

**STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MISSOURI-ST. LOUIS**  
**INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FORUM ORAL HISTORY PROJECT**

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**CAROLYN LOSOS INTERVIEWED BY BLANCHE TOUHILL**

Blanche Touhill: Would you introduce yourself.

Carolyn Losos: I'm Carolyn Warner Losos. I've lived my entire life in St. Louis. I went to the University City High School and Washington University.

Blanche Touhill: Okay. Let's talk about your early life: your parents, your siblings, your relatives or friends and your elementary school. Was there a teacher that really...or your relatives or your family surroundings that really said to you, "Carolyn, you're very smart and you have ability."

Carolyn Losos: So, I think I have rather special background. I was born in 1932 in the Depression and my parents were making their way in the world. We didn't have money. My father was a graduate of Washington University and I had two older brothers who were three and five years older than I was. When I was nine months old, my father, who was a superintendent of a plant, fell down the steps, went to the hospital and while he was there, he caught a staph infection. It went to his heart and he died. They didn't have Penicillin or sulfur or any of the special things they have today that could have helped. So my mother was left a widow, age 32, with three children, five and under but I was very fortunate. I had a wonderful mother and, although she didn't have college, she always made me feel that I was important and I was surrounded by relatives, especially an uncle and an aunt who were always there for me. So, although it was strange, not having a father and I must say that growing up when teachers would ask how many of your parents are coming? Are they both coming, and I would always have to say, "Well, my mother will be here." I was a little ashamed of not having a father but some way or other...although we didn't have money, Social Security wasn't in. I think it

came in right after that. So my mother didn't have that to depend on. Some way or other, I never felt deprived. I went to Delmar Harvard in University City. We lived in an apartment. We had a wonderful neighborhood of apartments and one way or another, my mother always figured a way to see that we participated in things. It was interesting because my mother's friends during the war, many people did well and got to be middle-aged and they grew and got better positions and sent their kids to private schools and I went to Delmar Harvard in University City Schools and I think I'm the luckiest person in the world. It was really the glory age of the University City schools. I had lots of teachers in elementary school who paid attention to me. I think perhaps they thought, "Poor little Carolyn, doesn't have a father," and I had two wonderful older brothers whom I adored and with whom I fought. But we were a family and I never felt there was anything I couldn't do if I wanted to do it...naïve, I guess. When my mother died, it was interesting, we were going through her things. There was an envelope and said, "To my three children," and she said, "Here is an insurance policy for \$2,000 and originally I had it made out so Carolyn could go to college but she has taken care of herself by getting a scholarship and so I'm dividing the proceeds up. I've changed who the beneficiaries are," but the one thing my mother always said to me was, "You are going to college," so Blanche, I never thought I wasn't going to college. I mean, I was going to college, one way or the other. So, when I was five, my mother started working and she went into the insurance business. She chose that because my two uncles were in the insurance business and also because her time was her own. She didn't have to be there from 8:30 in the morning to 5:00. She made calls at night or during the day. So when there was something important going on in my life, my mother could be there. So I would say my mother, number one, was a huge influence on my life and how fortunate it was because she just left me with the thought that you can do what you want to do.

Blanche Touhill: What did you want to do in those days or did you have any idea?

Carolyn Losos: I used to play school all the time. I had a desk, you know, a little roll-top desk and I would be the teacher and I wanted to be a teacher and there weren't a lot of options then. I knew I didn't want to be a nurse. Later on, I would say I entered Washington U with the idea that I was going to be a teacher and then decided maybe I'd go to law school.

Blanche Touhill: Well, let's change that then.

Carolyn Losos: Okay, we'll save that for later.

Blanche Touhill: When you were in this neighborhood, in Delmar Harvard and the University City schools, it was the glory days of the University City schools.

Carolyn Losos: It was.

Blanche Touhill: Did you play in the neighborhood?

Carolyn Losos: We lived on Washington Avenue and our apartment building had a gangway between it and we played in the gangway with the neighbors next door and there was a back yard and then garages and we'd play Kick the Can. I have a wonderful story: We played in the back yard all the time and we had a sandbox and I still remember, one of my earliest memories was when I was four years old and my older friend, her name was Joanne Cohn; we called her Johnnie and she was two years older and she was the boss of the neighborhood. We'd go to the sandbox and Johnnie would say, "I'm the richest" and then I'd be second richest and my friend, Audrey would be third richest and we'd build our houses and that's what we'd do. So one day, we got to the sandbox and very quickly I said, "I'm the richest"; Audrey said she was the second richest and Johnnie didn't say anything and then, after a few seconds, she said, "I'm poorest" and with one second, I was second poorest and Audrey was third poorest and I said, that's how I learned about leadership, when I was four years old.

Blanche Touhill: That's a wonderful story.

Carolyn Losos: It is, but we had a wonderful neighborhood.

Blanche Touhill: Did you play with the boys as well as the girls?

Carolyn Losos: Yeah, we played Kick the Can with them; we played Going to Russia which was throwing a ball against the wall. We did play with boys. It was a neighborhood. We took chalk and drew things on the two apartment buildings. One time I remember not writing something very nice about a new girl who had moved into the neighborhood and her father came over and we paid for that. But it was a wonderful...and, you know, I'm still friends with those who are still surviving from the neighborhood.

Blanche Touhill: So then you went on to high school. And how was University City High School in those days?

Carolyn Losos: I loved University City High School. There was a wonderful teacher there who taught math. I will say, Blanche, I was blessed with two wonderful brothers, one who is no longer here but my other brother is a lawyer and we're close. You know, if they did something, I wanted to do it too. When I went to my 10<sup>th</sup> grade...which was the first year of high school then...class, there was this math teacher, her name was Lillieta Brunz and Miss Brunz spoke six languages and you didn't see her smile very often but I took lots of math in high school, not because I liked it but because I liked Miss Brunz. Anyway, I'm in this class and she's looking the class over and she said, "And you are a Warner." Now, I didn't look like my brothers and I said, "Yes"; "Well, you have a lot to live up to." Miss Brunz was a mentor to me in high school and I kept up with her after high school. In fact, I held her hand the day before she died at the nursing home. She was...and everyone who went to U City who knew Miss Brunz felt the same way. When I was graduating from the high school, one day the newspaper called me out of class and said, "We're doing an article on you and your two brothers and what you've done while you were at U City" and I thought, huh, well, isn't that wonderful? And so we did it and then the head of the Tom-Tom at that time, said to me, "I want you to know, Miss Brunz suggested this. She's not doing it for you; she's doing it for your mother." Now, is that a teacher for you?

Blanche Touhill: That's a teacher.

Carolyn Losos: But U City, they had extraordinary teachers and I was well prepared for high school. I participated in all the activities. U City was an interesting school in that time. It was segregated but segregated, Jewish/Gentile, not black/white. There were no black students at U City at that time. You had the Jewish kids who ate together and the Gentile kids who ate together and then there'd be the table in the middle who's sort of mixed with both. Isn't that interesting?

Blanche Touhill: Did you run for any offices when you were in high school?

Carolyn Losos: I did and I was the first female president of the school.

Blanche Touhill: What year was that, roughly?

Carolyn Losos: I was elected in 1949.

Blanche Touhill: That was a big thing then?

Carolyn Losos: It was a big thing. It was a big thing. You know, if the football hero had run, I would have never won but he chose not to run so it was...and I had a female vice president and it was known as the petticoat era. But, you know, it was so self-gratifying for me because I got to do so many things like introduce the assemblies every week that we had at those times and so I learned public speaking. It was exciting times and a real growth period for me and I was very lucky and Miss Brunz was my sponsor.

Blanche Touhill: Were there any women's athletics in those days?

Carolyn Losos: Yes, there was. We had a wonderful woman in the University schools named Helen Manley. Did you ever hear of her?

Blanche Touhill: No. I knew of her.

Carolyn Losos: There were absolutely women's athletics. I wasn't very athletic but there was field hockey, baseball, dance, basketball.

Blanche Touhill: Did they play other schools or did they...

Carolyn Losos: They played other schools; they did play other schools and there was health education and that's all due to Helen Manley. I have an extraordinary story: we became friends with a woman who had taught at the University City schools at one time and was a friend of Helen Manley's and she said that she and Helen Manley and my 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher went out to visit my 1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher; her name was Nelly Trail, whom I remember as an extraordinary 1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher, who became principal of Delmar Harvard during the war when all the men went off to war. She lived on a farm in New Haven and I said...I was about 45 at the time and I said, "Oh, I would love to do that," and she said, "The next time we go, I'll call you," so she called me. So I drove in this car with Helen Manley and her friend/partner...I'm not sure...Gwen Drew who was head of athletics at Wash U and my 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher and this other friend. It was like...I mean, I was this little girl with these...you know, my teachers. So we get out to New Haven, Missouri and Miss Trail...we go in and I said to her, "Miss Trail, I'm sure you don't remember me," and she

looked at me and she said, "Carolyn Warner, of course I remember you. How is your wonderful mother and your two brothers?" Now, that was...

Blanche Touhill: That's wonderful.

Carolyn Losos: That's why I loved school, Blanche, you know? Those kind of connections and a great story...can I tell you one story?

Blanche Touhill: Sure.

Carolyn Losos: If I'm talking too much, tell.

Blanche Touhill: No, no, I'll move it on.

Carolyn Losos: So I said, "You know, as long as I have you in this room, I want to ask you a question. We had a very strange phys ed teacher and they said, "You must have had..."...should I mention her name? No..."You must have had..."...I said, "Absolutely." So, with that, Miss Trail said...who was physically not well but mentally..."She was the worst phys ed teacher I ever had." Gwen Drew said, "Well, I thought she must have been marvelous" and Helen Manley said, "She was terrible and she smelled," and it was...I remembered her from 1<sup>st</sup> grade and here they were, talking about...so anyway, schooling for me was wonderful.

Blanche Touhill: When you graduated from high school, then you got a scholarship to Washington University?

Carolyn Losos: I got a full scholarship which would have paid housing if I needed it but I lived at home so it paid my tuition and books. Tuition then was \$450 a year and I got \$150 for books and so it covered all my expenses.

Blanche Touhill: What did you major in?

Carolyn Losos: Education.

Blanche Touhill: We talked about joining a sorority, years ago.

Carolyn Losos: Yes. Well, this is interesting: there was no Jewish sorority on campus and, of course, I couldn't join other sororities.

Blanche Touhill: When did that end?

Carolyn Losos: I think during...I bet you the '60s, yes. I mean, I can't imagine that it survived but the sororities are still back there. Anyway, I was part of a

group that started a Jewish sorority and was at the highlight of my...no, but did. In fact, I ended up being President of Panhellenic and I'm sure the reason I got elected President of Panhellenic was I wasn't a threat because, you know, I was from the Jewish sorority and so they were all out being sure that...so, it was interesting times. In fact, at our 50<sup>th</sup> reunion, a friend came back who was in one of the sororities, a woman who...psychiatrist and she said to me, "Carolyn, I've always felt I should apologize to you," and I said, "What for?" and she said, "To think that in those days, you couldn't be a member of other sororities because we couldn't take Jewish kids." I couldn't be a member of the Junior League, you know. There was so many things that were closed to you. I never thought about it at the time. I would think about it very differently today, I'm sure.

Blanche Touhill: When you graduated from Washington U, did you go to work or did you get married?

Carolyn Losos: Well, I decided early on that I wanted to go to law school and you could go to law school as a senior at the end of your fourth year at Wash U at the time and so what I did was, I worked it out that I started taking my teaching classes as a sophomore and I practice taught as a junior. So I had all my teaching and what I thought I would do was go to law school for a year and then my scholarship would run out and then I would teach for a few years and then I would go back and finish law school. So I got admitted to law school and I went to law school and I was the only girl in the class.

Blanche Touhill: How many men, roughly, 50 or so?

Carolyn Losos: I would say 100...150, something like that. There were five women in the law school but I was the only one in my class. At the end of my senior year, I started applying for teaching jobs and I applied in University City and I applied in Clayton...oh, I practice taught in Clayton and I got an offer from University City and, at the same time, I was still interviewing at Clayton. So they were opening a new classroom and I went to interview with the superintendent, who was John L. Bracken at the time, and he said to me, "Miss Warner, you are certainly qualified for the job but, frankly, we want a man for the job..."...it was a new 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> grade class... "and if we can't find a man, we'll consider you." So I said, "Thank you," because I had a job offer in my pocket and would have been happy to

teach in U City and the gist of the story is, I guess they didn't find a man who qualified because I got the job in Clayton. Now, how do you like that? Anyway, then I took some classes on Saturdays at law school and then I went, after my second year, out to Stanford to take two classes in law school and I went to one class and then I went to the second class and decided I wasn't going to spend my summer taking corporate law or whatever it was. I think maybe it was constitutional law. I took a course in teaching Spanish in the elementary school and I went to Mexico for three weeks. I did that with the idea that I would teach for a few years and then go back to law school and I never got back.

Blanche Touhill: Did you enjoy Mexico?

Carolyn Losos: I did enjoy Mexico. My Spanish is not very good but I met my husband because I had a little Spanish. So if there's one regret, it's I didn't finish but I've had a good life and I'm not sure it would have been any better.

Blanche Touhill: So how long did you teach in Clayton?

Carolyn Losos: I taught for seven years and then I got married and I raised my family and I kept speaking words by about going back to law school but then I would be involved in this or involved in that and Joe would say to me, "Are you going to practice law?" and I said, "You know, probably not." He said, "Well, then go take something you want," whatever. He's a non-practicing lawyer. So anyway, then in 1981, which was about 17 or 18 years later, I went back to work.

Blanche Touhill: What did you do when you went back to work?

Carolyn Losos: I was hired to do the leadership program.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, now, talk about that. I know you've been in a lot of volunteer activities.

Carolyn Losos: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: You were St. Louis' volunteer person. So, did you do that while your children were young?

Carolyn Losos: What happened?

Blanche Touhill: How did you get from being a mother and a housewife to being the volunteer?



Carolyn Losos: I was always a volunteer.

Blanche Touhill: That's what I'm asking.

Carolyn Losos: Yes, and I absolutely credit that with being president at the high school, being involved. It just was not part of me not to be involved and my brothers were involved.

Blanche Touhill: What was the beginning? What was maybe the first or second volunteer group that you joined when you got out of college?

Carolyn Losos: There was another woman who I think had an extraordinary impact on me and that was Edna Gelhorn. Edna Gelhorn...

Blanche Touhill: ...was famous.

Carolyn Losos: Did you know Edna Gelhorn?

Blanche Touhill: No, but I knew of her.

Carolyn Losos: Oh, my goodness, Blanche.

Blanche Touhill: And I remember seeing her.

Carolyn Losos: First of all, she was gorgeous. She was a sort of Greek goddess with the hair and she was one of the founders of the League of Women Voters; she was a Suffragette. Incidentally, her husband brought me into this world. He was my mother's OB. Anyway, I got involved, as one of my early organizations, with the UN and Mrs. Gelhorn was very involved with the United Nations Association and she, at that point, was in her 80's and I got to know her and she became my friend and she'd come see all my children and she would call and ask me to do something at maybe 8:30 in the morning and I would know that she'd been up since 5:00 getting her volunteer activities together. I just think the brief time that I got to know her, just said, "Do you want to do." When she was quite old and not well, I went to see her one day and that was in the '60s when the world was erupting behind us and she could hardly talk and she said to me, "Carolyn, what do you think about the girls throwing their bras out the window?" and I said, "Good for them." She said, "If I could, I would have done it too." Of course, Ernest Hemmingway said the only good person he knew in St. Louis was Edna Gelhorn. Anyway, so I do believe she had a great impact on me.

- Blanche Touhill: So you went to work then with Leadership St. Louis?
- Carolyn Losos: Before that, I had a number of opportunities, before Leadership and I started the volunteers for the Council of Public Schools, for the Council of Jewish Women, and then I ran for school board and I lost.
- Blanche Touhill: At University City?
- Carolyn Losos: No, in Ladue. They had never had a woman then.
- Blanche Touhill: Oh, my goodness, yes.
- Carolyn Losos: They had never had a woman and I was going to bring blacks into Ladue.
- Blanche Touhill: Is that what they said of you?
- Carolyn Losos: Well, some people did and I was a communist, and I'll tell you why I was a communist: when I was teaching school, the junior class at Clayton High School that I had practiced with, came to see me and said that they had gotten the administration...agreed that they could do a class trip but they needed to get two chaperones and would I chaperone them and it was going to be during spring vacation and they were going to Washington U and they had raised the money. So I said, "Sure." So we go to Washington, D.C. on the train, 24 hours, 1959 and the girls and the boys stayed in different hotels. Our hotel was across from the Cuban Embassy. It was the time that Fidel Castro had come and spoke to the UN and was in good stead with us. We thought he was a good guy and he was staying at the Embassy. His henchmen came across to get Coca Colas at our hotel and our junior girls were all over the henchmen and they said, "If you'll come at 7:00 o'clock in the morning, we'll introduce you to Fidel." Well, they went and they didn't get introduced. So the last afternoon, before we were going to go back home, we had had free time and I had met a friend of mine and I came back and I was greeted with, "Miss Warner, Miss Warner, he's walking in the park. Come; we'll introduce you to him." So I ran and got a front page of the Washington Post with his picture on it, went to the park next door and there was Fidel Castro with Clayton High School girls on either side of him, taking a walk with hundreds of reporters including Richard Dubman...remember, of the Post Dispatch?
- Blanche Touhill: I do, I do.

Carolyn Losos: And they introduced me and I have the newspaper and it says, "To Carolina from Fidel Castro" and, when we got back to Union Station, we were greeted with a hundred parents, screaming, with the front page of the Post Dispatch and there was a huge story on our trip. We were on television; I got calls and so I was a communist because I knew Fidel Castro. But when we traveled and they were high jacking planes, I would take that with me in case we got high jacked to Cuba; never used it. A few years ago, Joe and I, when they opened up, went to Cuba. So anyway, so...

Blanche Touhill: How are you bringing blacks to Ladue?

Carolyn Losos: Well, because we were trying to get an ice skating rink and I worked at the polls and it was a miserable day and everybody came out to vote "No" and one man said to me, "You know, it's all Earl Warren's fault that we're having this," and so it was that the blacks would get on the bus, come to Ladue and skate in their skating rink. So, you know.

Blanche Touhill: So you lost that election?

Carolyn Losos: I lost that election but, you know what? It turned out to be good because I got appointed to the board of the Conference on Education and chaired that board. I was chair of the board when we went to Kit Bond and asked them to call a governors' conference on education which was in 1976. Then I co-chaired that conference with the lieutenant governor and that was the last best thing they did in education. It was a two-year process and we had people from the entire state. I traveled with Marsha Kerr the entire state after it was over, trying to get senators to back the legislation that we were promoting of the conference.

Blanche Touhill: What was that legislation?

Carolyn Losos: Early childhood.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, Parents as Teachers, that...

Carolyn Losos: Well, it eventually came out of it, a new financial formula...

Blanche Touhill: Oh, yes, for elementary/secondary.

Carolyn Losos: That's right and state-wide reassessment because no formula could work until state-wide reassessment, accountability and that we had to vocational. It was a very productive...

Blanche Touhill: Were most of those things carried out?

Carolyn Losos: We did get a new formula eventually. State-wide reassessment was...yes, I guess eventually we got it but, boy, that was a tough battle and we got early childhood. We didn't get much in accountability done. That was another thing. One of the interesting things was, Kit Bond put the conference after his election, after his first time and, of course, by that time he was a lame duck and Joe Teasdale, who disappeared, as you remember. I'm telling you this because this is how my job came about. Then I was very involved and I got asked to be on the Girl Scout board. I had a wonderful scout leader also. So then I got in the first session of the Leadership Program...not the first, the second session and after five years, the Danforth Foundation decided that they no longer wanted to run the Leadership...

Blanche Touhill: So they started it...the Danforth Foundation started it?

Carolyn Losos: The Danforth Foundation started it.

Blanche Touhill: Who was the head of the Danforth...Schwilck at that time?

Carolyn Losos: Gene Schwilck. So they were looking for proposals. They looked nation-wide for proposals. Then the rumor was, they were going to give it to the Coro Foundation, give a grant.

Blanche Touhill: And the Coro would then run Leadership?

Carolyn Losos: Then Coro would run the Leadership Program. During that time, that post-dated my involvement with the Governor's Conference on Education and then the implementation. I was at a conference at Florissant Valley, an educational conference and I was talking to Otis Jackson...

Blanche Touhill: I remember Otis Jackson.

Carolyn Losos: You remember Otis...who really gets the credit for getting it going. I said, "Otis, I hear you're giving the Leadership Program to the Coro Foundation," and while I'm saying that to Otis, Arthur Mallory, who was

the commissioner of Education, walks by and he said, "Hello, Carolyn," and I said, "Hello, Commissioner," and state senators walked by, "Hello, Carolyn," "Hello, Senator," that's all, you know and Otis' response, when I said about Coro, he said, "No, no, we're still looking." So one day I got a call from Otis and he says, "Do you remember what we were talking about last week?" and I said, "Yes." He said, "Well, we've decided to give the five-year contract to Coro to run the program and we want you to run it." I said, "Have you told Coro?" He said, "No, but we will and they'll get it if they have you." So I really believe, Blanche...and it's something I have given speeches about...that I was very lucky, but I really believe you make your chances; you are the right person because of what you have done and, like you, when you became chancellor, you were there. It was fortunate you were there but you had done all the work to get the job and so it was a gift and so I went to see Gene Schwilck and I said to Gene, "Okay, Gene, tell me what this is all about." He said, "We're giving a five-year grant to Coro and we'd like you to run it and I will tell you two things: number one, become a consultant because it would be a half-time job," and he said, "and then you can make your own hours and you are not just an employee, and number two, if you have any problems with them, come and tell me." How do you like that for a way to start a new job?

Blanche Touhill: But Coro said yes?

Carolyn Losos: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: But Coro didn't stay long, did they, with Leadership?

Carolyn Losos: Well, what happened is...it's probably my biggest gift to Leadership, is that there were some wonderful people at Coro and it's a fine organization but it wasn't the fit for Leadership.

Blanche Touhill: No, it wasn't.

Carolyn Losos: And if it had stayed there, you would not have focus today. I mean, there's no doubt in my mind. So, during the first few years, I had an idea about starting a program called "Experience St. Louis." It was for new...

Blanche Touhill: Yes, people moving in that you wanted to introduce the community to...

Carolyn Losos: That's right.

Blanche Touhill: ...but they were basically people moving up.

Carolyn Losos: Well, that was originally for the top people, yes. Now, it is not quite there but, you know...

Blanche Touhill: Okay.

Carolyn Losos: It's a different community today. We don't have the...or the second in level. So anyway, I went to see Jim O'Flynn.

Blanche Touhill: Yes.

Carolyn Losos: Remember Jim O'Flynn?

Blanche Touhill: Yeah.

Carolyn Losos: He sort of drug his heels so then I went to see Harry Wilson.

Blanche Touhill: Yes.

Carolyn Losos: And Harry said, "It's a great idea. I can't understand" and he called Jim O'Flynn and we got it started and I ran it and I ran it...

Blanche Touhill: So you were running Leadership and this Experience?

Carolyn Losos: Experience and I did not give the program to Coro and they thought they owned it and that sort of start...

Blanche Touhill: But you were only part-time with them?

Carolyn Losos: I was only part-time with them. Long and short of the whole thing, it came to the place where there was going to be a separation and I can understand. I wouldn't want me working for them and I went to see Gene Schwilck at which point that year he said, "Have the alumni put a grant in," and that's when we separated.

Blanche Touhill: Yes. How many years did you run Leadership?

Carolyn Losos: Seventeen.

Blanche Touhill: And it really grew and took hold?

Carolyn Losos: It really grew, it grew and I was so lucky because it was at a time when you could do things and we had access.

- Blanche Touhill: Yes, you did.
- Carolyn Losos: We did have access and became regional and that to this day, some of my best friends.
- Blanche Touhill: Yes, have come out of that.
- Carolyn Losos: Come out of the Leadership Program and I still keep up and I said at the end of 17 years, out of the Leadership Program grew the Confluence and Confluence was the citizen engagement and they were not under leadership. They were under their own separate organization because they didn't want just Leadership people. They wanted the entire community. So, it became obvious to me that Confluence was having some problems and that it would be a great merger and Edith...Chris was chair of the board and Edith Kuname was running it and Edith believed it too. So we started a merger talk. Then I said that if we merge, that I would retire. I was 65 and I felt it would be no pleasure to them. It would look like...
- Blanche Touhill: Well, then, would the boards merge?
- Carolyn Losos: The board merged.
- Blanche Touhill: And then they chose Chris?
- Carolyn Losos: They chose Chris.
- Blanche Touhill: And she's been there probably 17 years.
- Carolyn Losos: She's just about that and she's done a wonderful job. Coro was given the opportunity to come in and they chose not to but last year they came in and it wasn't a merger; it was a takeover. So anyway, so that's when I retired.
- Blanche Touhill: I want to change the subject just a little bit.
- Carolyn Losos: Sure.
- Blanche Touhill: And talk about the International Women's Forum. I'd like you to talk about what you've learned from that group or what do you think of that group?

Carolyn Losos: Well, again, Blanche, I feel like I was given an extraordinary opportunity to be right in the beginning of...well, the Missouri Women's Forum, when they were talking about it and I think...

Blanche Touhill: Were you one of the founding members?

Carolyn Losos: Yes, yes. They had had a few discussions before they got the founding group together and it was a great group. My friendships expanded greatly to different kinds of women in different leadership positions. I consider...I knew you before but I consider you a friend, not an acquaintance and the extraordinary thing that I think I've learned is what women have been able to accomplish in these last number of years. By the way, something that I would like to just say is, in the 1960's, a woman named Kathryn Whitehorn, who was a columnist for the London Observer and a friend of Chuck Korr's you probably met her...came to St. Louis and she was doing an article on why the women's movement seems to have emanated from the United States and she was traveling around and she came to St. Louis and she interviewed Harriet Woods and I had an interview with her and her article said, when she went back, which I read, that she bases the women's movement...sort of took off because of the volunteer opportunities that women had had in the United States. Even if they couldn't reach the top position, they at least had the experience of being out of the home. So I thought that was interesting.

Blanche Touhill: I always thought they worked together too. When you're in those volunteer groups, you have to work together and you learn who you can trust and who you can't trust and who's going to do the job and who isn't.

Carolyn Losos: That's exactly right.

Blanche Touhill: And so you form those friendships with the people that are doers.

Carolyn Losos: Yes, and right along that...as long as you're saying that...I am such a believer in that it's important to show up and if you're not there, you can't have an impact on something and because you're there, you can make things go in your direction and you can have your say. So anyway, so back to IWF...that's what you were talking about...

Blanche Touhill: Well, now I'd like to change to say: if you had been born 50 years earlier than you have, would you have had the same kind of life?



Carolyn Losos: Probably no. Fifty years earlier would have been...I would have been born in the late '80s, 1880's and my basic family came to the United States in the '60s and '70s and I wouldn't have had near the opportunities I've had. I wouldn't have been traveling around the world the way I've been able to do. I think my family was middle-class even though, when I was born, we didn't have resources but I think my life would have been different but, on the other hand, I think that so much goes back to the family you're born into and the kind of support that you have and I certainly had that, from my family and my relatives and I was always made to feel that I could do it. So, it would have been different but probably not accomplished what I've accomplished today, if I've accomplished anything. I've had a good time, lucky me. So anyway.

Blanche Touhill: Did you get any award or awards that you really feel were wonderful to receive?

Carolyn Losos: Well, I've been very lucky. I also believe, Blanche, that I'm on a list, you know? It's easy once you start getting awards, to be getting more and more awards but I've been honored two or three times by the University with their alumni award and then Arts & Sciences and then their Ethics award. I was honored by the Girl Scouts many times over. Girl Scouts has been very important in my life also and I've been honored by SIUE, community award, St. Louis University put me in their portrait collection. Things that I've really enjoyed doing was I would give graduation speeches at the pharmacy college and Bellville Community College. You know, they're not big deals but for me, they were...I put a lot of time and then I got the Prevent Child Abuse national award from them. I've been honored by Parents as Teachers, public relations people here. The Mitzvah, Athena, I mean, you know, I've been very lucky.

Blanche Touhill: Let's talk about the Girl Scouts. I know that you were the chairman of the board of the Girl Scouts, isn't that right?

Carolyn Losos: Well, first, I was the President because...

Blanche Touhill: Oh, I'm sorry, the President, okay.

Carolyn Losos: Because we had a chairman of the board who was male and one of the biggest things that Betty Sims and I did was to see that that was changed, that the chair of the board would be...could be anybody and I became chair of the board and then I served on the national board for 9 years. I

do think Girl Scouting had a great deal to do also with my leadership because I had a fabulous leader and I was a Girl Scout through high school and it wasn't the thing, to be a Girl Scout in high school but I loved my leader and she taught me how to sail and took me camping and I got on the girl-wide leadership council and I chaired the 1976 Girl Scout/Boy Scout event which, if we had more time, I'll tell you about it sometime. Girl Scouting was interesting but it was...so, I do believe that Girl Scouting and the National Board is very protective of it remaining an all-girl organization. You know, girls cannot become senior Boy Scouts and in many places in Europe, they are a combined organization but the National Board of Girl Scouts U.S.A. believes there is time for girls to be girls and activities and leadership and they have fought to keep it a single sex organization and I really believe in that too. I think you'll understand, Blanche, how proud I am of them because all of them are in some form of teaching. My son is an endowed professor at Harvard and doing extraordinary research on lizards and he's an evolutionary biologist. My daughter, Elizabeth, is the CEO of the organization of Tropical Studies. UMSL is one of their universities who supports that and so she is in the tropics and working in the whole sustainable environment world and my daughter, Carol, who took time off to have her kids, is the program director for...she is an art historian and the only one without a PhD and probably she could easily have gotten one if she'd wanted it but she was in art history. But now she is program director for the English-speaking union which does a great deal with Shakespeare and (debate?) and Carol's in charge of that and Louise, my daughter, is in education. She's curriculum director right now for the Confluence charter schools. One time, I was asking someone what his kids were doing whom I'd had four kids and he told me...he asked me what my kids were doing and I told him. He said, "Don't any of them want to earn money?" I almost hit him and I said, "You know, they're out there doing what they want to do and making a difference and that pleases me."

Blanche Touhill: Well, I think that's a perfect way to end this because you've spent your life being out there and doing what you wanted to do to help. Thank you very much.

Carolyn Losos: Thank you. You know what? There's nobody who doesn't like talking about themselves.