This interview took place on the back porch of her house. It was laid back and she gave me coffee to drink. She was also more interested in asking me questions about who I am than actually getting interviewed. She told me that she wanted to hear what I had to say and didn't want to listen about what she had to say.

Ami Allain: It is July 23rd, 2007 at about 1 o'clock pm.
AA: What is one of your favorite foods?
Janice Wright: Ah man. That is really hard to say, because um, I have a hard time thinking of a food that I don't like. Um, let me see. Tripe. Menudo. I've never gotten, I just can't do it. I can do any other part of an animal. You know, I tried. I ate the stomach line. I helped the women make menudo. Nope.
AA: Ok, So that's your least favorite food?
JW: Yes.
AA: Ok, And then what did you eat for your evening meal yesterday?
JW: Well, last night we had uncle bud's mountain stew. It’s a good one pot meal and it’s just a pound of hamburger, a chopped up onion, salt and pepper, a can of stewed tomatoes with the juice, and a can of salty canned vegetables. Canned vegetables are really salty. But with the can I used a can of corn with the juice. And a couple of handfuls of macaroni. Some nice pasta. The pennie pasta, the smaller. And a can of olives drained. You can't put the olive juice in. It’s too grimy. And um. Just uh, let it come to a boil. Put the lid on it and turn it down to a high simmer and it’s done in thirty minutes and people love it. With a loaf of bread. Feeds a good crowd of people. Handy ingredients and you know, other than canned stuff. And it was good beef. My son in law had half a beef and sent us home with a big cooler full. So it was clean meat. Um, Oregon beef is wonderful. It’s expensive. But if we choose to buy, you know cut down. Like when you go to Safeway. And it has a big hunk of meat for fifty percent off. I mean its like wow, I better buy that. We actually. I actually over buy and by switching over to Lakeview lockers. Which means buying less. Because of the price difference. I think it’s a really good step. Yeah.
AA: And who prepared that?
JW: I did.
AA: Do you ever share food with anybody else?
JW: Whoever is here!
AA: Do you ever receive food from family or friends?
JW: Yes. Gifts of food. Um. I just have friends, wonderful, wonderful folks. That give me eggs. It’s just always very wonderful.
AA: So thinking of the food system more broadly. What are three things that you appreciate about the food system in your community?
JW: Well, I appreciate the gardeners. Our farmers market is just a delight. I was able to totally supply, not only, um, produce through the summer, but to get produce to preserve. You know, tomatoes, fruits. It was just great. But that has just kinda gone by the way side this year. But then again, Lakeview Lockers is now there for local stuff. But there isn't enough local participation. The community garden is a really good. Good start. You know it’s a good seed to be planted in a community because it is the future. You know it really is.
AA: Do you can any of your own food?
JW: I do some but, not much, its just bud and I, you know, my canner, I gotta get another canner for quarts, and I don't have all of the jars and stuff. You know, buying lids and paraphin. You know all the paraphernalia is kinda costly.
AA: And what are three things that you don't like so much about the food system in your community.

JW: Well, I think that people are now. You know, I was so frustrated. There was no real food in town. It was all packaged. Um, stuff. No one made anything for real. From scratch. And I see that as a new happening here and the rippling effect of that here. That desire to going back, and its certainly not going back, its going forward. But you know, the pioneers started with the basic food and we got so far away from that.


AA: How does your household get their food?

JW: We buy it. Yeah. I buy it. I get a lot of supplies through the food group. But it’s generally the bio degradable soups and cleaning products and you know, things like, things that, you know. I search for the cleanest food that I can find in my community. If it’s not available then, I shop at the grocery stores and o brand.

[I cough]

JW: Yuck,

AA: Yeah

JW: Yuck.

JW: Boy, what a, that is not the direction. That just is not the direction and we are making so many mistakes. Anyway, I just feel. It’s like you bless it. I don't do any ceremonies. But its like, you just accept it as a gift. You know. And being lucky to have it.

AA: So does any of your food come from hunting or fishing?

JW: Only when friends gift us, when they share a bounty with us. Because we don't hunt or fish.

AA: Do you or any of your family ever face challenges in getting food? That you want to eat.

JW: Well, you know, we've been pretty darned comfortable the last few years since our daughter moved out. We have more money. [both laugh]

JW: Um, in some areas in the grocery department. So um, you know the last few years, I've been able to, pretty much buy what I wanted. Instead of, not. And, I shop wisely, I've always shopped wisely. If I had seven dollars to go and buy um, food for, the family, you know, for the day. It would be, flour and beans. You know. Um. That. And, you know oil. I would always buy the cleanest oil I could. If it wasn't olive oil. Then it was something else that wasn't as bad as some. So, and you know, always tastes good, it’s always tastes good. Like this mountain stew. It’s great for a crowd. You know its filling. So yeah.

AA: What is the history of your family’s involvement in the food system?

JW: My mother. Um, was just a very good cook. She was a first generation Italian in Seattle. You know. I remember how precious oranges were. I grew up in the fifties and transportation was not what it is now and oranges were from California and avocados and things like that and um, yeah, my mom was a wonderful cook. She cooked everything for real. Um, she changed, as life changed for her and got into modern things and you know in the sixties we were dropping out and there was a food revolution going on and um, so it was really back to the land. I had no processed food in my house. You know, the kids had no processed food. You know the final blow was when I put kelp powder in the salt shaker. But I ground my own flour and it was just a, but anyway. Annadel Davis was a food guru. Let’s eat right and have healthy kids. Um, Frances Von
Lapee had a diet for a healthy planet. Boy we had a food awakening going on. And it was my mom trying to understand me. Going, being terrified for me and all of that anguish of parenting and I was absolutely no help to her, let me tell you, but I did I was very radical about my food then, so it was a plane of contest between mom and I. But she came around because and she respected and honored that. When she came to visit she would bring wonderful produce you know, for the kids. For the family, fruit, fresh vegetables and a big bag of donuts.

[Laughs really loud]

AA: Are there any stories connected with food in your family in the past or present.

JW: Well, the only stories, story that I really, well, I'm sure its not the only one, but the big one that stood out in my mind through out childhood, Was the story that my great grand father, uncle mo. My great uncle, sorry. Was an immigrant from Italy, and he was part of our family, lived in down town china town in Seattle. And, he was a newsboy there and um, but every, and he was a bachelor all his life. Wore a three piece suit and high button shoes. A watch chain, and he would come to our house every Saturday which was his day off and every holiday. And we were his family, he was our family. He lived with Nick, another old bachelor, who wore baggy clothes and an apron, it was sorta like the odd couple and it was an original china town, it was an old original. Decrepit, condemned apartment, two stories, tall ceilings, bathroom on the back porch and coal stove in the kitchen. And he loved opera, tears, he would listen and tears would just roll down his cheeks, just so beautiful, and um, but, the story about uncle mo, as a young man he went to London. Because his true love spurned his love. So he went to London and he sold ice cream on a street corner. Well, apparently he came up with the idea of ice cream in a waffle, so, I'm, there are no patents or anything, don't you think they would know. He was right there. With a great idea and Uncle Mo. So that's my food story. I'm sure there are many more.

AA: Are there any Special recipes that you and your family enjoy?

JW: I've gotten so many recipes from Mom. Well, lets see, we all like anything Italian. Its really getting so eclectic. We are all good cooks and we all like experiencing different food. Um, so, the old stand byes my mom and her sister Rosa were both marvelous cooks, both of them. And the holiday meals were just a gourmet delight. They were really famous for their food with everybody. My sister, is not, she doesn't really care about cooking, she is a very, but her family does. Her son's a very good cook. The kids are all good cooks. But we all, it’s become very eclectic.

AA: Are you or any of your family members involved in processing, selling, serving or making food for the public?

JW: No.

JW: You know, that would be wonderful. But that is a bigger venture that my family to be involved in at this time.

AA: Do any of the groups that you belong to eat together? Do they offer meals?

JW: That's, yeah. We started that in our Ford family group. But before that, hospitality. It’s about hospitality. And the common denominator is food. And it makes a difference and we started doing that, you know, a few years ago. I guess it was when I started volunteering. You know. I tried to volunteer. I wasn't really accepted into the community as a volunteer. You know. I've always helped out in different situations. My kids in grade school. In the classroom. So, anyway, it was during the peace rally and I met Yvonne who is organizing our recycling group. And she asked me to join and I was delighted. I've been a life long recycler. So, um, that was the beginning. Then I met Emma, Dr. Cornell, through our peace rally and a little bit. But she started a lot of things from her. She had a part time job at Treasure Valley. It was a half time position. But her office was at the Senior Center. She had more leeway to time there. Um, just had so many things going. I was
so happy to help her with. So our little meetings. And Yvonne. Had snacks at the first recycling meeting. Simple. She was almost vacant. Just grapes and nuts and tea. But it was hospitality. So I kinda carried that with myself personally. Groups that I became involved with after that, after my first involvement. You know, I'm stubborn. The Taurus. We always said we were going to do this, so we are going to do it! And people, a lot of work and effort, extra effort in the beginning, but took pride in their really nice effort too. Cause, you know, its art, its effort, its everything. But now we kinda cut back. It started out meals, now hors d’oeuvres. But, hospitality. Is the purpose. You know, it can be very simple and real. Having it be real. It’s ok to bring a package of cookies from the store. But keep the real stuff happening.

AA: Do you think that farmers and ranchers, or how do you think they are fairing in this community?

JW: Well, I don't know but you know. Um, I just have a hard time with public land. I think that is, you know our public land. It’s our commons, its our birth right. And clean air and clean water that is our birth right. That is our commons and it is a priceless resource. It’s not a resource. It is a gift or enhancement. So, that's my priority. I think ranchers are, really special people. I've spent time on ranches in different, you know in New Mexico for a couple months and Wyoming. Um, I guess that's about it. Because I'm a city girl, but I love country life and people, so, I know how special they are and what a beautiful life it is. You know it’s not everyone's life. But a romance. You know and an art and a beauty that is unique.

JW: But you know, being responsible. I don't care if people have a lot of money. I just don't care. What I care about is social consciousness. And people with a lot of money can do a lot of damage. So, anyway.

AA: What do you know about how low income/disabled/elderly people how they get their food in your community?

JW: You know. Stewarts market, I think runs charge accounts for some people. That's a hard thing to do and stay in business. I haven't done it myself, but I think that, if I don't know if they would give me credit. They are all real, I don't know. I think if we needed help. But only because they were known now in the community.

AA: Ok.

AA: Do you know where food comes from that is eaten in this community?

JW: Where food comes from that is eaten. There is an outlet. A restaurant food outlet in Klamath falls that supplies. Most of the eating establishments in town. As far as I know. K foods or something. Wholesale, restaurant supply houses.

AA: Do you eat any local food?

JW: Um, do you mean restaurants, eating establishments?

AA: I mean food that is grown locally.

JW: As often as I can. Well, the Oregon Beef. It’s a local beef outlet. Its local to Eastern Oregon and they might be into Idaho too. But they are all committed to growing quality beef, quality, clean. They are all committed to doing that. So, it’s wonderful. The hamburger will keep in the refrigerator for a couple of days or longer in the same wrapper. Where as hamburger from the store, one day is it. You have to eat it the day you bring it home. So that indicates a lot less handling. Yeah. I'm really happy about that.

AA: So how would you get more locally grown food processed here and how do you think the community could make more local food available.

JW: You know, maybe the community garden is a beginning in awareness. Um, in hands on. But it’s really hard the hands on part is so so hard. It’s going to take a disaster. How else are
people going to pull it together? Unless there is something that unites them for the common good. We're human beings for crying out loud. We've got a strike against us from day one. We're here to destroy the world.

AA: Are there ways you would like to see the food system changed in your community.

JW: Well sure. I would love it to be local. I would love people to focus on our community, to create our community, our earth community. Right here. Right now. To have a cooperative spirit about it. Michael Moore, I haven't seen his film but on interviews and we have a me mentality. The rest of the world has a we mentality. Or at least in the cooperation's and universal health care and social programs. We are a me community. You know society. And change happens. At the bottom. We have misrepresentation, trickled down misrepresentation. from the top. It is so gone at the top. It’s rotted away and that rot has trickled down and the only way we can clean it up is to rebuild it from the bottom. And this is it. This is it. You make your community where you live. That's what burning man says. Don't, this is not where you live. You go home and do your work. Your work is in your community. [makes fun of the people who go to burning man and imitates them in a very sarcastic voice]

AA: What is your view of what the community will be like in twenty years?

JW: I don't know. Its up to, you know the individual people.

AA: So I guess I'll start on the herb questions.

What are your reasons for using herbal remedies?

JW: Because they work. Because they are available. They're gentle, They're beautiful, they're living, they're life. I don't like chemicals. My preference is not chemicals. I'm grateful for whatever enhances my life in a positive way. Um, I had an emergency c-section and hospitalization with my last child. And it was a good awareness, watching and seeing the care that I got and the nursing staff, the people who mopped the floors, the people who cooked the meals. It was all a good awareness there for me. And I just had cataract surgery. What a miracle. It’s just amazing.

AA: So, where do you get your herbs?

JW: Well, um, I have living herbs, you know comfrey, you plant it once and its there forever and you can divide it. It’s like a tuber and you just make other plants out of them. They are hardy hardy hardy. And I have been able to plant there every where I have lived. For wounds, for broken bones, for bruises. But wounds, painful wounds, are immediate first aid. Immediate. They relieve the pain. Mullen is another favorite. The flowers, the little yellow flowers, they have pain, they are gentle. You can take the little flowers and put them in real clean olive oil. The best you can get. Cause you want to have them for medicine. For babies, or you can use them for ear aches. If you use them for ear aches on babies, its very soothing, because the flowers have a pain relieving property too. And they are good for primary infections. If it goes too far you will need something else. But its gentle. I you know, I'm a bad mother  with babies because I don't want doctors or medicine near them.

AA: So what are the most common herbs that you use?

JW: Um, the most common. I don't use herbs on a daily basis. I don't take vitamins. I think of them as supplements. And I don't have a real good health regime. Either. You know, I am who I am and I do the best I can, but I can sure be a lot better. And I love herb teas. Real basic ones. I don't like fancy stuff. Yarrow and rose hips make a wonderful sickness tea when I'm down with a bad cold or a real flue. But I haven't been in years! It’s been about three years since I've had a cold.

AA: Well, that's good.

JW: I know, I've been real fortunate. But I have arthritis, so, you know. I pay my dues.

AA: About how many different herbs do you have in stock?
JW: Um, well, I have herbs in my yard that I just pick and in winter, comfrey will die back, I've never had to dig up the root for some serious problem. But the root is always available in the winter time. The plant disappears, but I know where it’s at. It’s really strong. All of my herbs that I cook with. I use herbs all the time because I cook with herbs. You know herbs are powerful. And I use things like golden seal. For things like infection. Golden seal is way over used. Its harmful to your liver. It’s over harvested. It’s crazy. And use it sparingly. Pregnant women, do not take it. But I have that and Echinacea, it’s wonderful. Eagle peek herbals, is a wonderful farm in Eagle View that grow their own herbs. And um, Tina, the woman takes her llamas, into the mountains to harvest the wild herbs. Totally responsible, they have a bird refuge. Boy, that would be a trip for you guys. But herbs are wonderful and I order them directly from her and Thorton’s drug store. Has a few of them. And will be getting more of those things. The daughter wants to carry on in that herbal line. So hopefully they will continue to be an outlet here. And they have ocha root. I love the way that stuff works. And I only use it if I've been around a lot of sick people and I feel down. If I feel something coming on, I use medicinal herbs sparingly and all the other herbs liberally.

AA: If you had the option between a prescription drug and an herbal remedy, what would you choose?

JW: Well, that depends. I have that option right now. I'm taking blood pressure pills. Which I've been taking for ten or fifteen years now, except for a three year hiatus, when I did homeopathic medicine. And I was a clean machine. You know, no smoking, no fat at all. I mean like, such a strict diet, no meat, no alcohol, no tobacco. Walked twice a day. Two miles a day, minimum. Drank lots of water. My blood pressure was still high, but it was manageable in a homeopathic remedy. And I was in a class, I was in a case study, so I had a professor of homeopathy in the class, plus my private homeotherapist. But then we moved here. That was in Flag Staff. We were actually living in Winslow. We were driving sixty miles to flagstaff. AA: Is there anything else that you'd like to say?

JW: Um, oh god, I could go on forever. Sorry Ami. I could just go on. I've enjoyed this. I've enjoyed our little visit before hand. And tea and coffee and you know telling me a little bit about yourself. Cause I was thinking if the interviewees could interview the interviewers.

JW: Thank you, thank you Ami.

AA: Thank you.

From there I had to leave instead of staying and chatting because I had another appointment for an interview. It would have been nice to stay and continue to visit because we were having a wonderful conversation and she is a fun person to talk to.