

Newsletter290

Keith's Corner/McGill News

November 29, 2024

Downwinders

There has been a lot of interest in “Downwinders” recently.

Downwinders is the name assigned to those people that lived in areas that were downwind of the, above ground atomic tests, carried out in the late 1940s and early 1950s. The gubberment was setting off atomic bombs above ground near Las Vegas. The resulting huge explosions churned up dust storms that were highly radioactive. These radioactive dust storms came through our area.

The gubberment told us that there was no danger. Yah, sure.

I remember one dust storm going through our area in the 1950s. Several years ago I was chatting with Lil Sundred at the Club 50 about that storm. She told me that there were two federal agents of the Atomic Energy Commission that wanted to rent a motel room from her. They told her that they were monitoring the dust storm. She showed them the rooms and they decided not to stay there because the building was a wooden one. They wanted a motel made of brick. So, they knew how dangerous the dust was and sought protection for themselves.

These same agents set up a radioactive monitoring apparatus next to Whit Pine High School on Aultman Street.

It seems to be a hsbrit of the gubberment to lie to us.

St. George, Utah was hardest hit. Hollyweird was making a movie with John Wayne, The Conquistador and many members of the movie crew died from cancer. There was also a bunch of young kids that developed goiters. These developments forced the gubberment to admit the truth about the effects of radiation from the atomic tests.

A payment program was set up to pay damages to folks that developed 'certain' types cancers.

In order to collect a payment, the 'downwinders' had to prove they lived in certain areas. The local ones here used their employment with Kennecott or other places of work. Some were able to use school records.

Eligible members of a family were, mother, father, son, daughter or a spouse. Siblings could not.

When Kennecott shut down, Ron Montoya, was put in charge of the vacant Kennecott area. He managed to supply a lot of downwinders with their employment records.

Another source of records was the McGill Drug Store and other drugstores in the area. Tax records, mortgage and other records at the WP Courthouse were used. There were many other sources used to obtain payments. Sometimes it took an attorney to navigate the process.

No matter what the payment was, it didn't make up for the loss of life.

Next week I will have more on this subject.

McGill News



The bac room had a wall that had leaked water for many years. I found boxes of magazines from the 1930s such as Popular Mechanics etc, that were completely ruined with mold. The wooden wall was rotted. I tore the wood out and found a cinder block wall. I painted it with tar, then 30 lb. felt , $\frac{3}{4}$ in. foam insulation and then sheet rock. The wall above the block was 1/12x1 wooden planks and no insulation between it and the corrugated tin on the outside of the building. There was cold air coming in from all over. Fiber glass insulation was stuffed into the dead air space. There is no cold air coming in now. This should save a lot on the heating and cooling expense.

