

Interviewee: Lisa Berghammer (LB)
Interviewer: McKenna Larson (ML)
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Abstract:

Lisa Berghammer lives in a little town in Northwestern Wisconsin called Clayton. Lisa works at the Clayton K-12 School District as a 1st grade teacher currently. In this interview, Lisa talks about how her days used to be structured pre-COVID and how many things have changed throughout this pandemic. She goes into a very detailed description of how her days have changed and how they even have to quarantine their books in the classroom. Lisa talks about how she is frustrated with the lack of seriousness people have toward COVID after she's had it and says that wearing a mask is not a hard task to do. She also says how maybe the pandemic will make us all realize what's really important in our lives and it could be a good thing in a couple of ways.

ML:

Alright. Good morning Lisa, would you mind sharing the date and time for me please?

LB:

Sure. Today is Sunday, November 29 and it is 10:27am.

ML:

All righty. Would you mind sharing your demographic information for the study such as your race, ethnicity, age or gender?

LB:

Sure, I am a white female, I'm a Lutheran, I live in a middle class town, I guess. And, I think that's about it.

ML:

All righty. How did you get to where you are as a first grade teacher, in Clayton?

LB:

Well, I went to- I graduated from Prairie Farm [Wisconsin] high school in 1987. I then went on to- went to a junior college for a year in Rice Lake [Wisconsin], and then I transferred to UW-Eau Claire. And there, I received my undergraduate degree in elementary education so I could teach anything from first grade to eighth grade and I could also teach physical education from kindergarten through freshmen.

ML:

Okay, awesome. What's your favorite grade to teach?

LB:

I would say my favorite grade- I've taught pretty much everything, first through eighth grade and there's favorites about all of them. I really enjoyed when I was teaching fourth grade, because they were still young enough to really get into everything and they, but they were old enough to understand things that you were doing-a little more independent. But like I said, every grade has its positives.

ML:

Okay. So what are the primary things you do on a day to day basis, you could include your job some extracurricular activities with going to football games and stuff like that, and how that's changed with COVID, can just speak on that stuff.

LB:

Okay, well, my typical day- this year, of course, is a little bit different with COVID-but typically, I'm at school every morning at 7:30am and I'm there usually until 4:30pm. And so that takes up a great deal of the day, I get home, and I will, you know, continue preparing for the next day- I will, of course get supper ready. My husband is also a teacher in another town and so he is also coaching football and basketball. And so he's home a little bit later, which is alright, it gives me time to finish up my schoolwork and get supper ready. And then the rest of the night's kind of- I'm pretty tired out from the day. And so the rest of the night if there's not a game to go to then we're home and we start the whole routine over the next day.

ML:

Alrighty, perfect. So living in Clayton, what's your favorite thing about living there? And can you kind of describe the area to people who don't usually know where Clayton is?

LB:

Sure, well, Clayton is a really small rural town. It's in northwestern Wisconsin. There's a population of slightly over 500. So it's, it's very small. Our typical class sizes in the school are

right around, probably upper 20s. I add, if you have a low 30 class, that's a big class. But I would say a lot of I, let's see here, a lot of factory workers, a lot of- there's not a lot of big businesses or anything like that. So people, you know, drive to other communities most often to get to their jobs. I, I think my favorite thing, I grew up in a neighboring small town and so this is all I know- I know that if we need groceries, we have to drive 45 minutes. I know that if we want entertainment, we have to drive 45 minutes. And so you just do a lot of outdoor things here. It's a it's just like I said-small lot of lakes though. Very pretty. You get to enjoy all the different seasons. See lots of wildlife. It's just I guess it's what I'm used to, what I grew up with, and kind of where I want to be.

ML:

Okay, awesome. When you first learned about COVID-19, what were your thoughts about it and have your thoughts changed since the beginning of this whole thing?

LB:

It's interesting, I was teaching last year when COVID all started- I was teaching Middle School. So as I had said earlier, my degree goes up through eighth grade. And in a small school district, you do need to be flexible and able to move where, where there's more students. And so I moved up to middle school, I was teaching social studies, and we would watch on Fridays, there's a 10 minute clip called CNN [Cable News Network] 10 and a it talked about COVID-19. But of course, it was not affecting us at the time. This was, I'm thinking about December, January-they were talking about how this this strange thing was happening in China. And my kids, my students, especially my eighth graders, were very interested in it wondering, you know, what is this what, you know, my gosh, is it ever going to affect us? And, you know, it was, it was just interesting to watch it evolve, and how-oh, my goodness- and ended up in March shutting down our school and changing life as we know it. So that that was, you know, like I said, at first, it was just kind of interesting to watch from the outside and not thinking that it was actually going to affect us in our daily lives. So when it did shut down school in March, that totally changed everything. It was just kind of like watching this, this movie that we were now a part of, because we had seen it happen on the screen. And now we were kind of living it, even though it wasn't really affecting us in Clayton at that time. So it was it was scary I think at first, I would say that's how, how I maybe felt was-I can't imagine what their life was like living with this and watching how they had shut down everything and people suited up in their white suits with their bubble hats on and, and just wandering my gosh, I can't imagine what life was like. And so then we come home when school was shut down, and we'd watch CNN, and you'd see all these reports. And then oh, my goodness, it came across to the United States in New York, and the eastern side of the country was really being affected. And still thinking that it's scary, but gosh, it can't really get to our rural areas. And then lo and behold it it hits us, whammo and, and again, this school year now has, is very different than any school year that I've ever experienced, even though last school year, we were shut down. This year it seems like we're in limbo all the time- you never know. We're shut down for a week because some students have it. It ended up that I actually ended up with COVID- was very, very sick, obviously not as sick as

what you hear, but it was the real deal, and it was really scary and no energy. And still- that happened in early November and still- to the end of November, there's not a whole lot of energy, and not a whole lot of stamina to do a whole lot. So my views have changed from being afraid to thinking ah, is it really going to affect us, and kind of feeling-having a lot of empathy for these other countries or even then our country and now? Gosh, we're living it. We had to be flexible to deal with it. Thinking okay, we can handle this, but also frustrations with people that still don't think it's real.

ML:

Okay, awesome answer. What issues have most concerned you about the pandemic?

LB:

Oh, gosh, I would say- probably it would be- I think there's quite a few issues. One of the, the unknowns, you know, what are the long-term repercussions going to be for this? Because it is new, it's never, we've never experienced it before. So what long term effects is this going to have on everyone that has, has had COVID? You know, gosh, can they get it again? Are you know, that's wonderful that the vaccine is happening- that they're working on it, are, but are people going to take it? What are the long-term effects of the vaccine? I think it's just so many unknowns that way. Let's see here, what else? Other concerns are would be the fact that people are not taking this seriously. And I think it you know, that's always bothered me, I don't think it's, it's very difficult to put a mask on and show care and concern for people around you. Like I said, we're a small community, and we do know everyone. And so I think it's really, it is really sad that people can't put on a mask even when they're signs on every door that masks are required. And I think there's a lot of people that feel that they're above the law and that it's infringing on their rights, but by not wearing a mask I think you are it that also says a lot about you as a person. So that's been really frustrating and I think the fact that once I did get COVID and see- not that I was ever doubting that I realized that COVID was real-but I think once you get it and you realize how how sick you are, and- I had it, my husband had it, my brother had it, my mom had it. And it was really scary. My mom lives alone. And my dad had passed away several years ago. And she was by herself, and I was too sick to go see her. And worrying and you hear all these terrible things- my daughter's a nurse at a pretty large hospital, well actually one in Eau Claire, and she sees firsthand how how quickly this changes and how it has, how many people have died from it. And watching them go from, you know, sick to dying, and in a matter of an hour. And so I I knew from her obviously, I knew that this was real, but people still don't believe it. And people are still thinking that this isn't a true illness or that it isn't real. And I just think that's scary. And I think that with feelings like that, that I I worry that this is never going to go away. I worry that when the vaccine actually comes so that we're able to get it, are people actually going to take it? You know, so I, I don't know, I worry that this is going to be something that's going to be around forever. I worry about, you know, I've had it, my mom has had it- our what is it going to be like? Can you get it again? What's it going to be like if you do get it the second time? Are you going to be really sick? Are you going is it going to be worse? So I think it's so much of the unknowns- I think those are some of my my main concerns.

ML:

Okay, awesome. So let's go back to your job a little bit. So-

LB:

Ok.

ML:

How has COVID like affected your job? You talked about, you told me a story about how you quarantine your books for the kiddos?

LB:

Yup.

ML:

Can you just kind of go into some details about how your day to day- how you normally would teach has changed so much.

LB:

Okay. So it has changed a lot and then like I said, last year, I was middle school. So this year, I'm in first grade, which in itself is a big change. But- that we had a team at school that tried to come up with the pandemic plan, you know, how are we going to be able to keep kids in school safely. And *clears throat* I think they did a pretty good job with it- you know, how can you plan for this. But what we've done is we are basically, like I said, I get to school at 7:30. The kids arrive by 7:45 and they come down to the classroom. And I am with them then from 7:45 until they leave at about 3:25. So you are with them all day, which is it's a big change. I mean, you can imagine first graders- lot of energy. And it's hard their specials- well, first of all, my day would start with breakfast, we walk with them up to what would have been our concession stand because we are a K-12 building and so we don't want the elementary intermingling with the middle school or the high school. So we are trying to keep the elementary down on our wing. And so instead of going to our typical lunchroom, we go to the concession stand. So it's just kind of a common area. And we walk the kids up there's purple dots where they have to stand six feet apart. And of course, obviously they wash their hands and sing the ABCs and so it takes a long time to get everyone's hands washed. We walk them up they they have to wear because there's plastic shields up and so it's really hard for the cooks and the food service to hear the six-year-olds. And so they have to wear clips if- because there's choices on meals so that the cooks can see okay, gosh, they've got a purple clip they are going to get the peanut butter and jelly sandwich option, or they have a yellow clip and they're going to get the yogurt

option. If they don't have a clip, they get the regular food and so they could get through the lunch line, they walk their trays which is a major feat walking their trays to the room without spilling. But they're getting better. So they get in the classroom, they sit in their desks that are six feet apart. You've got tape marks on the floor where the front two legs of their desk have to be on those tape marks so they're not moved. So they sit down and as you can imagine how six-year-olds eat- thankfully we don't have carpeted floors. And so there's food all over the floor. They do the best that they can but, they're kids. And so they finished eating you have to set a timer because it could take all day to eat breakfast and so we set a timer- by 8:30 they are done with their breakfast, and then comes the cleanup. And so on our job board this time, we have a cleaner/sanitizer. And so I have a spray bottle that I have to put on the gloves for. And it's just like dawn dish soap and water and I have to go around and spray the desks and the cleaner person comes around with towels *phone dings* and gives towels to everybody. They clean off their desks, they have to clean off their area of the floor. If there's things like muffins that have the crumbs everywhere, our cleaner gets the broom and cleans everything up for them. And so then we start our day. And so then our day is so different than what it really should be for first grade. The kids are in their seats most of the time because, obviously, you try to do things when they're pretty good about wearing masks, but they're also little kids and they slip below their nose. And so, you know, most of the things that we do are in their desks, you know, all day. And so you try to switch it up, you try to put on a "Go Noodle" video where they can stand by their desk and get their wiggles out. And then you go back to reading. And then finally we get to it's our special time. So is it music, art, library- well those are all in our classroom so they could stay in their seats, and the specialists have to wheel down to our classroom. And it would be a great time for me to go somewhere and get something done but there's nowhere to go- because every room is used up to try to make sure that none of the classrooms are too full of kids. And so like I said, we're in our classroom all day, with the kids all day, after this special, you continue with your reading, and then it comes lunch and you do the whole meal routine over again. And finally it's recess, but I have to go to recess with the kids. And so I go out with them, we come in. And it just it's just everything takes so long as you feel like you are working really hard and going 100 miles an hour but accomplishing very little. I feel bad for the kids because they they're thrilled to be at school, don't get me wrong, they love that and it's a way better option than being at home. But it's not it is there's nothing normal about what we're doing. There's nothing when everyone says that we need to get back to normal. We need the kids at school. Yes, we do. But it is not normal. It's as normal as it can be. But I guess we do the best that we can so there's been so much that has changed. If kids obviously little kids that working math or anything, they need manipulatives. So we had to buy Tupperware containers and handout manipulatives that they keep in in a separate container for them. If kids don't don't have their own scissors, I have scissors, obviously that I can lend out to them but when they are done with them, they have to sit- I have to sanitize everything that they use that is not theirs. We have a sanitizing machine in our, in our classroom that anytime the kids use anything or want to go get a book off the shelves, they have to sanitize before they go to the books. Which also as you had talked about earlier, our books have to be in quarantine. So as they take books off our school shelf, if they are done with them, they put them in a container that they have to sit for at least four days before they anyone else can touch them and put them back on the shelf. So that it's so strange, you know, kids, the word quarantine is something that six-year-olds probably

shouldn't need to know, but they know it very well. And so those are, those are some of the main- oh, another major change is at the end of the day. Well, it's elementary and so a lot of times you have parent volunteers in the classroom- this year, we can't have that- this year we don't have parents are not in the building. And so at the end of the day, parents are waiting outside of the building for if they're there to pick their children up. And so we walk the kids out outside of the building and parents are waiting for them there. I feel for the parents, they can't come in you know that to see what their kids' days are like, they can't come in for parent teacher conferences, they can't come in for programs- everything is live streamed so that you can see it. That there's just so many things that are different you could go on and on forever about it because nothing is what the typical normal is.

ML:

Yeah, that's crazy. Has the COVID-19 pandemic affected the employment of any other person you know in the family or anything like that?

LB:

Well in our family, there's a lot of teachers and so as far as that goes, we still have jobs, our jobs are just so different. And so certainly not complaining about that because I know there's a lot of people that have lost jobs and are really struggling. Our job has just changed tremendously but we still have a job. I've got some brothers that are, they work for a local cable company. And obviously, they're probably more busy than ever, because of so many kids that are virtual and so many jobs that have required people to be home. And so I know that they're certainly more busy than they ever had been before because there's constant calls about- oh, my gosh, my internet isn't working, or we need this or that. And so I've been fortunate that many of my friends are teachers, many of my family members are teachers, or they're in businesses where they are very much needed because of the change of the pandemic. So, personally, I've been very lucky that I do not know anyone that has- I mean my, my students parents, I know some of them are really struggling, but as far as my personal family and friends, we've been very fortunate that we still have jobs and we still have an income.

ML:

For sure. So let's talk about like your family a little bit. How is COVID-19 affected like how you and your family do your day-to-day activities and getting together and stuff like that?

LB:

Well, I would say that my family I have a large, extended family that we do a lot together for so we would get together for Easter. Well, that was one of the first holidays that had to be canceled. As I mentioned before, my my dad had passed away and so he was in the service and so Memorial Day is a big holiday for our family. We couldn't do that. My son was graduating in May from St. Scholastica, he is a physical therapist, and so we are pretty excited to see he was

going to get his doctorate gown and that graduation was cancelled. So so many things have been cancelled of the big events. As far as how we try to do I I think about the most recent one, Thanksgiving. Like I said, my, my mom is one that would always host Thanksgiving and there would be close to 40, 50 people there- like I said, we have a huge extended family. Well, we obviously couldn't do that. Plus, my mom was just getting over COVID even if we could, there was no energy to even begin to make the big meal. And so this year, I attempted on my first Thanksgiving meal and had just my children that we had a total of six people at our house, people that you know, I I do see them frequently. And so it wasn't- and plus I guess I figured I had had COVID already, my kids are are young and healthy and so even you felt a little guilty having your own kids over for Thanksgiving. But it was like I said six people total and so everything our holidays everything has changed. A lot more texting and a lot more talking on the phone to check in with people. And so I would say those are some of the major changes. I'm missing my extended family very much because I'm used to seeing them for all the major holidays and I just haven't I haven't seen them since really last Christmas.

ML:

Yeah that it's crazy. What have you, your family, and friends done for recreation during COVID? You can include details about like some Netflix shows, you've been watching, some games you've done, or some books anything like that.

LB:

Okay, well I would say- as I had mentioned before, Clayton is a small, rural town. Lots of lakes. It is very pretty around here. So we thankfully like the outdoors we go on a lot of walks, and it now when it's getting colder, we still do walks when the snow comes we'll snowshoe. We have just spent a lot of time outside. We are fortunate that we do have a cabin on Madeline Island [Lake Superior], we would go up there we were able to do our virtual teaching up there, so it was kind of a nice change of scenery. And it's you know, there weren't a lot of people on the island and so obviously that was beautiful. We can go down and enjoy Lake Superior. It just so many pretty things to see. So we spend a lot of times outdoors. When we were not outdoors, I'm a reader. I read a lot of books on my Kindle. I might have Audibles so when I'm walking or driving some place to go get my Walmart pickup order. I will listen to Audible books. As far as Netflix we have that too. I've, I I don't know, I've watched a lot of, well, a lot of Christmas movies even when it wasn't anywhere near Christmas. I've watched series like the Crown. I've watched all sorts of things on Netflix- things that I can't even remember because they're kind of no brainers you turn your brain off, and you just watch that for some entertainment. I've done a lot of baking, trying new recipes, I've learned to make donuts, I've learned to make kringla I've learned different soup recipes, I anything to keep yourself busy. So, my husband and I, he's a he's a coach and so I will go to, you know, a lot of his games, which are very different you have, you know, there's a limited number of tickets for people to get into the football games, it'll be interesting to see how basketball goes- but football, they were able to get through the season. We just sat in our small little- the people you came with group- and everyone had a mask on. It was everything's just been so different. But thankfully, we've still been able to do things. Like I

said, my grocery shopping is pick up orders. And that's I guess that's- spend a lot of time outdoors, a lot of time reading, watching Netflix, watching TV, baking, talking a lot more talking- oh we started crafting more. Started making different- we needed something to do in the spring when we are done virtual teaching and so we would build different houses and all sorts of things, just to try to keep ourselves busy.

ML:

Very fun. So let's talk about the community a little bit more in Clayton here. How do you think that your community and the people around you are responding to the pandemic?

LB:

As I've talked before, I've been frustrated with that. I think the businesses are trying their- they have signs up and many of our businesses you- like I said, Clayton is small, there's not a ton of businesses. But some that you walk into, many do have their employees have masks on, they've got the plexiglass shields up. But there's also some that you go into where nobody is, even employees are not wearing masks. And I find that that frustrating, again, because I think that does say a lot about the people that do not wear masks, it makes me think that they maybe are not concerned about other people's health. I think that our businesses are trying, I realize they need people to come in and are doing the best that they can. But I think that the customers are probably thinking that their rights are being infringed upon and many are not wearing masks and are not taking it seriously. And don't believe that COVID is going to affect our small county of Polk County, in Wisconsin, and it definitely has, it's shut down our school for a week it has impacted- many of our community members have gotten COVID and have been very sick. Thankfully, we have not lost anyone to it but we've had people that have had to be sent to bigger hospitals and put on ventilators and it is here. And I think that people have politicized the pandemic. And I think that's so sad that that has happened no matter what you who you want it to be president or who you are supporting this pandemic really could care less. And it's going to affect you whether you're republican or democratic. And I just think the whole thing is very frustrating that, that they think we're a small town and it's not going to affect us, but it has.

ML:

Yeah. So let's let's kind of talk more about that. So let's say have you noticed people change their opinions on COVID? Like after Have you like seen someone get it and then they change their opinions or with your daughter being a nurse has that like changed people's opinion talking about it?

LB:

I think it definitely has I think you know, I mean, I think that's human nature. Like I said, we watched it happen on CNN 10 in China. And it just seemed like it was something- oh my gosh,

you felt terrible for them but it doesn't really apply to us. That's a whole- that's across it- several, you know, an ocean it's so far away, it's not going to get here. Once it got here, I think it did change some opinions a little bit, but it was still in New York and New York to us here in Wisconsin, plus we're small town USA was so different than big New York City. And it just didn't seem like- gosh that can't affect us. And then, you know, it started shutting down everything around here when it wasn't really here and I think that, you know, gradually, people were starting to think, oh, my goodness, this, this really is getting closer to us and closer to home. And, and then students' parents, and then community members, we're starting to get it. And I think that people I know, there's been people that have gone on Facebook and have said- gosh, I really didn't think it was this bad but yes, COVID is the real thing and I've never been that sick in my whole life. And so I think that it's sad, but I think until you know someone personally, or you have it, actually get COVID yourself, I think many people didn't believe in it, and didn't really care about it, until it affected someone close to them. And then I think gradually, those opinions are starting to change. But for some people, it's not going to change at all, until they would actually get it. And that's really scary, because some people are not going to do well if they get it. So I think opinions are changing, but they're not changing like they probably should, in my opinion, I think that we need to care about these things, because they're affecting humans and people even that we don't know. But I do think that we have to realize that it could be us next and so we need to prepare, we need to realize that this is real. And my daughter is been one that's been very frustrated. She, you know, knows people in around people that do not believe in it and will openly go out to big events with huge crowds, and nobody's wearing masks and she keeps saying you guys this is this is so bad. And this is real, and people are dying from it. And sometimes it's like talking to a brick wall. So I think there's been a lot of frustration with this. And I don't know how that's going to change.

ML:

Alright, awesome. So, in which ways you think COVID is affecting people's mental or physical health during the whole pandemic?

LB:

Well, you know, I think as far as physical health health goes, I think that if you allow yourself to stay cooped up in, in your home, which you know, if you're afraid to go out and do things and you live in a city where you know- we I don't- but if you live in a city where it's hard to get out and go for walks and be outside, and- I think that could be really bad. I think that people could gain weight because you're eating and you're watching TV, and you're doing things that you know, are not very physical. But I think if you take advantage of this, gosh, we can't do anything else we might as well walk or we might as well try to, you know, care about our physical health. So I think it affects people differently. I think depending on where they live, their lifestyles, we've been fortunate where we do enjoy being outside, we do- we are somewhat active. And so even just getting off to go for a walk just makes such a world of difference. As far as mental health goes. I think again, it affects people so differently. I obviously I'd like to be around people but I also like to, I like to be home and I like to be around just my family and I like to not always

be out and about and doing things so for me, I don't think it is affected my mental health all that much. I mean, I miss people and I miss my extended family but I still get to see people and I think my job allows me I see a lot of people and a lot of kids and so coming home, it's it's okay to be just kind of, I don't know, quiet and to yourself. I do think there's a lot of- when we were shut down from March until August- I think that you hear a lot of parents talking about they were worried about their kids and worried about their children's mental health and I think that's real. I was just fortunate not to have to experience that. I worry about my my kids that are in school, that everything's online and they don't have that, that I that chance to interact with other people. I do worry about them. I don't know I think this pandemic has affected everything physically, mentally, emotionally, everything and so I think we need to be able to reach out to people whether it's, I get that in person isn't always possible. But I think thank goodness, it's happened, this pandemic, if it had to happen is happening now. Where social media, and you've got your phones that you can FaceTime and see people and I think people need to make, make sure that they are reaching out and checking on on the people that they care about.

ML:

Very good answer. Okay, so let's talk about how you get some of your information for the pandemic. What kind of news source do you watch on TV or on the internet? What do you kind of go to for your primary sources of info?

LB:

Okay, so mainly, you know, you try to watch the local news- now that the COVID is affecting us here in our communities, just to see- I mean, it's kind of nice to to watch the local stations that are talking about us. But I also I do watch CNN and it's scary to watch the numbers of people that are dying in the United States and in the world, and knowing that, gosh, that it's here now so it is affecting people, you know, within an hour, it's affecting people. And so I think, you know, it's interesting to compare the local stations to the CNN's. I will, I read our local newspapers, I will check you know, I'll go on and check stories on on the internet. You know, you talk to people and you hear different things so I will talk to people about it. But I would say my main source would be the local news, CNN, our local newspapers, that kind of thing.

ML:

Okay, so what do you think are like the most important issues that the media may not be covering well? Or covering too much, honestly.

LB:

Okay. I think I don't know, I, it's so hard to say what's right and what's wrong. I think maybe at first people became kind of not, I don't know, like COVID desensitized maybe because that's all we were hearing, and it wasn't here. And so I think it was easy for people to think, okay, there's

COVID and that's all you hear about in the news, but it was not here. And so I think that, that people became very desensitized, and we're not taking it seriously and not thinking it was real. And so I think that was, that was part of it. But yet again, that's just us thinking about our very small circle where we live. And you have to be able to look broader and realize, no, it's not here but it is, it's somewhere. And so I think that- not faulting the news stations, because they had to cover it because it was affecting their viewers. But I don't I don't know if- that's such a that's such a hard one because I do think that they need to inform us and tell us what's happening. But I think a lot of it was it was scary. And I don't think it was scare tactics. But when you would see the, the refrigeration trucks with that many people that had died, and and I think that was scary, you know, to see oh, my gosh, this can't be real- it felt like you were watching a movie. So I think were they covering it too much? I I don't know. I think they had to. I think some of the other issues, I think, and they they can't fix this because you'd like to know what are long-term effects but nobody knows that. And so I think it's hard to say, what new stations and what journalists what they could do better or cover more or cover less, because this is the first time this has happened. And so we're learning about it as we go. I'm sure when we look back on this someday, there's going- that, you know, hindsight is going to be so much better to say, gosh, we should have done this. We shouldn't have done that. But right now we're living it. And I don't know that you can fault people for doing what they're doing because nobody knows what is right and what is wrong. And so I think you have to stay informed. And I think when you get overwhelmed, you have to shut the news off and get outside and do something else. Because it's everywhere. It's on every station you tune into. So sometimes I think social media is great for keeping in contact with others. But it's also terrible, because that's all you see and all you hear about. So I don't know I I don't would not want to be a person making decisions. I would not want to be a journalist right now. Because you're never going to be right in everyone's eyes, but you have to do your job. And so I don't know, I don't know what I would say to do differently because we won't know that for years down the road.

ML:

Yes, perfect. So let's just finish up with this one question. So, knowing what you know now, what do you think the individuals, communities, or governments need to keep in mind for our future, going into the rest of the pandemic?

LB:

Well, I think this is something that in a million years we never would have thought would affect us. And so I think, now that it has- you mean we live in an area where we're not affected by earthquakes and the volcanos that all these- hurricanes- you know, yes we are affected by tornados, but we live in a really safe area where things- bad things, you know don't really happen all that much. Of course there's cancers that affect us and there's accidents and things like that but now this is this pandemic has connected everyone in the world so and we here in Clayton are also part of that connection. And I think that to be prepared maybe now our eyes are maybe open a little bit more to realize that we are not- just because we are in a small little town- we are not immune from these bad things happening. Hopefully our eyes are opened,

hopefully our local governments that never in a million years would have thought they'd have to deal with this. Now they realize these far-fetched things, the things that you see in movies can really happen here. And hopefully now that there will be- granted it will probably be after the fact for COVID, but and if there is ever something else that happens maybe now there's emergency teams put in place. Like I said I know our school has now a pandemic team that put together a huge policy of how we are going to handle this. And now maybe those things are going to be in place. Maybe, you know, how we're handling holidays, how we're handling businesses, how we're handling everything. Now at least it's forced people to maybe at least think about this and to maybe have an emergency plan in place and if something like this ever happens again or if this COVID never goes away, maybe we are more equipped to deal with it in the best way possible. It's probably not ever going to be perfect, because this thing is ever changing and evolving, but I do think that it's forced us to really look at our way of life and how we deal with things and maybe it's prepared us for life not always being so rosy. That there are bad things that happen, and they can happen to us.

ML:

Okay, awesome. Thank you so much for your time, is there anything else you'd like to add or anything?

LB:

No, I just think you know it's taught us a lot of lessons, it truly has I mean very cliché to say you know we've learned what's essential but we really have. We I've learned that I don't have to go to the mall and kill time looking in all the fun shops, I know that family is the most important and you- as long as they're safe and you can talk to them whether that's in person or on the phone. I I think we've learned things, the things that we really need and those are people and those are that we have to look out for one another and care about each other and we don't need all the thrills in life. And I do think maybe that pandemic has has taught us some of that too that what really is important, and we need to keep that in in mind.

ML:

Okay thank you so much. You can kind of hang around on the Zoom call and I'll just end the recording now. Thank you.

LB:

Okay, thank you.