?

22 MS. LOUDEN: Yes. My nephew was downwind. After  
23 one of the tests, the nuclear fallout blew over St. Louis,  
24 and they reported it, and it got in the milk. And, his  
25 mother was going to college, and my mom was feeding him out

1 of a bottle. So, he drank, that's all he had, was that nuked  
2 milk to drink. And, he got cancer when he was ten, and died  
3 when he was twelve. And, I was there when his mom got him up  
4 in the middle of the night, when he was in pain, and I heard  
5 him say to her, "Mom, am I going to die?" And, she said that  
6 she wouldn't tell him. She said no. And, it just crushed me  
7 to death to hear that. I mean, that was the most painful  
8 thing ever. And, so, yeah, it just makes me think that a lot  
9 of people are insensitive about their need for this nuclear  
10 power when I don't really think there's a need for it. And,  
11 nothing like that has ever happened to them, so maybe they  
12 don't understand it.

13 MS. JOHNSON: Let's move on to the next question.

14 (15:41:37 End Tape 2-4)

15 (15:40:00 Begin Tape 2-5)

16 MS. JOHNSON: And, what about your brother-in-law.

17 MS. LOUDEN: Okay.

18 MS. JOHNSON: And, tell me about your brother-in-  
19 law.

20 MS. LOUDEN: Yes, my brother-in-law, my husband's  
21 brother, he died when he was 16 of pancreatic cancer, and his  
22 dad and mom would take them out to the Death Valley around  
23 the time of the nuclear testing, and they didn't really know  
24 that, you know, it could hurt anybody. So, he died when he  
25 was 16. It hurt my husband a lot, because that was his

1 favorite brother.

2 (15:40:51 End Tape 2-5)

3 (15:40:06 Begin Tape 2-6)

4 MS. LOUDEN: A parade or something, and we had some  
5 little things on wagons and bikes and stuff that we added  
6 onto to make posters against the nuclear train coming.

7 MS. JOHNSON: I think you did. I think it was  
8 maybe a Fourth of July parade or--

9 MS. LOUDEN: Some kind of parade, yes.

10 MS. JOHNSON: Yes.

11 MS. LOUDEN: Yeah, we always have a parade here  
12 once a year. I forgot what day we have it anymore.

13 (15:40:33 End Tape 2-6)

14 (15:40:12 Begin Tape 2-7)

15 MS. JOHNSON: I think you did a nuclear awareness.

16 MS. LOUDEN: Yeah, we did. Yeah. I might still  
17 even have some of those old posters at home.

18 MS. JOHNSON: If you did, I would love to--

19 MS. LOUDEN: Would you?

20 MS. JOHNSON: Yes.

21 MS. LOUDEN: Okay, I could give them to you. I'll  
22 check and see if I can find any.

23 MS. JOHNSON: Yeah, please do.

24 MS. LOUDEN: Okay.

25 (15:40:30 End Tape 2-7)

1 (15:40:20 Begin Tape 2-8)

2 MS. LOUDEN: We had a parade and we made little  
3 floats out of bicycles and wagon and whatever we had, and we  
4 put signs all over them talking about "no nukes," and how we  
5 didn't want nukes in the Valley.

6 (15:40:46 End Tape 2-8)

7 (11:08:54 Begin Tape 2-9)

8 MS. JOHNSON: Eureka County, throughout all this,  
9 didn't take a position in favor of Yucca Mountain or opposed  
10 to Yucca Mountain. Do you agree with the County's decision  
11 not to take a position?

12 MS. LOUDEN: Well, I don't know, because that gets  
13 into politics and all this different stuff, you know, that  
14 people have all kinds of reasons, especially people that run  
15 counties and different stuff like that, you know, they all  
16 have different reasons for what side they want to be on.  
17 And, so, that's all I know, you know, I don't know why they  
18 didn't take a position, but it was probably because of some  
19 higher-ups in there that were for it, and they didn't want to  
20 commit themselves.

21 MS. JOHNSON: Let's move on to the next question.

22 (11:09:46 End Tape 2-9)

23 (11:09:04 Begin Tape 2-10)

24 MS. JOHNSON: If the Yucca Mountain Project is  
25 revived and if the Carlin Nuclear Waste Rail Route would

1 again become a possibility, what would your reaction be?

2 MS. LOUDEN: My reaction would be one of sheer  
3 horror, because I just--I'm horrified by nuclear reaction.  
4 You know, the whole idea of it seems anti-human to me. It's  
5 just, you know, I know it's killed a lot of people,  
6 especially up in Utah, and I think the people that want it,  
7 are the ones that aren't going to be around it, and they  
8 don't have to worry about it as much, although they should.  
9 I just think that certain people want to make money off of  
10 it, and they don't want to take the responsibility for what  
11 kind of accidents could happen from it.

12 MS. JOHNSON: Thank you.

13 (11:10:17 End of Tape 2-10)

14 (11:09:08 Begin Tape 2-11.)

15 MS. JOHNSON: If the Carlin Nuclear Waste Rail  
16 Corridor Project came back, how do you think people in the  
17 Valley would react?

18 MS. LOUDEN: Well, before when they were  
19 threatening us with it, we were--everybody in the Valley was  
20 against it. And, we all fought hard together, we really  
21 stuck together on that. We never stuck together on anything  
22 before, but we really stuck together on that one. No one  
23 wanted that.

24 MS. JOHNSON: Do you think that would happen again?

25 MS. LOUDEN: Probably, yes, I think so, although



1 maybe some--maybe things are changing now, I don't know.  
2 Maybe people are getting programmed by the television more,  
3 or something, I don't know.

4 (11:10:02 End of Tape 2-11.)

5 (11:09:18 Begin Tape 2-13.)

6 MS. JOHNSON: If the Carlin Nuclear Waste Rail Line  
7 Project came back, how would it affect the Valley? How would  
8 it change the Valley if it actually happened?

9 MS. LOUDEN: I don't think it would change it a  
10 whole lot. It would just mean that, well, maybe some people  
11 would move away. They wouldn't want to be around it. But,  
12 then, again, it wouldn't do much unless there were leaks  
13 coming out, and then maybe ten years later, you'd come down  
14 with cancer and you couldn't prove that it was from a leak.  
15 And, so, you just stay here and live with it, and never know,  
16 but you'd feel--I wouldn't feel good about it. It would  
17 affect me in kind of--give me depression. It would make me  
18 depressed, and we might move away, but I don't know. I think  
19 it would bring a lot of depression on the place, really.

20 (11:10:27 End Tape 2-13.)

21 (11:09:22 Begin Tape 2-14.)

22 MS. LOUDEN: It's okay if you use this for any  
23 purpose you like.

24 MS. JOHNSON: Thank you very much. We'll probably  
25 use it for the web, and also for researchers. Thank you.

1 MS. LOUDEN: Okay.

2 (11:09:32 End Tape 2-14.)

3 (Whereupon, the interview of Nancy Louden was  
4 concluded.)

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