

Interviewee: Pat Linder and Caleb Linder

Interviewer: Alexis Linder

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Abstract:

Pat Linder and Caleb Linder are father and son from Ellsworth, Wisconsin. They both are employees of McGough Construction. In this interview, Pat and Caleb discuss how Covid-19 has affected their lives at work, at home, and in their community. They talk about their experiences working in Minneapolis and St. Paul during the George Floyd protests as well as Covid-19 has affected the hospital in which one of them currently works and the changes they need to make because of the pandemic. They discuss their feeling and thoughts on the vaccine, how the media portrays the pandemic, and what they do to stay safe while living through the Covid-19 pandemic.

Alexis Linder 00:01

And it's recorded. Okay, so this My name is Alexis Linder. I am the interviewer. It is Monday, November 29 of 2021 it is six o'clock. Exactly, which is pretty cool. Um, so just for you guys, [talking to recording] um, this is I am interviewing my dad and my brother and I'm going to give you some daily statistics about COVID-19. So I'm currently for-as of today, the US COVID cases total is 47,900,000-900,16- 623 [47,916,623] cases. The US total deaths is 773,779. The percentage of people age five and up with at least one vaccine is 74.1%. More regional in Wisconsin, the confirmed cases of Wisconsin residents as 2749. Wisconsin resident confirmed deaths so this is resident it can be out of the state is 8964. Wisconsin resident percentage with at least one dose of the vaccine is 58.9%. And the percentage of Wisconsin residents with the complete vaccine is 56%. So those are just some facts to keep in mind as you're answering questions. So to get started, can you please tell me your name? And if you're comfortable telling me your demographic information so like tell me your race, your age, your gender and your name.

Pat Linder 01:44

I am Pat Linder. White. Male.

Alexis Linder 01:51

Your age.

Pat Linder 01:52

And I'm 50 years old.

Caleb Linder 01:55

I am Caleb Linder. I'm a white, male, and I'm 21 years old.

Alexis Linder 02:01

Alright, so what are the primary things that you guys do on a day to day basis? So like your job, extracurricular activities, anything like that, typical day.

Caleb Linder 02:13

Day to day I, as you can see are from McGough construction. And so for my job I go there and we are a commercial builder or construction company. So on day to day I put on bags and stuff to go work. And then for hobbies, I like to deer hunt.

Alexis Linder 02:37

What is bags?

Caleb Linder 02:39

Bags?

Alexis Linder 02:40

Yeah.

Caleb Linder 02:40

Oh, sorry like my concrete-my pouches.

Alexis Linder 02:43

Oh, like your

Pat Linder 02:45

Tools.

Caleb Linder 02:45

Like my tools like that. I hold nails and screws and stuff.

Pat Linder 02:50

Okay, I'm Pat Linder. I am a superintendent from McGough construction. I have been there for 25 years. I remodel in hospitals. I-I'm a superintendent. I don't wear the nail bags or work with my tools anymore. I deal with the day to day office on a jobsite.

Alexis Linder 03:15

Do you have anything extracurricular activities too?

Pat Linder 03:18

I also like to deer hunt and anything outside. [dogs barking]

Alexis Linder 03:24

Excuse the dogs barking. Um, so where do you live?

Pat Linder 03:31

We both live in Ellsworth, Wisconsin.

Alexis Linder 03:33

And what is it like to live in Ellsworth, Wisconsin?

Caleb Linder 03:38

Very small town.

Pat Linder 03:41

Very.

Caleb Linder 03:42

Very small town.

Alexis Linder 03:45

Do you guys know the population of Ellsworth?

Pat Linder 03:48

It's about 3550 something. It's just about 3600 people. So yeah, very small town. Tight community. Almost everybody knows everybody. It's a typical small town Wisconsin, I guess.

Alexis Linder 04:07

Yeah. Very small. So when you first learned about COVID-19, what were your thoughts about it?

Pat Linder 04:16

First learning?

Alexis Linder 04:17

First learning. First ever learning about COVID.

Pat Linder 04:20

I had no idea what it was. It was a-another thing that the media hyped up and it was gonna be gone in two weeks.

Caleb Linder 04:33

Very similar opinion. I was very confused. Frustrated. The same thing. I guess I thought it was going to be gone. Same thing. I thought the media hyped it up more than it was and I was hoping you would be gone sooner than later.

Alexis Linder 04:52

What were you frustrated about?

Caleb Linder 04:55

Um, just more that -I guess more I was more frustrated with the media about like, because at the time I thought it - well at the time I thought it was a really a joke. Because I just - I wasn't very understanding of what was all going down. I just wanted everything to get back to normal. I think that's another thing I was most frustrated, about because I wanted everything back to normal. So I could hang out with family, friends without even worry about everything.

Alexis Linder 05:25

Yeah, yeah, that's a good answer. We'll get more to the media too. So we can talk about that more. But um, moving on, is-how have your thoughts changed? Have you have your thoughts changed from when you first learned about COVID?

Pat Linder 05:40

Mine, excuse me, mine have due to now media still hyped it up. But it's more real. It has hit home, it has hit community, it has had friends, family, it is more now. It's been here a long time. It is not going anywhere for a while. Still frustrating and confusing. But it is here. It is alive. It is real. So and we just deal with the day to day now.

Caleb Linder 06:14

Yeah, very similar opinion. how it's changed now, like he said is more real. It's home. And I guess it's more what you live with day to day.

Alexis Linder 06:29

Yeah. Um, so what issues have most concerns you about the COVID 19 pandemic?

Pat Linder 06:38

What issues?

Alexis Linder 06:39

Yeah, have most concerned you. So like, issues like, possibly like the vaccine maybe or like issues surrounding like medical issues, you know, anything you can think of? That's an issue revolving COVID-19? Like, what has concerned you about that?

Pat Linder 06:57

Well, it's concerns me, because I have parents that are elderly, in-laws that are elderly. So as it concerns me for them, [glass set down] because it seems to hit them the hardest. I am a diabetic, so it hits me hard. And I just want my family and friends to be safe. And it affects everybody differently. So you don't know how it's going to affect you until it hits you. So that's my concern is to keep everybody safe.

Alexis Linder 07:28

Yeah, totally understandable.

Caleb Linder 07:30

Very similar, as well. We're very family oriented. So we like to keep everyone safe. I guess the same thing, because I guess he said he's a diabetic and stuff and it seems to hit those harder, and-which is hard to see. And especially with your family and friends. I guess another issue, I believe, is that people with getting the vaccines and stuff happening to them. And that is I guess one of the issues I have. I just with things- certain things going down with only certain people and stuff like that. I just-that's another thing that I guess I have an issue with.

Alexis Linder 08:23

Yeah. So would you say for like Dad said that he was concerned with like his parents and in-laws? Would you say that your concern is for your parents to then?

Caleb Linder 08:33

Oh 100 percent. Yeah. 100%? Yeah, there's no doubt about that.

Alexis Linder 08:40

So we're going to dive a little bit more into the employment and I know that you guys touched on it a little bit. Caleb, you kind of said a little bit, but can you just elaborate a little bit on it? Do you have anything to add on who McGough construction is?

Pat Linder 08:53

McGough construction is a commercial contractor. So we made-primarily in the Twin Cities, but we are throughout the nation as well. We have like 10 Other in other states-ten other offices. Yeah. So but that's what we do. We build commercial buildings. We are not residential. We are not road construction. We build commercial buildings or remodel commercial buildings. We are a union contractor. So everybody that works in the field as union-is a union member. And that's pretty much the gist of McGough. We are

not solely hospital. We are not solely churches. We are not solely anything. We-we are commercial contractors.

Caleb Linder 09:51

Nailed it. [laughter]

Alexis Linder 09:52

Okay, perfect. And you guys kind of already touched on what you do to a day to day basis. So you guys work on two different job sites right? Can you just- can one of you start and say where you work and what you're currently working on? Like what city?

Pat Linder 10:07

I will start. I will not name the hospital, but I will tell you I work in St. Paul.

Alexis Linder 10:13

Okay.

Pat Linder 10:14

I do the remodels for a major hospital.

Alexis Linder 10:20

In St. Paul.

Pat Linder 10:21

In St. Paul. I've been there for 15 years.

Caleb Linder 10:24

Okay, I'm also not going to name the name of the company, I guess the company I'm building for just in case. But I'm building a parking ramp in St. Paul.

Alexis Linder 10:35

You're in St. Paul too?

Caleb Linder 10:36

I'm in St. Paul too.

Alexis Linder 10:37

Okay. Um, so you guys commute from here to the Twin Cities has anything in 2020, be that COVID restrictions, or the Black Lives Matter protests, the George Floyd incident has anything affected your commute from here to the Twin Cities?

Caleb Linder 10:57

100%.

Alexis Linder 10:58

What has? That's what I'm asking.

Caleb Linder 11:00

All that. So at the time of basically everything I was in downtown Minneapolis on a 40 storey building. So I was there for a good two and a half years or two years, two and a half years. So at the time, I was down there, the George Floyd was happening. The BLM [Black Lives Matter] protests, and also the court cases of George Floyd, I was there for everything of that. And everything that happened. I was -was happening in my commute to get to my job. So yes, like there was broken glass on the street. I guess that's how you could say my commute was? Yeah.

Alexis Linder 11:49

Was there anything like super memorable or crazy that you remember seeing? Like at work? Like, from all that?

Caleb Linder 11:56

Yes. We wer- I can't remember what story it was. But I think it was a seven story [referring to seven stories above ground] and we were all working. And it was during one of the court cases that it happened. And there was snipers on top of the buildings, just in case. And we could see them because we were up a certain height. And they were like, directly across and we just went on with her day. Like it was nothing. But I guess especially during like the BLM, yeah, the amount of National Guard. That was there was insane. I mean, you're talking about soldiers. They're protecting citizens, you know, doing their job. And granted, for me, I thought that was- not cool, but like, I guess I don't know how to say that. But-

Alexis Linder 11:57

What was it?

Pat Linder 12:51

Respectful.

Caleb Linder 12:51

Yeah, Thank you. Yeah. Respectful, but it was not a good thing.

Alexis Linder 12:58

Yeah. Yeah. It was a cool experience.

Caleb Linder 13:01

Yeah, respectful. Just not a ideal moment.

Alexis Linder 13:05

Was the snipers, like when you saw them, that was during a protest happening, or they were anticipating a protest happening?

Caleb Linder 13:12

It was during one of the court cases. So it was more anticipating just in case. So I think, like, in other words, respect for everyone, you know, just to make sure everyone's safety. Yeah. So yes.

Alexis Linder 13:29

Did you have anything you want to add?

Pat Linder 13:31

For COVID, it helped my commute, because everybody stayed home. Oh, it was. So for me to go to St. Paul was very easy, very light traffic. [glass setting down] During George Floyd conviction, or the conviction part of it, we did have National Guard in St. Paul guarding the hospital. We that-that was really about the effects of me, because we were in St. Paul. Way different program than what Caleb had in Minneapolis for sure.

Caleb Linder 14:06

It was also nice on McGough-McGough's behalf too, because they cared about us that if certain things happened,-were gonna happen. We would leave a job and go home safely. So and they also gave us a heads up or I mean, granted, even like my-becasue we work for the same company, he would call and say, you know, no matter what, get out of there and be safe, you know. So that was for everyone. You know, just to give everyone's a heads up or what was going on. So yeah, very family oriented.

Pat Linder 14:42

Yep.

Alexis Linder 14:43

That's really cool.

Caleb Linder 14:44

Yeah.

Alexis Linder 14:44

Um, so quick side question. I know you mentioned how long you were working with McGough. Caleb, how long have you been working McGough? I forgot to-

Caleb Linder 14:51

Uh, three years. I'm an apprentice.

Alexis Linder 14:53

Oh, yeah. Okay. Yeah, I forgot. I know- You mentioned it and then I forgot to include that in there. But um, Still going, has COVID 19 affected your jobs and in what ways?

Pat Linder 15:08

Wow, that's a big question for me.

Caleb Linder 15:10

I was gonna say that's more you.

Pat Linder 15:12

Yeah, I, we have built negative pressure rooms, negative pressure wings, we have built morgues. We have built -it-It's crazy how much work has been created for us and for us with guys in the hospital we Yeah, so we have to put in negative pressure rooms are negative air so that takes the air out of the room and allows everything to be dissipated outside for the infected patient. We have done whole wings in the hospital that way. Taking out windows, putting in negative air machines that actually filter the air, removed the dirty air and pull in clean air into that wing. We have built two-two morgues. One was temporary, one is still existing and it is a cooler unit. It is a Conax like a semi trailer with the refrigerator unit on it. And it is-I was just asked today to remodel that and make it bigger. So-

Alexis Linder 16:24

You were just asked that today?

Pat Linder 16:25

Just today. So I have to do this design and rebuild that, more.

Alexis Linder 16:31

Is that attached to the hospital?

Pat Linder 16:33

It is outside the hospital on the street. It is in the back.

Alexis Linder 16:37

Is that like heavily guarded?

Pat Linder 16:39

Nope. No not guarded at all just locked.

Alexis Linder 16:42

Oh, yeah. Huh.

Pat Linder 16:45

And morgues come to get the bodies, you know, every other day or every hour, I don't know the routine and that I don't want to know that. [laughter] I just know that it is full. And we were asked to make it bigger. Yes. Unfortunately.

Alexis Linder 17:02

That is unfortunat. Do you have anything to add?

Caleb Linder 17:08

It quite hasn't-I guess it hasn't changed a whole lot. For me, I guess just start from the COVID we had to wear masks, you know, going wherever we're in confined spaces and stuff like that, we abide by that. And other than that, because a lot of my work is outside. So-so it doesn't really change much for me unless, you know, for him.

Alexis Linder 17:42

More so because you're outside?

Caleb Linder 17:44

More so because I'm outside.

Alexis Linder 17:48

Um, so you know, the concerns that you talked about earlier? Do you have any concerns that are more focused on your employment at all? Or would you-Did that make sense?

Pat Linder 18:02

Yeah. My concerns is people not staying home when they're ill. My concern is, if I have one positive person being confined in space, or we're indoors, although we do need to wear masks indoors, where I work. It can be spread rapidly, and are-so yes, it's a concern. We have crew tracking where we track where and who's been in contact with each other into specific job sites. So we do track, we do-So yeah, there is concerns that we try to take care of right away so that we can track and quarantine the right people. If this happens.

Caleb Linder 18:53

We do the same.

Alexis Linder 18:55

You have that crew tracking too?

Caleb Linder 18:57

Yep.

Pat Linder 18:57

That is McGough policy.

Alexis Linder 18:59

Oh.

Pat Linder 19:00

That one is.

Alexis Linder 19:01

Cool. Um, has the pandemic affected the employment of people that you know, and in what ways like the people that are close to you, maybe?

Pat Linder 19:17

not not me with McGough. No. McGough does not require anything. It's our client. If they require we have to obey. McGough is not-no mandates no nothing minus whatever the client brings to you. So as far as us no, have I seen nurses and all of that effect Yes, but not McGough personally.

Caleb Linder 19:50

I haven't either. Not McGough personally,

Alexis Linder 19:53

You guys are welcome to talk about like mom too. Like anybody who you know personally affect their employment.

Pat Linder 20:01

So right now, I mean, we're we're talking, the only employment that's been affected are the restaurants and stuff like that, until the mandate is put into place from [President Joe] Biden, there isn't a super effect. When that-if that passes, you will see a major impact on a lot of people's jobs. Jobs, careers, everything, it will,-it will significantly impact everything in my opinion.

Alexis Linder 20:34

Yeah. So I know that you guys are not like residential construction workers. And you guys are, like commercial. And I know that we were talking a little bit earlier, and you said that this was more of a dad question. But, um, so in the beginning of the pandemic, um, I think there were a lot of news coverage around like, it was May of 2021, there was a-huge major lumber shortage, as people had a whole bunch of time to work on home improvement projects. So did that shortage affect your job at all? And in what ways your jobs at all?

Pat Linder 21:09

Yeah, so those are a perfect storm, there was a fire in Texas that affected like insulation, and different things like that being made, there was COVID, with people off of work being COVID. So companies couldn't pick up. There was the the remodel effect where everybody was at home so they could rebuild. So there was a lot of things hitting at one time. So yes, prices went up. Nobody could keep up to the product it is- it's now getting a little better, even prices are coming down. But now we're seeing it in like appliances, and like new doors and different things like that, where the bigger companies cannot provide us without having it be a long lead item. So there's no more quick ships anymore. As far as some of that goes, it's-it's very hit and miss on the product. [dog walking]

Alexis Linder 22:10

Do do you know if like McGough commercial companies like McGough get higher priority over appliances or anything? Are they in the same competition as people who are ordering new appliances?

Pat Linder 22:24

They-I don't want to say it's special treatment, but it's wholesale. It's like bigger, contractors are bigger, we hit the bigger box store, we don't go to Home Depot to get it we you know what I mean? We-we would go right to the factory or something. It helps-it cuts on cost, it cuts on shipping, it cuts on a lot of things if we-we don't have to pay for the markup of when people is how I can work best.

Caleb Linder 22:58

So that happens for us too. Because a lot of the times the higher ups such as like, my dad will go out and get the supplies for us and different-Sometimes even different companies that I have, like on site, they'll go and get it for us so we can keep going with our project.

Pat Linder 23:16

Yeah, it does pay to be one of the biggest contractors in the Twin Cities and know People. [chuckling] If that's what you're asking.

Alexis Linder 23:24

Yeah.

Caleb Linder 23:26

It is very nice for us so that it keeps us busy keeps us going.

Alexis Linder 23:29

So the suppliers just come in, like literally drop off some of the stuff that they-

Pat Linder 23:33

If they can.

Alexis Linder 23:34

If they can.

Pat Linder 23:35

If they can. They try to keep McGough happy because we keep them going.

Alexis Linder 23:39

Yeah. Um, okay, so yeah, you guys' already kind of answered some of these other questions. So um, kind of a fun question going into family. Did you guys do a home improvement project of your own? Were you guys part of the lumber competition?

Pat Linder 23:56

Me myself, being my wife works at 3M I don't know if I was supposed to say that.

Alexis Linder 24:03

No, that's fine.

Pat Linder 24:04

But cannot go into work. So she works from home. So we built her an office. She has a very plush office. [laughing] Nothing is too good for an office. Yeah, it is. And rightfully so, she needed a place, the kitchen table isn't the right place to do that. Yeah. So yep, we built her an office and that's really about all we did. As far as a home improvement, really? So.

Alexis Linder 24:33

Yeah. Yeah, I mean, we live together.

Caleb Linder 24:39

[laughing] Yeah.

Alexis Linder 24:39

Yeah, true. Um, so how has COVID affected your family day to day- or our family day to day activities? Anyways, that you guys can think of, I mean, has anything changed?

Caleb Linder 24:53

We just, I say we more just play it safe.

Pat Linder 24:56

Yeah.

Caleb Linder 24:57

We play it very safe to where if someone or some-someone is not feeling good, we'll go get a COVID test, you know, to be sure for everyone just out of respect. And I guess, yeah, I guess we just play it safe. And we just communicate and talk with each other. Just more about the health side of things and I guess we just kind of continue on day to day.

Alexis Linder 25:24

Yeah. Would you say that that's the same as communicating with like, or doing things with your friends? Or is friends a little bit different?

Caleb Linder 25:34

I would say the same. Yeah, cuz I mean, we just tell each other straight up if you're sick do not come around me. Yeah. Just out of respect for family. Yeah. It's just one of those morals thing too.

Alexis Linder 25:49

Yeah. And then what has the biggest challenge that you faced during the [dog barking] COVID, 19 outbreak? It could be within like, your families, your friends, personal anything like that.

Pat Linder 26:05

For me, when COVID hit home, and we got it. It was the quarantining and the effects of it on different people and the timing of it. [dog walking] How it prolonged the quarantine and that was early on in-not early, early on- it was right- It was November of last year. So we were confined to our home with three of us in it and it got very tight. It got very small, but everybody handled it and had different effects. Everyone was different. So thank God Caleb was healthy and out of the house. He could bring us groceries. [laughing]

Alexis Linder 26:52

Yeah.

Pat Linder 26:54

Yeah. Set 'em on the-on the porch and we would kind of wait from the window. And-

Alexis Linder 27:01

yeah, I mean, we were gonna touch on that a little bit. But I guess you kind of answered it to have you or anybody you've known gotten sick during COVID 19? So you got sick.

Pat Linder 27:12

I did get sick. I did not handle COVID. Well, so yeah.

Alexis Linder 27:15

Yeah. What-What was your experience like? Getting sick?

Pat Linder 27:19

Mine was a lot of shortness of breath, a lot of fatigue. The coughing was unbearable. I had COVID for four or five weeks. I didn't have COVID, I had symptoms, the cough for about four to five weeks. As far as the fever and the headache and the loss of smell and taste. I didn't experience a lot of that. But it was a lot of fatigue and shortness of breath. It was that one was big for me.

Caleb Linder 27:49

I guess for me, I guess I have been pretty lucky for us, like I have not tested positive. But I guess like I said, our family has gotten it, and I was lucky to enough where at the time, I did not live at home. So I was able to go and get them groceries and stuff like that. So I guess that part was cool. I'm glad I was able to do that. Yeah, but yeah, I guess. Yeah. I guess I've been lucky. I've been around it and I have tested negative and quarantined and tried to play it smart like that, I guess.

Alexis Linder 28:29

Yes.

Pat Linder 28:29

Tested negative several times. [chuckling]

Caleb Linder 28:31

Several, several times.

Alexis Linder 28:34

Yeah. Let's hope it stays that way too, huh? So do you think that COVID-19 is affecting people's mental and physical health as well? Like obviously, physical health big once you get COVID-19? But more on like the mental health part of it? Do you think that it's affecting people. Is it affecting you?

Caleb Linder 28:50

Mental as in?

Alexis Linder 28:53

Like-like, how are you noticing that like, you know, like seasonal depression comes around? I can do would you say that people you know, maybe are more anxious, more depressed, you know, like that type of mental health?

Caleb Linder 29:04

So I can answer the mental part. I think in my line of work, I can tell more frustration, a lot more frustration. And it's more on the vaccine requirements. I shouldn't say requirements, because the thoughts on the vaccine and stuff like that of the- the more- it's not even more the fact of the vaccine, it's, the more that they're trying to make you to get it. So it's that part you can tell is getting very frustrated on men and women. At least in my line of work, live where I work, I guess. Sometimes it's not even where [else?] I work of-friends too, friends and family. You know, I guess I'm just more on the pushing of the vaccine for everyone to get it. So I guess-that's what I understand from the mental.

Pat Linder 30:12

Yeah. Yeah, as far as the mental part of it for me, I don't experience a lot of it, I'm able to-we were one of the workers that are able to go out of the house every day, [dog walking] go to work, we are the essential workers. So we don't get to see that or experience that because the people that we do deal with are essential workers as well. So we don't see it day to day like someone that is laid off or has COVID or a restaurant worker that can't go to work. I would assume that there is mental issues being cooped up like that, or am I going to work again? Can-how's things going to change? You know, I can definitely see that. And I also stand with Caleb on the the vaccination of the forcing of it. I am vaccinated. I chose that on my freewill. You should have the freewill right to not do it as well. That is just my political stance. Yes. My opinion. Not to be everybody's opinion. But it is mine.

Alexis Linder 31:21

Yeah, that was actually kind of my question is did you receive the vaccine? So you received the vaccine?

Caleb Linder 31:27

And I did not.

Alexis Linder 31:28

You did not. And then so if you did receive the vaccine, which is Dad, did you have any side effects? Did you get both, too?

Pat Linder 31:36

I had two shots. Yep. The first shot I felt like I-it's gonna sound funny, but it sounds like I was hungover. Oh, like I was hungover for a day. I was fine. The next day, nothing ever happened. The second shot, I did not have any effects.

Alexis Linder 31:55

And then, um, oh, if you vaccinate-also question for Dad, because he's been vaccinated. What was your experience getting to the vaccine? Was it easy? Was it difficult?

Pat Linder 32:05

Very easy.

Alexis Linder 32:06

Super easy?

Pat Linder 32:07

Yeah.

Alexis Linder 32:07

Did your work- Did McGough provide vaccines?

Pat Linder 32:09

No, It was at the Excel Energy Center there- er- I don't know the theater. Sorry. It's- it's connected to the Excel it's on the backside by Rice Street? Or the Rice Park-I mean, I do not know I forget the name of it.

Alexis Linder 32:28

Yeah, yeah. And Caleb, do you have any could-What are your questions or concerns about the vaccine?

Caleb Linder 32:33

Um, so I guess my concerns are-ah-the research behind it. I just-I think it's very new too- I feel like it's new. I feel like it was rushed. I just feel like there's a lot more things to work out before getting it. And I just, I guess, you know, you hear one thing, and you hear another, it's all rumors, you can believe one or not the other. You know, it's just kind of one of those things. To where I just, I feel like it's very new and with hearing, you know, different side effects of younger, older, middle age people, you know, stuff going on like that. I guess hearing that just, I just wish there'd be more behind it. I guess that is -I guess that is my belief in my opinion. But also, like Dad said earlier, you know, whether you get it or not too does not define anything, everyone should still get along and treat each other as equals.

Alexis Linder 33:47

Would you say that those concerns or why you did not receive the vaccine?

Caleb Linder 33:51

Those concerns or why I did not receive the vaccine, yes. I just-I am not against it. I just I wish there'd be more stuff behind it before. Like I said that this vaccine when it came out before COVID, I'd be like, Yeah, let's go for it. [chuckling] But right now I just am just going to wait and hold off for now and see what happens in the future. So that's where I stand. That's my opinion.

Alexis Linder 34:25

Understandable. So these next couple questions are going to be about the community. You get-We mentioned earlier that you know you live in a very small community. So how has the COVID-19 outbreak affected-basically affected Ellsworth like the sports, the churches, the schools, businesses, anything that you can think of how it's affected- COVID-19 has affected this community?

Caleb Linder 34:47

Well, I think I can answer some of those. I guess for smaller restaurants, I think they-they tried for a while, I guess- I guess was it last year? They were cookin-they offer like more stuff. Stuff was added discounts for you could come pick it up with a mask and-

Pat Linder 35:09

Curbsides.

Caleb Linder 35:09

Yeah. So a lot of smaller businesses did started doing that, which was cool so we can support them and they could keep going. I know for sports as for like football last season, they couldn't go the State Championship because of COVID. I know wrestling it got tough because of COVID. I guess that sounds bad because that's really [only?] two sports I follow last year.

Alexis Linder 35:39

N-no, it's-

Caleb Linder 35:39

But ah yeah, I guess that's about all I know. I do know that they were hit hard last year. I can't remember. I know that-I can't remember what happened. I know last year of spring. I can't remember if they even had track or baseball or nything like that. Sorry, 2020. In the last year they did this, I guess this year?

Pat Linder 36:04

Yeah. Yeah, and for me, churches definitely took a hit, with not being able to gather, there's actually newsletters sent up for our church to-on whether they were going to shut off all the appliances, all the electrical everything. And just because it was tough to maintain cost of even keeping the lights on. Small town businesses like restaurants, actually, I don't know-I don't want to say they got a boost. But the community stepped behind them and really stepped up to help them with curbside and keep their doors open and keep them afloat. So the community it did very well. At times, they could not keep up to the orders, it was pretty busy. So impressive to see those [dogs walking] little shops or little restaurants because we don't have big ones here. We just got Ma and pop shops [term descrbing family owned

businesses, usually small, local businesses] and in the community stepped up so and they are open today in our town, so it was a big thing. It was cool to see.

Alexis Linder 37:10

Yeah, I don't think any restaurants in Ellsworth were closed down.

Pat Linder 37:12

Not that I can think of either, no.

Alexis Linder 37:16

Yeah, very cool to see. Um, so yeah, that kind of answers the question too that I had, but you guys can add to it. How are the people responding to the COVID pandemic? Obviously supporting the businesses, but do you want to add anything else?

Pat Linder 37:30

Everybody hates it. [chuckling] Yeah. I mean, no, in small towns, it's very hard to get. I don't want to say involvement. But everybody, we don't have the big city effect. So they're curious of why we have the same rules. Why-Why it's confusing, you know. So if we in a bar, sometimes if we've get seven people in there, we got a full pla-full place. But yet, we can't have that we can't social distance inside, you know, the rules were put into play for everybody straight across the board. Even if you're in Pierce County [Wisconsin] versus the St. Croix county [Wisconsin] or is not you know, something different, like the Hudson's [Wisconsin] or anything, you know. So yeah, that's it's frustrating. People don't understand. Those of us that do drive to the Twin Cities [St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minnesota] understand it a little more, because we see it, and we hear it way more. But yeah, it's-it's-it's definitely the you know, it's two lines, really, it's a very anti-COVID. I want to be safe, where the mask, vaccinate, or I don't want to have follow any of that. I'm very confused very, again, you know, not against it, because everybody knows it's real, but it's just why do I have to do something? Why are they forcing me to do it? Or you know, that's-that's kind of what I see.

Caleb Linder 39:03

I guess, I agree with everything you said pretty much. But. Yeah. Pretty much nailed that one. [chuckling]

Alexis Linder 39:16

So yeah, that kind of goes into- so "self isolation" and "flattening the curve" have been two key ideas that emerged during the pandemic, how have you, your family, friends and community responded to the request of "self isolate" and "flatten the curve"?

Pat Linder 39:36

Self isolate, we had to do. That- I mean, it was everything shut down. Unless you were an essential worker at a certain point in time you-you didn't leave your home you didn't-There was nowhere to go. You could go to the Home Depot or Menards and wear a mask and buy your products but restaurants, bars closed. You you had to isolate So now you know that the mandates are changed, or CDC [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention] has changed the rules or people can get out. Different story today than what it was. But as far as what was it, isolation and what?

Alexis Linder 40:15

And "flatten the curve".

Pat Linder 40:17

Flattening the curve? I don't know on that one. Did it work? Did it not work? I don't know. It ah-very tough to hear and believe what I hear. I feel like sometimes we're being lied to, to- to persuade our minds. And I don't want to say lied either, to that might be the wrong word. I don't-I don't know the exact words. But it's not-

Alexis Linder 40:51

Like persuaded?

Pat Linder 40:52

Yep. Yep, I would say that we're told things to persuade us. And I'm not-I've always been taught to have a mind of my own. Stick with my beliefs and my gut. So that's, yeah. So I don't know, did it work? Seems to. 74% of the people are vaccinated, and we seem to be a little better than what we were last March. So something definitely worked, but, yeah.

Caleb Linder 41:22

I guess for the self isolate. I guess it was - it was very different. But like, now, as Dad said earlier, we're essential workers. So we went to work every day. So like,- I guess I didn't really affect me a whole lot as or affected like, you [referring to interviewer, Alexis] or Mom and stuff like that. Because we just got to work on a mask on when we're closed. But like, Dad said, you couldn't do anything else except for go for a walk outside. But, you know, with the people you're at home with or stuff like that.

Alexis Linder 42:04

Yeah.

Caleb Linder 42:06

But because even-because we're outdoorsman. And there was a time where even you couldn't have a certain amount of people on your fishing boat. In the spring or summer.

Alexis Linder 42:17

Really?

Caleb Linder 42:18

Yeah.

Alexis Linder 42:18

I didn't know that. What was the restriction?

Caleb Linder 42:20

I could not tell-

Pat Linder 42:22

The DNR [Department of Natural Resources] had the six foot or the 10 foot social distance rule.

Alexis Linder 42:27

On a fishing boat?

Pat Linder 42:28

On a fishing boat for the opener.

Alexis Linder 42:30

So it was only like two people, one on each end?

Pat Linder 42:32

Pretty much.

Caleb Linder 42:33

Yeah.

Pat Linder 42:34

From what I understand. Yeah.

Alexis Linder 42:36

Is that mandate still in effect?

Pat Linder 42:38

Not that I'm aware of, no.

Caleb Linder 42:38

Mmmmm-

Alexis Linder 42:39

Oh, huh.

Pat Linder 42:40

I can't imagine anyone it anyway. [laughing]

Alexis Linder 42:43

True. Yeah, not anymore, at least

Caleb Linder 42:46

Right. [unintelligible] fourth of July. Yeah, I guess like that. changed everything. You know, because if you went on public water you- I mean, everyone was out, you know?

Alexis Linder 42:59

Yeah. So the DNR could fine you.

Caleb Linder 43:03

Oh, for sure. Oh, sorry, fine you or find?

Alexis Linder 43:08

Fine you ,like fine you for being closer than six feet on a fishing boat. That's what I'm talking about.

Caleb Linder 43:15

I know a lot of people have gotten warnings.

Alexis Linder 43:19

Oh.

Caleb Linder 43:20

I know cause at the time, when I follow that, they get they were trying to-they were trying to be nice and understand. Because everyone wanted to get out of their house. So they're like you're outside I get it. You just got-they were just trying to be-help people be aware of what was going on. So but I don't know if they could fine them or not. But.

Alexis Linder 43:48

I didn't know that.

Pat Linder 43:49

Yeah.

Alexis Linder 43:52

Um, yeah. Did you Sorry, I kind of interrupted you to do any more thoughts.

Caleb Linder 43:55

No I'm good.

Alexis Linder 43:56

Oh, okay. Okay, sorry. Um, yeah, so has COVID-19 changed your relationships with family, friends or community? In what ways or in any way? Change the relationship? Yeah.

Pat Linder 44:11

For me, no. I'm open minded enough to know that people have their own beliefs, their own thoughts. I-so-not-not to me, not to my family and friends. No.

Caleb Linder 44:25

I'm the same way. No. Because if every one of my friends is open minded, and everyone in my family has to I guess either way, we're going to get through it. So.

Alexis Linder 44:35

You haven't had any-have you had any issues where like, friends look at you differently or family members like you differently because of your beliefs. And like the vaccine COVID, anything like that?

Pat Linder 44:48

I haven't had any experiences and if I did, I don't care enough to pick it out. [laughter]

Caleb Linder 44:58

I guess a little bit with being unvaccinated, you know, some, like, not so much family, but just like other people in general that you just build conversation with. And then-I guess that you get looked at a little different, but it hasn't happened, like often at all. You know, the most people are very open minded to understanding or willing to understand when to listen to your side of things, if that makes sense.

Alexis Linder 45:29

Yeah.

Caleb Linder 45:29

So yeah, I guess other than that, nothing has changed that way.

Alexis Linder 45:35

Yeah. Um, so last type of thing- so you guys kind of talked about the media a little bit? What are your concerns about the media portraying COVID-19? Like, what is your primary? Hold on, let me-Where was it? It was like, What is your-like- What is your primary source of news been during the pandemic? Or like anything-anything you want to touch on the media? Its a loaded question. [laughing]

Caleb Linder 46:08

That is a loaded question.

Pat Linder 46:09

To me, it's simple. I don't watch the news anymore due to all of this mess with everything turning political and people thinking it turned political or whatever, have you. So, I don't-So I strictly go with like the CDC, and what their recommendations and thoughts are-I-I-and that is what that is what our company takes on as for their roles is that I- I'm-I don't believe that the media tells us everything correctly. I think that there is- there's rumors of false deaths. There's rumors of people dying of old age or whatever, and then all of a sudden, it's they died at COVID. We have it's just very hard to believe what I hear at all times.

Caleb Linder 47:10

I am pretty much the same way. Yes. I just think they build it up way too-I shouldn't say they build it up- Because it's it's real. But it's to me, it's over exaggerated to a point to where I just, it just amazes me sometimes. But it's also what you can believe and not believe in stuff like that. Like if you go on, I think one of the websites that I don't think you should ever look at and CNN [Cables News Network] for that information. Say I just don't believe that stuff. But like I said, That's my opinion. But it to me, if something you hear something I like to look it up to see other sides. And sometimes you get a few different stories to its just which one you want to want to believe. So and is that part is just crazy to me in like Dad said you can see how many other things there are. But there's also, I believe that there's always something that they're not telling you. And sometimes the thing, they're missing it. And that's the most key points of what they should be saying. Or should not be saying is my belief. But yeah.

Alexis Linder 48:36

Yeah. So a few hours ago, the three of us were watching the news, and we heard about Omicron variant in South Africa. What do you guys think about that? Or how the media portrays it or too little information still?

Pat Linder 48:50

Too little, too new. I do know that there-I heard that they're stopping travel from Africans to America. And I think they said that that was just to buy time. A couple of weeks of a gap. They do believe it's coming here. I do believe them that it's coming here. Because it's- bu- I-How hard is it going to hit or any of that? I don't know. Every community is going to be different obviously, like it is today. You have

to live in your community. You have to live what's there. So yeah, but it is new. Very, very new to me to really pass a judgement.

Caleb Linder 49:38

Yeah, I agree. I think it's way too little information right away, right now anyway. But as in they just talking about like I said, it's all new but they're talking about like a another vaccine for it. So, and I think that's still another thing of how many vaccines are there going to be and how quick is going to come in. How many people are gonna get that right away? And how many people is that gonna affect? So, I think the media just portrays it a lot more than what it-I shouldn't say that-then-they just put a lot out there right away. So, but yeah,

Alexis Linder 50:20

yeah, no, that's good. Good answer. Um sorry I mixed around all my stuff but um, so how have the municipal, I think I said that right, municipal leaders and government officials in your community responded to the outbreak? These are more government questions now.

Caleb Linder 50:41

Well, in the beginning, what did they say that they we couldn't have a bigger group than- or how many was at our house?

Alexis Linder 50:54

I think it was six, wasn't it?

Caleb Linder 50:56

Six or seven.

Pat Linder 50:56

Six or seven, right.

Caleb Linder 50:58

He says that was at the beginning. And couldn't have more.

Pat Linder 51:05

Governor [Tony] Evers [of Wisconsin] tried to push that even more and it got taken to court and things like that. So our governor was-was battled against as well. He tried to have stricter mandates and ah-and lost, was thrown out of court. So yeah, there's- as far as like the municipality of our small community, we just we did whatever-like our-I'm going to say the small town, CDC, the community, county nursing, we did the mandates that they suggested, which is what CDC suggested with the closing of the restaurants and things like that, as far as small town gets hit a lot harder. So as soon as everything is lifted, and like, when Evers lost we-everything opened up and they would be able to strive again. So

it-for me, I mean, yes, we got hit but only hit because of government. It was much more of an impact of there than it was an impact of COVID in our small community, in my opinion, but.

Caleb Linder 52:25

I totally agree. I mean, it does hit hard I mean stuff and it changes impacts in everyone's life when that stuff happens. So.

Alexis Linder 52:37

Yeah, do you have any thoughts on how the local, state or federal leaders are responding to the crisis? Any three of those levels,

Caleb Linder 52:52

So-

Pat Linder 52:54

I don't stand with Biden and his thoughts of the new mandate.

Alexis Linder 53:00

Which is what?

Pat Linder 53:01

Which is any company over 100 or more of the forks-forced vaccination or they lose employment. That is not the United States government. That is a monarchy, in my opinion. Taken with a grain of salt, it is not-it is just me. But it should not be able to force any person in a free country to get a man to-to get a vaccination. When we are a free country. We are free people here that we have rules, we are not forced to do anything. And that is-anyway, that's my opinion on that.

Caleb Linder 53:45

I 100% agree. Everything he said except you're not agree with that mandate. I just-that- I think-cause everything they're trying-It feels like they're trying to make it political, almost, to where it is a battle between two sides. It almost feels like and I don't see how a mental ill- well not mental, but ah an illness can be political. I never understood why that ever happened or how that is happening. When- we all should be as one you know, because we are the U.S. Why are we fighting? You know, and we're-I guess it feels like a battle almost because why do we-what who says that one person decides for all? Well, I mean, I guess like he said we are free. Why do we have to listen to to you when greatned you are-or he is the president. But still, it is and It's my body. You know what?

Pat Linder 55:09

It's democracy not a monarcy. Yeah. That's my opinion.

Caleb Linder 55:12

Yeah, I just I've never agree with that. I don't know. But yeah, I guess I never understood why COVID-Maybe it's not, but I guess it feels that way. For me anyway. never understood why it wants to be political. When everyone should be as one. Helping each other out. Just like small town Ellsworth.. So.

Alexis Linder 55:19

Yeah.

Caleb Linder 55:42

Yep.

Alexis Linder 55:44

Yeah. So another loaded question. But do you think that they're important issues that the media may or may not be covering?

Caleb Linder 55:52

100%? I think they're covering-well-

Alexis Linder 55:56

But they're not covering?

Caleb Linder 55:57

Oh, yeah. I do believe that there are things that they're missing. That they are not telling us like, but I have never understood why it's all a big secret. When we live here, we can I guess we can't tell the truth. I guess.

Pat Linder 56:18

To me, it's more, whose pockets are being lined by the pharmaceutical companies? Is there campaign kickbacks? Is there-Who's-is there the decisions being made from our crookedness? Or our greed of things? It's-it's a very big thing in our government, in my opinion for us that we-people have people work for companies to get money to support their campaigns and everything. And it's all done in a legit way but it's still [fraud?], it's still crooked. It's so there's, there's it can go deep that's a way different interview.[chuckling] That's the stuff that I don't think the media hits on and shows how the honesty of what we live in, and what we live with, is where I'm at, I guess.

Alexis Linder 57:27

Alright, so last couple questions are looking to the future. So has your experience in all of COVID-19, Black Lives Matter, George Floyd, COVID, Everything. Has it transformed the way you think about your family, friends or community? And in what ways?

Pat Linder 57:50

Has it changed the thought of?

Alexis Linder 57:52

Has it transformed the way you think about your family, friends and community? And in what ways?

Pat Linder 57:58

Not the way I think of them. But more of if I care for them to if I'm sick, not to go near them. It's to be a little more precautious around them, but not the way I think of them or feel towards them. It's more of-more of a respect line now.

Caleb Linder 58:27

Yeah, I agree with the respect and everything like that. But as far as maybe I have the respect thing of like the George Floyd, stuff like that. In my opinion, I will still back at blue. Do I think what happened was a tragedy? Yes. But I still think without them, they respect and care for us. I wish things like that never happened. Yes, but they are here to help us and keep us safe. So for that as a community looking towards the future for the COVID and everything, I really hope it ends soon. Because I am sure as much as everyone else I'm tired of it. But, and is looking towards the future though, as well. You just gotta keep going day to day and keep everyone safe and healthy. Yeah.

Alexis Linder 59:43

All right. Last question for you guys. Knowing what you know now, what do you think that individuals, communities, or governments need to keep in mind for the future? Is 2022-we've been in this for about two years now. Isn't that crazy? This started in March of 2020 it's been two years, so what do you think that they need to keep in mind for the future?

Pat Linder 1:00:14

Well, we are a very small community here. So it's they-they need to, in my opinion, localize instead of statewide, or federal mandates, or it should be given to your state or your representatives of some kind to-to apply those mandates or those-Everybody is different. Everybody lives a different life. Everybody is a small community, big community, even a little communit. It is a-I just think that one mandate straight across the board probably isn't going to go. But how do you manage that? I don't have that answer. I don't know. Somebody that makes a lot more than me configure that out. [laughter]

Caleb Linder 1:01:09

Yeah, and I just think that we should keep an open mind. You know, and just make sure they think of everything before they throw something out, you know, for everyone to see. And, like he said to you know, it's a little small community-community here, and you just keep an open mind of what everyone else is doing. And like you said, everyone's different. Everyone has a different day to day. So

it's-granted, the variables are very wild out there. So you just really never know. So and I get everyone tries to do their best and stuff. But sometimes the best is-I don't know. But yep, just keep an open mind and try to listen to your community. That would be very cool. Because if you listen to others, you just have that much more information. So, yeah.

Alexis Linder 1:02:13

Do you guys have any more questions, thoughts or concerns, comments? Anything want to add that we didn't touch on?

Pat Linder 1:02:25

I just hope that we can figure this out and move on and keep everybody safe. The winter months are coming so it's gonna affect everybody differently with different strains and different everybody being cooped up so stay safe.

Caleb Linder 1:02:41

Stay safe, stay healthy.

Pat Linder 1:02:45

Yep.

Alexis Linder 1:02:48

All right. Well, thank you guys for participating. That concludes this interview.