

Terrence Dougherty Oral History Interview
Returned Peace Corps Volunteer Collection
Administrative Information

Creator: Terrence Dougherty
Interviewer: Tamatha Nibert
Date of Interview: June 22, 2019
Location of Interview: Austin, Texas
Length: 38 pages

Biographical Note

Terrence (Terry) Dougherty served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Afghanistan from 1972 to 1975 as an English teacher.

Access

Open.

Usage Restrictions

According to the deed of gift signed February 4, 2020, copyright of these materials has been assigned to the United States Government. This interview is in the public domain.

Copyright

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specified conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be "used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research." If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excesses of "fair use," that user may be liable for copyright infringement. This institution reserves the right to refuse to accept a copying order if, in its judgment, fulfillment of the order would involve violation of copyright law. The copyright law extends its protection to unpublished works from the moment of creation in a tangible form. Direct your questions concerning copyright to the reference staff.

Technical Note

This transcript was created by Sonix software from the MP3 audio recording of the interview. The resulting text file was lightly edited and reformatted according to a standard template.

Suggested Citation

Terrence Dougherty, recorded interview by Tamatha Nibert, June 22, 2019, page #, Returned Peace Corps Volunteer Collection, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum.

DISCLAIMER

This transcript was generated automatically by Sonix software from the audio recording. The accuracy of the transcript cannot be guaranteed. Only the original audio recording constitutes the official record of this interview and should be used along with the transcript. If researchers have any concerns about accuracy or would like to recommend corrections, they are encouraged to contact the library reference staff.

Oral History Interview

with

Terrence Dougherty

June 22, 2019

Austin, Texas

By Tamatha Nibert

Returned Peace Corps Volunteer Collection
John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum

NIBERT: [00:00:01] I'm Tamatha Nibert and I was a Peace Corps volunteer in the Philippines from 1992 to 1995, and I am interviewing Terry Dougherty, who was a Peace Corps volunteer in Afghanistan from 1972 to 1975 doing TEFL [Teaching English as a Foreign Language]. And why did you join the Peace Corps?

DOUGHERTY: [00:00:25] To go to a South Pacific island or someplace in the Caribbean.

NIBERT: [00:00:30] And they didn't send you there, did they?

DOUGHERTY: [00:00:33] No, they said, how about Afghanistan? And I had to find a globe back then to see where Afghanistan was. I started on the wrong continent, on Africa. Interesting and sorted out. Eventually found it in South Asia, Asia, Central Asia.

NIBERT: [00:00:48] Yeah, there's just kind of in-between. Exactly. And so you joined really wanted to travel?

DOUGHERTY: [00:00:58] And to learn of other cultures and people and experience living in a world that would be different.

NIBERT: [00:01:08] And what was your application process like?

DOUGHERTY: [00:01:14] I graduated in those early summer, June of '72, and applied and it wasn't difficult. We had what was called a pre invitational staging where we met a group of people and the Peace Corps had psychiatrists and others there to lead us out. And those of us who didn't get weeded were invited to get tickets to Washington and fly to Afghanistan in December.

NIBERT: [00:01:53] So you knew that they were psychologists watching you at your training?

DOUGHERTY: Yeah.

NIBERT: You all knew that ahead of time?

DOUGHERTY: [00:01:59] Yeah, that was in a pre-invitation. What we did in country was pre invitation. They switched from in country in the U.S. to in country of the host country, about '68, '69. They switched from calling them cycles to whatever they were called for.

NIBERT: [00:02:22] Interesting. So your pre-invitation, where was that?

DOUGHERTY: At Chicago.

NIBERT: In Chicago? Yeah, close by. And so was just like maybe three days or so?

DOUGHERTY: [00:02:32] Yeah, it was a weekend. My wife at the time and I drove over to Chicago from Fort Wayne and met folks and went to an Indian restaurant with one of the recruiters that had brought people there. And it was a good time.

NIBERT: [00:02:49] Good. And so then you did in countries training after that?

DOUGHERTY: [00:02:55] Yeah, right. Kabul, December 13.

NIBERT: [00:02:58] Wow. And how long was your training?

DOUGHERTY: [00:03:00] There was three months. And school starts right after the New Year's celebration, which is March 21 in Afghanistan. So we trained from the time we got there till we deployed on the Nowruz holiday weekend to our site.

NIBERT: [00:03:24] Wow. Very nice. And then when did you know what your site was going to be? Did you visit it during training?

DOUGHERTY: [00:03:30] No, we didn't. They did the selection. There were there were like a I don't know, half a dozen married couples and 40 in our group. And I think we found out that our site after we were there maybe two months. And so we had about a month to prepare for moving to a remote town in Afghanistan.

NIBERT: [00:03:59] Where was your site at then?

DOUGHERTY: [00:04:00] It was Taloqan, Afghanistan, Northeast River Road between Kunduz, which you hear about in the news frequently because of violence now. And Fayzabad, which was the entrance to the walk on corridor, which is the old Silk Road over to China between the Pamir and the Hindu Kush Mountains, trying to make a 30 mile wide corridor and common border with China. So it was remote and took a better part of a day to get there from Kabul.

NIBERT: [00:04:36] So and what kind of form of transportation was it?

DOUGHERTY: [00:04:39] We took like they were Toyota minibuses, like 15 passenger busses that took us from Kabul through the mountain Pass, Salang Pass and to Kunduz. And then we took Russian troop carrier called awaz, it was four wheel drive along the road next to the river or while the river was dry, you could ride the riverbed because it was more smoother than the road. And in the spring, the river washed out the road. Yeah.

NIBERT: [00:05:10] So it was a journey to get there.

DOUGHERTY: [00:05:14] So we got there.

NIBERT: [00:05:16] Then we got there. Were there other volunteers besides your wife in the community?

DOUGHERTY: [00:05:20] Not in Taloqan. There were volunteers in Kunduz to the other married couples. So the four of them were went to Kunduz at that time. There was a town in between us, Khanabad that had volunteers have been there for a year already. And there were volunteers beyond us and Fayzabad. So we're and there had been volunteers in Taloqan once before. So we were the second volunteers in that site. We didn't meet them.

NIBERT: [00:05:49] So, OK, so they had already been gone before you got there? Yeah, that's interesting. Did you spend a lot of time with the other volunteers? Did you all socialize or?

DOUGHERTY: [00:05:58] Oh, we socialize but usually at holiday school breaks we were all teachers and that and that in that corner. Yeah. And there were some. The single volunteers that we're doing, other projects that would travel through from time to time, and so they'd camp out at our place, but that was infrequent.

NIBERT: [00:06:23] It's interesting. And so who was your in country counterpart that you worked with or did you not have one?

DOUGHERTY: [00:06:32] In Taloqan we, our landlord and the assistant principal at school I taught in they shared an adjacent compound with a wall between us with a shared outhouse and and well pit, water pit that it was a junior running ditch running water ditch that brought water into the compound and back out to the neighbor.

NIBERT: [00:06:59] So it wasn't necessarily clean drinking water. You had to boil it.

DOUGHERTY: [00:07:03] Yeah, it was a daily activity to bring water in and let it settle for a day. So the mud fell out and boil it and move it and do another. Yeah. You know, keep staging fresh water from the day before, you know, for use.

NIBERT: [00:07:20] So did the Afghanistans also boil the water?

DOUGHERTY: No.

NIBERT: No. And so were they often sick or were they immune to it?

DOUGHERTY: [00:07:29] And it just had a high infant mortality and childhood mortality. It was like 20, 25 percent of children died before the age of seven. Mostly from dysentery.

NIBERT: [00:07:39] That's really sad.

DOUGHERTY: [00:07:41] Yeah. That at that time is right. It's much better now.

NIBERT: [00:07:44] But yeah, water is so precious. You have to spend all day so you can drink it.

DOUGHERTY: [00:07:51] We also had GI issued iodine tablets that we used when we traveled, and they were awful.

NIBERT: [00:07:58] They taste horrible, don't they? It's not refreshing at all.

DOUGHERTY: [00:08:00] But we used those to wash fruit that we might buy that we want like fresh fruit or things like that.

NIBERT: [00:08:05] To be safe. It's wise.

DOUGHERTY: [00:08:06] Yeah. Or while we traveled, we drank the stuff.

NIBERT: [00:08:09] Did you do a lot of traveling in country?

DOUGHERTY: [00:08:11] Yeah, we've seen, I saw. Our first trip actually was to Mazar-i-Sharif in the north west corner. We were in the northeast and I had a kidney stone and got medevacked. I mean it was just, or no, that wasn't our first trip. Anyway, we there's a ring road around Afghanistan and we took the ring across the north to Mazar-i-Sharif on one end and we took the ring around the south and went to Herat and Kandahar that you hear about in the news and several other historic kinds of locations. We visited volunteers in those cities when we were traveling and back and forth to Kabul to get more shots. Frequently we had lots of shots.

NIBERT: [00:09:01] You have to keep your hepatitis up. Yeah, lots of shots. I don't even know what Afghanistan really looks like countryside. Like what did it look like while you were there?

DOUGHERTY: [00:09:14] It was very dry, except for about two weeks in the spring that turned lush green. Oh, we were in the northern steppes, you know, the Asian steppes from Mongolia across the river, you know, so it's for Afghanistan. It was relatively flat. There were hills around Taloqan, but it quickly rose into mountainous. The Hindu Kush is, which means

Hindu Killer Mountains. Kush is to kill. And it kept those Hindus out of Afghanistan, you know.

NIBERT: Those troublemakers.

DOUGHERTY: [00:09:54] Yeah. So anyway, it's very, very mountainous and traveling from north to south or from one region to another, you're constantly going through mountain passes. And you know, it's an interesting the central region of Afghanistan was probably our favorite as Bamiyan, Where the Buddhas were that the Taliban blew up in 2001, spring of 2001. Before 9/11 happened, they blew centuries old, 280 foot tall Buddha off of the face of the cliff. And it was it was a worldwide historic site.

NIBERT: [00:10:38] So horrible. But you got to see it before they blew it up.

DOUGHERTY: [00:10:41] I went to the head of the Buddha, I've been on the head of the Buddha.

NIBERT: [00:10:46] So you can climb up it and stuff?

DOUGHERTY: [00:10:48] Yeah, it had a staircase behind it, a spiral staircase. At one time there were 2000 monks that lived in the in the cliff caves alongside and had frescoes above and the staircase that came out onto the head. You walked out really literally onto the head of the Buddha and looked out of the valley in front of you. Sounds gorgeous. I pictures of it. And so. They're hanging in my living room now. One of my favorite images of Afghanistan.

NIBERT: [00:11:18] And is it greener there in the central area or is it?

DOUGHERTY: [00:11:21] Yeah, well, Bamiyan is a little bit compared to Idaho. It's a potato growing region. Ok, and so the fields are potato fields and they irrigate. And so they're pretty green throughout the growing season and pretty cold and snowy in the winter and locked in because the

mountain passes are closed off. And the Taliban wanted to kill the Hazara people who lived in that region. So they tried to starve them out. They had

NIBERT: [00:11:50] Even in the '70s?

DOUGHERTY: No, in the '90s.

NIBERT: In the '90s, OK.

DOUGHERTY: [00:11:54] When they got control of the country in '96, that's so that region, that population or the ones that were most affected by the by the wars, the civil wars.

NIBERT: [00:12:06] That's a shame. Your favorite area.

DOUGHERTY: [00:12:07] Yeah. Yeah. And the people too. They were awesome. Just wonderful people. Shia Muslim versus Sunni and the Taliban were, you know, a radical Sunni sect.

NIBERT: [00:12:20] Were the Taliban there at all when you were there?

DOUGHERTY: [00:12:24] Not so much. The Pashtun tribal region was much more conservative. Women wore what they call a burka here. It's a chadaree in Farsi. And in the south, the Pashtunwali, the tribal code of ethics was thought to be religious, but it was really a tribal code expressed in the simple Zan-Zar and Zameen, don't mess with my women, my gold or my land. And so.

NIBERT: [00:13:03] It's kind of common to go by, you know?

DOUGHERTY: [00:13:05] And that's the tribal code.

NIBERT: [00:13:07] So the Taliban kind of did all. Wow. So your project, you taught English. What was the main language that they did speak there?

DOUGHERTY: [00:13:20] Dari was common throughout all of the northern regions and under Zahir Shah when we were in Taloqan, they had been teaching English in high schools and starting in 9th grade through 12th grade, I don't know, probably for 20 or more years.

NIBERT: [00:13:43] Before you got there?

DOUGHERTY: [00:13:44] Before we got to Taloqan, the Peace Corps started sending volunteers in 1962. It was one of the early countries to Afghanistan. And Zahir Shah, the king, had convinced the United States to build a dam in southern Afghanistan, in Helmand Province, to dam the Helmand River. And so there was a big USAID project and lots of engineers who built the Hoover Dam in the United States. And they built the Helmand Dam and opened up a desert region to irrigation farming. So, I mean, it was and there were hundreds of USAID engineers and their families in Kabul while we were there. Oh, wow. So and we had over 300 volunteers in country while I was there.

NIBERT: [00:14:38] That's a lot.

DOUGHERTY: [00:14:40] It was a big program. Effective program. The other programs in Afghanistan, the smallpox eradication teams of American nurses eradicated smallpox from the last holdout on earth, in Afghanistan. And now it's the last holdout for a few cases of polio, so that and Somalia right now are the only places with polio. So but the Peace Corps nurses are credited with that. And there were other programs, food for work and banking and agriculture product projects as well.

NIBERT: [00:15:26] So you taught English in the school system. Was it an elementary school?

DOUGHERTY: [00:15:30] No, no, it was a high school in the first year.

NIBERT: [00:15:32] High school. They still did high school.

DOUGHERTY: [00:15:34] Now, the first year was Taloqan High School. And then because of the medevac kidney stone episode, we transferred to Kabul. So I'd be closer to medical help because they had to fly me with the embassy plane back when I had the kidney stone.

NIBERT: [00:15:50] Wow. And was it a fancy plane?

DOUGHERTY: [00:15:54] Yeah, it was a really nice plane. That was that was the easiest travel in all of Afghanistan was on the embassy plane.

NIBERT: [00:16:00] So did they actually come to your site and medevac you from there?

DOUGHERTY: [00:16:03] Yeah, well, I was traveling I was in the northwest area very shortly after that happened. Mazar had a was a larger city and had an airport that. Embassy had flown to before one strange place for them to go at that time. I tried flying out of Taloqan one time to go back to Kabul and the internal airlines was called back to and they flew Canadian otter's that are designed for, you know, water landing. And there was no water to be landed on. I mean, they didn't have to. Interesting. But the Canadians used them in the central region of. But they're the only the pilot had oxygen. The ceiling was like 13, 14,000 feet in the cabin. And we went through a 14,000 foot mountain pass between Taloqan and Kabul. That was the last time we tried that.

NIBERT: [00:17:04] So you were a little dizzy when you landed.

DOUGHERTY: [00:17:04] So anyway, flying. But and then the second year we moved to Kabul and I taught in teachers college and I taught teachers English in preparation to Afghan teachers to teach in high schools. And there

had been a coup between the first and second year. And the king's brother-in-law took over, Daoud Khan, and he started playing Soviet and American aid and they started teaching Russian in the room next to me at the teacher's college. And that was first year they were even preparing to teach Russian. And that was in 1974. And the Soviets invaded in 1975.

NIBERT: [00:17:49] Were you there when they invaded?

DOUGHERTY: No.

NIBERT: No, you left just recently.

DOUGHERTY: [00:17:53] We saw the volunteers that were in country in '74 saw troop carrier, not troop carriers, but equipment carriers that the Soviets started prepositioning military hardware as early as '74. And they started hand selecting potential leaders from the university and they started fomenting communists kind of agitation between '74 and '79 when they invaded, you know, internal agitation. They drained the intelligentsia, their children. They started bringing them to Soviet Union. Principal's son was one that when he came back from the Soviet Union. I was in school that year and he was telling all the other teachers how great it was. And the Soviet Union, I have to buy anything. You just went to the store and they gave you the clothes.

NIBERT: [00:18:45] Interesting.

DOUGHERTY: [00:18:48] I mean, it was a five year plan and they carried it out and failed miserably in the end. Yeah.

NIBERT: [00:18:55] Did you ever feel unsafe while you were there?

DOUGHERTY: [00:18:57] There were no the Russians weren't threatening to the Americans that were there at all. Oh, no. I mean, it was the Russians were threatened by being there. The Russian teacher was brought

from a walled embassy compound that they couldn't leave by bus to the school, dropped off, picked up at practically at the classroom. And we took the city bus and rode our bicycle back and forth to the school and Taloqan and lived in a house with no guard. Or they had a wall around the compound. But all the houses had walls around the compound. I mean,

NIBERT: [00:19:34] So you were accepted in your community. How do you how do you think they perceived you?

DOUGHERTY: [00:19:38] And as teachers, we were honored, you know, and they considered us a guest.

NIBERT: [00:19:44] That's great. The teachers were respected there.

DOUGHERTY: [00:19:47] Yeah, it was very different and the teaching student relationship subsequent we I got involved in 2004 and hosting and finding host families for YES Afghanistan exchange students, high school students. And the American council's was contracted by the State Department to do that. And a former Afghan Peace Corps volunteer was a desk officer. And we heard from Randy Biggers, who was one of our friends from Peace Corps days, that they were starting a program for high school kids in Afghanistan. And so few of us signed up. And the reason I went to that story is one of the students. They had an essay contest and they picked out the best essays from among the students while they were in the USA that year. And there's one young woman, high school junior, Shafiq was her name, wrote an essay about education in Afghanistan and the United States. And her opening paragraph was in the United States. The teachers care and the students in Afghanistan, the students care and the teachers know. And in Afghanistan for giving the teachers was that they were paid nothing. There was no possible way a teacher could live on a teacher's salary, and it was just impossible.

NIBERT: [00:21:38] That's horrible. And so that had changed since you were there in the '70s, right?

DOUGHERTY: [00:21:42] It has changed now not much.

NIBERT: [00:21:44] Well, no. I mean, even in the '70s, they weren't able to live on their pay?

DOUGHERTY. No.

NIBERT: Wow.

DOUGHERTY: [00:21:48] Yeah. Usually a teacher for one thing, Afghan culture is not, not a, it's a family oriented culture and everybody pulls resources, OK? And so teachers were far more educated families and generally there might be several brothers that shared a family compound. They might have had separate, you know, living arrangements within a compound. But the women shared the housework and the men shared the pooled their resources income. Often they had land and they had people that farm their land for them. They got income from other sources, some teachers tutored on the side, and that's how they supported their families. And I mean, it was just it was a whole mixed bag of if you were educated and other families knew the value of what you had, they would pay you for that for their children. They would tutor the tutor, their children after school and that kind of thing.

DOUGHERTY: [00:23:11] But to go to school was not universal, certainly 9th to 12th grade. And girls in Taloqan, they only went to 10th grade. So, I mean, the school just had that many years. I'm in Kabul. My then wife not now taught in the only high school in Afghanistan that had married girls and I mean that because they were very young. They probably married when they were 15 or 16 and they were the wives of high level ministers or wealthy men in Kabul. And they wanted their wives to be educated, at least through high school. And so if the girl got married, she had to quit school and most and almost all of the country.

NIBERT: [00:24:06] Unless she married a.

DOUGHERTY: [00:24:07] A wealthy person.

NIBERT: [00:24:09] A wealthy person and needed to have an educated wife. Yeah, interesting.

DOUGHERTY: [00:24:13] So it was. And there girl, the demand for girls today I chaperon the first group of Yes exchange students when they went home and met their families and the student that had lived with us that year. Her mother was the headmistress of a girls school in Kabul. And I went to the school. I was it had been designed for about 2,000 students and they had 10,000 students at a high school. So the demand for education was there. And they had UNICEF tents out on the on the grounds all around the school. Classes were being held in tents. They had three shifts. So they had an early day shift that got out of school before noon. They had another one. It started and finished in the early afternoon. And then they had a third shift that went into the evening. And they didn't really have qualified teachers for the girls school.

NIBERT: [00:25:16] Why is that? Because it was women teaching?

DOUGHERTY: [00:25:19] You know, they had men, teachers at the girls school, too. But there, there were in 2004, 2005 there just the educated people that had the means to leave the country, left the country, got it. In general, people were still coming back from refugee camps out of Pakistan, primarily. And the population of Kabul swelled from, you know, during the Taliban. Maybe less than a million, something probably 500,000 when I was there in the '70s to three and a half, four million now. And it's, and they didn't have the infrastructure.

NIBERT: [00:25:59] I was just going to ask you, what was the infrastructure like there.

DOUGHERTY: [00:26:02] Just in the water was there was cholera at the school. Oh you know, I mean so it was and people were living in tents on the on the hillsides around and, you know, using out houses and facilities like that. And water leached and they used the trash heaps and burned plastic and whatever they could find that burned hot to cook and heat their heat, their homes. And so the and it was 7000 feet plus or so. It's a, it's a city with like Denver, Colorado, in terms of high altitude than air mountains surrounding it. Yeah. And it's a glacial plateau. So it's on a flat area within a mountain range. And so it's it was a mess. I came home very, very frustrated after spending a couple of weeks with my students.

NIBERT: [00:27:03] And this was in 2000?

DOUGHERTY: In 2005.

NIBERT: So you were frustrated there?

DOUGHERTY: [00:27:09] I was frustrated by just the lack of any kind of planning on our part. The U.S., because we were essentially administering the country then after from 2002 when we got total control of the country right through 2005. But we were mostly focused on short term military, you know, rooting out al-Qaida and the Taliban. And so, anyway, it was it's been a long. It's turned around some for me because I've got good friends and lots of Afghan American friends and lots of students who went on to graduate school.

NIBERT: [00:27:55] That's awesome. That's great. So and you probably would never done this in the Peace Corps in the '70s there.

DOUGHERTY: [00:28:02] Yeah, just one real quick one. The principal of the school I taught at Interlaken in 1973 had a large family and we went to a party at his home and I met his two daughters and the younger daughter was 18. And the older daughter, I'm not sure how old she was. The

older daughter came to the U.S. after the Soviet invasion and migrated to Fremont, California. Little Kabul. Berkeley. And the younger daughter and I, during those years when the Soviets invaded, I thought I had lost track of all my friends.

NIBERT: [00:28:37] Sure. In the 1990s, I put pictures up on a website and a girl from Freema wrote me and said, who are you? You have a picture of my mother and my grandfather and my aunts and uncles. And so I wrote back and we shared. And not long after that, I heard from a Russian soldier and he says Afghanistan was different when you were there. It just was in the '90s. And here's my website. So I looked at it and it was soldiers.

NIBERT: [00:29:05] And wow.

DOUGHERTY: [00:29:08] Here's a story in the opening page of his website said, if you should find yourself on Afghanistan's plane and the women come out to pick up the remains, then roll to your rifle and blow out your brains and go to your God like a soldier. That's Rudyard Kipling. And this Russian soldier was quoting Kipling. Anyway, Endo's end of story, isn't there?

NIBERT: [00:29:33] You don't have to end the story.

DOUGHERTY: [00:29:34] The 18 year old daughter of my principal in Telecom 1973, I heard from her niece and in Fremont, would you meet my aunt? And she's coming to Indiana.

NIBERT: [00:29:49] Coming to Indiana? Wow.

DOUGHERTY: [00:29:52] And she showed up with her five children in tow. And the oldest was like maybe twenty, eight, nineteen, twenty.

NIBERT: [00:30:01] And do you remember her?

DOUGHERTY: [00:30:03] I'm Uncle Terry to them all.

NIBERT: That's wonderful.

DOUGHERTY: And they've all finished college and they're all just and other.

NIBERT: [00:30:10] Did she move to Indiana or was she just visiting?

DOUGHERTY: [00:30:13] She can't know. She came as a refugee from the refugee placement programs that you know there's an executive there and I had been working with her to help refugees kind of acclimate to the culture. And sure, that would. So the city had at that point, a number of Afghan refugee families and her husband's family had several of their relatives in the city. And they came to Fort Wayne because one of the younger brothers of her husband was a medical doctor who was practicing family medicine in Fort Wayne, Indiana. So, you know, and he encouraged his family to come, but.

NIBERT: [00:30:59] A wonderful small world.

DOUGHERTY: [00:31:01] And they brought his mother, her mother-in-law. So anyway, it's, and that was the wonderful world story that I really wanted to tell you.

NIBERT: [00:31:13] That is fabulous, you know?

DOUGHERTY: [00:31:15] And so you never know when you're in the Peace Corps how this relationship and it really wasn't a relationship. I met her. I worked for her father. And it was it was awesome, though, that well, actually, my wife at the time we made donuts and this young woman liked to cook and so we showed her how to make donuts, you know, American style. Dip them in fat, in oil that.

NIBERT: [00:31:41] Yep, fry those delicious balls of yummy.

DOUGHERTY: [00:31:45] So and to this day she still makes donuts.

NIBERT: [00:31:49] Oh, isn't that great. So are they do they still have the tough love program there? Do you believe Teflon not changed it to some of that terminology?

DOUGHERTY: [00:31:59] Peace Corps left and right. But yeah, they teach English. Extensively and I've been part of the formation of a girls dormitory school boarding school in Kabul. I started that with the former director of the exchange program with American councils when he retired from that program. Yes, 2008. He just rented a big house and started inviting students who were looking for their moving on and their education to live there and work and go to college. And it has become, he died last year, but one of the students is president. I'm on the board still, and it's called Solar School of Leadership Afghanistan. Because so these things and they do teach in English and they look for American volunteers to use Skype and tutor the students. So they're recruiting knowledgeable ESL. And the school is actually taught in English for the most part, held in English, because that's a common language for Afghanistan. And they have students that don't speak a common language between them. Some speak Dari, some speak Pashto.

NIBERT: [00:33:23] So there's quite a few native languages. And yeah, there's and they don't they don't comprehend each other very well.

DOUGHERTY: [00:33:31] Yeah. The two languages and those who come from the south, the Pashtun region have probably only spoken Pashto most of their life. And the ones who come from Kabul in the north are pretty much only Dari, a dialect of Farsi. So anyway, it's and so the common language of English and plus it prepares them for advanced education in so many ways. And like there's an American university in Kabul now and they teach in English and bring in American professors. And so when the students graduate from high school, that's an option for them if they have, you know, a good level of English. But this is the only

school in the country that brings girls together in a dormitory environment from all over the country, 27 of the 30 some provinces, 35 now, and of all the different ethnic groups and learning to live together and, you know, share life together. So it's, it's a game changer for certain.

NIBERT: [00:34:40] For certain.

DOUGHERTY: [00:34:41] So it's Peace Corps. And frankly, the founder, Ted Achilleas, was his name, the former director of American councils and in Afghanistan was an Army Ranger as a young man. So, I mean, so Peace Corps Army Ranger, his father had been an ambassador and he'd grown up in the embassy circles and stuff. But so he had an international. But yet and but he had a vision of what could be done if Afghans were given the opportunity. And he was an entrepreneur and, you know, he was retired from business entrepreneurship and went to Afghanistan. At the request of, I think the second or the third. Yeah, he was the third Peace Corps director of Afghanistan. He was friends with Lew Mitchell. And Lew asked him if he'd go and check out business opportunities because Lew had had some health issues. And wanted to go. But so he sent Ted.

NIBERT: [00:35:47] And he started the school?

DOUGHERTY: [00:35:51] He started the school after the after he left the program. and I got to know him with the U.S. program. And we just stayed friends and I helped him stateside while he was doing the Afghan work.

NIBERT: [00:36:05] So. So when you first came back in '75 to Indiana, did you end up doing more education yourself or did you continue teaching? It sounds like your.

DOUGHERTY: [00:36:19] So I, I substituted for a few months and I decided that it would kill me to be a middle school teacher in the United States for the rest of my life. And I had had a daughter on the way at the time. I was

substituting and I needed a job that paid well. And so I decided to look to how to change careers. And I ended up landing a job with IBM and wonderful. I was an IBM mainframe marketing. And then my daughter was born and she was a Peace Corps child, you know, born nine months and one week after we left, you know, so. And she was also there, a volunteer in '98 to 2000 in Kazakhstan.

NIBERT: [00:37:10] Wow, that's fabulous. Did you have much of a culture shock when you came back to the state?

DOUGHERTY: [00:37:17] Yeah, of course. Yeah. Reverse culture shock was actually worse than.

NIBERT: [00:37:23] Yeah, it is.

DOUGHERTY: [00:37:24] We expected things to be totally different when we got to Afghanistan. So everything was different. Right. When we came back to the United States, we expected everything to be the way we remembered it and everything was different. Oh, you know, in two years time all kinds of things changed. You know, in 1975, there were lots of things that had changed from 1972. Believe me, there was a lot of change. Vietnam was over. It was on our trip home, Vietnam was done. Tricky Dick was gone. He was he was out of the White House.

NIBERT: [00:38:01] Well, it's all most positive things that changed, though.

DOUGHERTY: [00:38:04] Yeah, they were good things, but that there was a lot of adjustment. Yeah, there was a lot of I couldn't figure out how to open the ketchup bottle because it changed the way you open things. And, you know.

NIBERT: [00:38:18] You didn't really have the chance to really deal with this so much because you became a new father right away and a new career. Wow.

DOUGHERTY: [00:38:24] But every day you just encounter something new that that's not the way it was, you know, three years ago. And, you know, any and it could be anything from little to something big. And the other thing was talking to friends and family and others, you'd see their eyes glaze over after about 30 seconds.

NIBERT: [00:38:49] They didn't want to hear about your Afghanistan stories anymore.

DOUGHERTY: [00:38:51] Does not compute. No. I mean, it's just like, oh, I can't, I can't even think about why you would do that or why that would be interesting or why, you know, of, you know, stories about outhouses aren't interesting. You know. Well, in the Peace Corps, you know.

NIBERT: [00:39:07] We're all about outhouses in the Peace Corps. You have running water? Wow. I think our greeting was like, did you have a solid poo? You know, everybody was excited about those things, outhouses.

DOUGHERTY: [00:39:20] I went to the doctor and I told him I got giardia. And he said, I've never seen a case of giardia at that time.

NIBERT: [00:39:29] When you came back from the States, you had giardia then too?

DOUGHERTY: [00:39:32] Yeah, that's what I mean, I, I had a case charity when I came back. Yeah. Because I'd had a kidney stone. I went to a urologist and I decided, well he's the first doctor I'm see. And I said, I've got I got giardia. And he's I've never seen a case of giardia. And I told him what medication I should be prescribed because we had medicine. Once you've had giardia, you'll never forget having giardia.

NIBERT: [00:39:54] Oh yeah. I had giardia.

DOUGHERTY: [00:39:56] And rotten eggs. Yeah. Yeah. Oh yeah. Well it had been pretty much eliminated in the United States, but because and partly

because the geese population, the Canadian geese eliminated and they were almost extinct and then they were protected and they came back.

NIBERT: [00:40:13] Right. I was going to say there was giardia here in Austin when I first moved here that I got.

DOUGHERTY: [00:40:18] And well, when the geese came back

NIBERT: [00:40:20] When the geese came back so did giardia.

DOUGHERTY: [00:40:20] So did the geese poop and the water became contaminated with giardia. I mean. And so.

NIBERT: [00:40:26] Exactly. How weird that your doctor never seen giardia before, though.

DOUGHERTY: [00:40:32] But in 1975, there was I grew it up and I'd never heard of it, you know. You know, it was not a thing. But I could tell you if it was amoebic or vacillarior. Yeah, I knew I knew how to self-diagnose many of them.

NIBERT: [00:40:47] Yes. Yeah. It's very distinct. And the medicine is painful.

DOUGHERTY: [00:40:56] Yeah. Oh medicine. One of the shots at that time on arrival they gave us several shots, first day. And I left and I went into anaplastic shop.

NIBERT: [00:41:11] Oh no. From which one?

DOUGHERTY: [00:41:12] From a rabies vaccine which at that time they used a live rabies virus, you know, and it was cultured on duck egg.

NIBERT: [00:41:22] And you're allergic to ducks?

DOUGHERTY: [00:41:23] And I'm allergic to duck now. I didn't know that then and now. And so they had to give me adrenaline and Benadryl and the doctor saved my life and it was good and but it

NIBERT: [00:41:36] Kidney stone, anaphylactic shock. All these things that we fear when we're in country, you survived.

DOUGHERTY: [00:41:44] Yeah, but the kidney stone, the reason the doctor medevacked me and he had lots he said there's a higher incidence of young people getting kidney stones here than any, any medical book would ever tell you. And it was because we would get dehydrate and we'd get. But I had a congenital issue that I had had a dozen kidney stones before I ever went. But the U.S. doctors never diagnosed with the cause of it was and when they medevacked me to Beirut American University Hospital, the Lebanese doctor said, well, have they ever done a 24 hour urine test? And I said, they've done just about every test. There was never a 24 hour urine. And so he had me being a model for 24 hours and he said, you've got system area. And I said, well, how do you know? Well, you're output of cystine is higher than any other normal functioning kidney would put out. And over half of all juvenile kidney stones are caused by this scenario. So it's the obvious test. And why didn't the American doctors do it?

NIBERT: [00:43:00] So it could have been a preventable kidney stone? Are you like do they give you medication or something for it?

DOUGHERTY: [00:43:08] Well, at that time, I was taking soda bicarb all the time. Several times a day. And keep your urine alkaline and can't produce a. I stuff.

NIBERT: [00:43:20] Oh, there you go. How interesting.

DOUGHERTY: [00:43:21] There are other medications now, but a number for a number of years I never had another kidney stone because I have a nice doctor in Beirut.

NIBERT: [00:43:30] Thank you, Beirut. We thought we had great medical care. That's really interesting.

DOUGHERTY: [00:43:38] So Peace Corps is fun and the bad stories are our lifetime memories. But you also have friendships, lifetime friendships and relationships that reconnect with you time and again over your lifetime.

NIBERT: [00:43:59] So, yeah, yours came full circle. Yours came back and forth a few times. That's amazing. I am curious, what did you all eat while you were in the Peace Corps?

DOUGHERTY: [00:44:08] Afghan food. It was wonderful.

NIBERT: [00:44:09] Was it delicious and wonderful?

DOUGHERTY: [00:44:12] Kabobs and pulau and.

NIBERT: [00:44:14] Did you all cook yourself or did the country?

DOUGHERTY: [00:44:17] While in training, they had a cook assigned to each X number of you know, we had apartments during training. And there were two of the married couples. We had another couple in one apartment. We had a cook. And he actually saved my life when I went into shock, you know, because he was able to speak English and call the doctor for me.

NIBERT: [00:44:38] The chef? The chef saved your life?

DOUGHERTY: [00:44:42] Azalls his name. And he did. He saved my life.

NIBERT: [00:44:47] That's amazing.

DOUGHERTY: [00:44:49] But, yeah, he cooked for us in training. And then when we went to Taloqan, we cooked for ourselves and made donuts.

NIBERT: [00:44:59] Yeah, exactly. You made the donuts.

DOUGHERTY: [00:45:01] But you could buy naan. The naan boy would come around and have a basket of hot naan on his head. Nine a.m. in the morning and go out and pick up a fresh hot loaf of naan from a boy and a street for two Afghans, which was like a nickel and take it in and drink it with your Nescafe and maybe fry up an egg. And I'd ride my bicycle to the bazaar and buy some meat from the butcher and take it back in a pressure-cooker and leave it closed in the pressure cooker.

NIBERT: [00:45:45] Did you have electricity then?

DOUGHERTY: [00:45:46] No, no. I mean, at night there was a generator that they turned on after, so that's nice. And so we had lights, but you couldn't have a refrigerator. Nobody knew what a refrigerator was and well, they'd heard about it. And in Kabul they might have had, you know, because they had 24 hour electricity, but. It was cooking was more work and preparation of water was a daily probably an hour of work every day, you know. Just making sure you had healthy water and clean food. And different kinds of environments from. Fleas infestation because the floor had a packed mud straw floor underneath a mat of woven mat. You know, those things just love that. And when they when they when the weather got warm and they hatched, you were it was. It was an interesting and then shared outhouse. Had many experiences shared with the Afghan neighbors. Oh, that was we used toilet paper and the Afghans didn't write, but they kept low clouds of dirt. And in the outhouse it was just a hole in the ground. And every time we'd go in the outhouse, first few days that we were there, we took our toilet paper and left it there for sure. And we swept the clouds of dirt into the hole in the ground. And we come back there because the dirt there again.

NIBERT: [00:47:28] And you were like, what do they do with these clouds of dirt?

DOUGHERTY: [00:47:29] We had no clue. And, uh, and so then eventually we got we my wife had them dig a separate outhouse for us. And then she drew a picture of what a toilet looked like. I mean, a wooden box with a lid. And she drew the picture to scale full size. And so I had to take it to the carpenter shops and there was a row of carpenters on the street and I showed him a picture and he said, what's this? So I explained and I did what you're doing. And he took it to the next carpenter.

NIBERT: [00:48:12] And they all got a big giggle out of it probably. They want us to make a wooden throne for them.

DOUGHERTY: [00:48:23] I had a I had a closing lid. And so the lid that came down on top of the other was just like what you have here, right, hinge? And we had we had a chicken we call Chicken Little. It was a little laying hen. And it was great because she'd go in there and it was warm. And every morning when I'd go out there to use the outhouse, there'd be enough pressure so that it was a well planned multipurpose it was a well planned out house with a good lid. That's hysterical. So, I mean, there's there are many, many stories like that that are fun to think about. And they're memories that are warm and smelly.

NIBERT: [00:49:05] Sometimes it's all part of the Peace Corps experience.

DOUGHERTY: [00:49:10] And I take it Afghanistan isn't the only place where you experience such.

NIBERT: [00:49:15] I would think so. But I have to admit that I don't know anything about these dirt clouds. I really don't.

DOUGHERTY: [00:49:21] I don't want to know any more than I know. They seem to want them there. But I never really asked.

NIBERT: [00:49:28] Was it toilet paper? I don't know.

DOUGHERTY: [00:49:31] Actually. Actually what they call the outhouse is hokandos and hok means dust or dirt. Andos is to throw. So it's a place you throw dirt and so that's why the dirt clouds are there. I'm sure

NIBERT: [00:49:49] They threw them.

DOUGHERTY: [00:49:50] But one of my exchange students came and I said, would you like to go get some Haagen-Dazs.

NIBERT: Yeah, exactly. It sounds so close to Haagen-Dazs.

DOUGHERTY: Let's go get some Haagen-Dazs.

NIBERT: It's delicious, honest.

DOUGHERTY: It's the best you ever ate.

NIBERT: [00:50:11] Did they get the humor?

DOUGHERTY: And that's a true story, too.

NIBERT: Did they get the humor, did they get a big kick out of it?

DOUGHERTY: [00:50:13] Once they knew what Haagen-Dazs was.

NIBERT: [00:50:17] That is funny because exactly when you said the name of the latrine, you know, the outhouse, I was thinking the same thing. Ice cream sounds so close to ice cream.

DOUGHERTY: [00:50:27] Hok-andos, to throw the dirt. And so I threw those dirt clods into it and it came out ice cream,

NIBERT: [00:50:37] Magical.

DOUGHERTY: [00:50:38] Rocky road

NIBERT: [00:50:42] For certain. Goodness, that is so funny.

DOUGHERTY: [00:50:47] Yeah.

NIBERT: [00:50:48] So, so what would you say to somebody who was thinking of doing the Peace Corps?

DOUGHERTY: [00:50:53] Do it. Actually be, be sure that one that you're, you know, capable of adapting, uh, and accepting and other cultures, ways of doing things. But beyond that you have to. We go with an attitude of learning how that culture's value system and approach to things might be the appropriate one and not go with predefined ideas that the American solution is the only solution to problems. And the biggest clash we had with Afghans was a sense of time. Yeah, you know, Afghan time is a joke. And with Afghans, you know, we're doing this on Afghan time. And, you know, you come in,

NIBERT: [00:51:59] Does that mean you're going to be about a half an hour behind or more?

DOUGHERTY: [00:52:03] Well, more than a half hour. But there's five hours a day. And so when which prayer are you inviting someone to you? Are you inviting them to the afternoon prayer? And so you come and the party is set in the afternoon. Are you coming? Is an evening prayer. So parties in the evening. And so you just kind of come after the prayer. And if you only have five times a day, it's a big deal. And, you know, we're expecting things to be clock oriented and punctual. And it worked in their culture for planning purposes. And they have good reason. But I mean, that's just a simple example. But respecting the other cultures approach. Ted in founding Solo, the School of Leadership, said that the solutions to Afghanistan's seemingly intractable problems can only be solved by Afghans. And probably most likely good solutions coming from Afghan women. So he recognized that cultural situation where Afghan women were the homemakers, the organizers, the I mean, the

division of duties within a family and the solution to the problem can't come from half of the population to begin with. But it also needs some of those organizational skills and, and caregiving skills and homemaking skills and that to rebuild a country. You know, which was and educate children and all of the values that women bring to the table.

NIBERT: [00:54:06] So now do the women in Afghanistan, do they have power in the home? Would you say?

DOUGHERTY: [00:54:11] I would say and again, in the healthy families, yes. OK, there's misogyny in all cultures and perhaps more so in Afghan and some Afghan families than most cultures, but not all families, certainly. And the Islamic code of being able to have multiple wives is generally restricted to up to four. And there are other guidelines for having multiple wives. And so that can lead to some issues, I'm sure, and in homes where that's the case. But I did not see that many families. I didn't as a teacher. So the teachers generally had a wife and, you know.

NIBERT: [00:55:04] They didn't have multiple wives?

DOUGHERTY: [00:55:05] They generally. Yeah. And I didn't, I don't recall a teacher having multiple wives, actually, or any of the school principals or administrators that I worked with. But the governor of the province or a wealthy landowner or a mullah or so, you know, people of influence and wealth and power might have and that's one of the rules, is you don't you can't have more than one if you can't afford it. So I guess.

NIBERT: [00:55:38] Well, that's interesting. And it should be kind of a rule with children, too.

DOUGHERTY: [00:55:43] Yeah. And another guideline is that, you know, if your brother dies, someone needs to take care of your brother's wife. So things are taking a second wife who's a widow or something, which is a

form of social welfare that ties into the Islamic code, too. So that's another thing is respecting other people's religions?

NIBERT: [00:56:04] Most definitely.

DOUGHERTY: [00:56:05] And recognizing that there's probably values in that religion that you aren't aware of.

NIBERT: [00:56:10] So when you first went there, was that all very much eye opening? Just the

DOUGHERTY: [00:56:17] I was aware of Islamic culture to some extent and teachings. But actually that was one of the reasons I was fascinated when I was offered Afghanistan was that's what I wanted to learn about. I wanted and I wanted to see how other, other religious traditions, you know, affected life and life and culture and family and the strength of the Afghan family and the knowledge of your role in your family was the definition of you and an Afghan cultural sense versus the rugged individual and separate ness that we instill in our individualism here in the U.S. So there was a there's a vast difference, really, in how children are raised. And there's some things that Afghan families have. And our guests, exchange students have learned from their experience with American families. But there are things that we have to learn from, from their shared family responsibilities and respect for people, elders. And, you know, some of the relationships within the family are much stronger in Afghanistan than they are here. And so, I mean, you observe, if you go with the idea and observe something different and value the differences.

NIBERT: [00:57:55] Yeah, embrace them.

DOUGHERTY: [00:57:56] And look and look at where those differences may have strengths that I didn't anticipate. That's where the surprises came in. Some of the things that I didn't expect would be valuable were great, you know, or some of the things that I thought were good and proper,

maybe weren't so good and proper. I mean, at all times. I mean, in all cases, so and so you do a lot of. Cultural adaptation and comparison, and that's one of the things for prospective Peace Corps volunteers, right? Yeah, go into it with, with those ideas in mind. And it can be fun. It could be.

NIBERT: [00:58:39] It's so much fun. Did you experience a lot of the loneliness, though? I mean, I've already asked you that.

DOUGHERTY: [00:58:44] No, because there were a lot of.

NIBERT: [00:58:50] You with your wife, so that probably helped a little bit.

DOUGHERTY: [00:58:53] Yeah, I mean, two of us were there together and we shared, you know, I go shopping and we cook together and we had electricity at night so we could plug in our radio and we could use batteries on a battery operated shortwave, cassette tapes and shortwave BBC, an American

NIBERT: [00:59:16] Voice of America. Yes.

DOUGHERTY: [00:59:18] And listen to tapes that I occasionally get sent, you know. Carole King tapes and things like that, you know that we're the current

NIBERT: [00:59:33] Some reminders of home.

DOUGHERTY: [00:59:33] Yeah, that friends would send things from home that way, or I got a lot of reading done. My wife had been an elementary school bachelors degree, and she took with her an anthology of children's literature and so, you know, I got into some of the children's literature.

NIBERT: [01:00:02] Will you read anything that you can put your hands on?

DOUGHERTY: [01:00:05] Beware the JubJub bird and shun the frumious Bandersnatch. You know, sitting there looking for something to occupy

your mind in a long, dark evening with no lights or. And so you find other ways to entertain yourself. I mean my daughter, who is Peace Corps in 98, the school she worked at had email. They didn't have full time

NIBERT: [01:00:39] They already had email? Wow.

DOUGHERTY: [01:00:41] Well, they didn't have full time internet but she could do email 1998-'99 at the school so we could exchange messages that way. And, you know, to hear from somebody in two weeks was pretty good when I was in Afghanistan. Oh yeah. Know it's usually a month turn around at least. And we went to the post office to pick up mail.

NIBERT: [01:01:07] Exactly. Mail was very exciting when you were a Peace Corps Volunteer.

DOUGHERTY: [01:01:11] And there was no, no international telephone service unless we went to the Peace Corps office or the embassy.

NIBERT: [01:01:19] Which was about a day away.

DOUGHERTY: [01:01:21] Yeah. And even to call Kabul, like in the case of having an emergency kidney stone, you had to go to the telephone telegraph office and the telephone operator had an old pull the plug switchboard and there were only like a dozen phones in town. And so when I picked up, he'd plug them in. But if you wanted to call somebody in Kabul, they had an old rotary dial system which was current here to. Right. And, uh, but the guy would plug it into the Kabul port and turn the crank to generate the electricity and shout into the mouthpiece, Kabul, Kabul. And then he'd get them on the phone and he'd tell them what number you wanted to talk to. And the person answered and they'd put you through to the person like the doctor. The only time we ever used it was called the doctor. So, yeah, that was the that was the high tech start.

NIBERT: [01:02:18] Exactly. And then your daughter was able to send emails.

DOUGHERTY: [01:02:21] And she was able to send email and there what would have been they had telephones.

NIBERT: [01:02:25] She had a cell phone for the Peace Corps?

DOUGHERTY: [01:02:30] No I said telephone.

NIBERT: [01:02:31] Or telephone, got it.

DOUGHERTY: [01:02:35] The family in Kazakhstan had a telephone and wherever she lived. And so we emailed and prearrange of time. And I could call her and that's, you know, so you could, you could have voice conversations at least and quick conversations. And you could arrange for things. And, you know, so in '98, 2000, things had and but Kazakhstan was a different country. Soviet infrastructure in place.

NIBERT: [01:03:10] It's amazing that we were there.

DOUGHERTY: [01:03:15] She taught at a science hospital or a high school in teaching environmental science. And because of that, it was a technology based school. So, you know, I doubt that all the high schools had the Internet in Kazakhstan. And, you know, probably that one, you know, I don't know about a previous volunteer in Paladar. I think it helped set up that particular service at high school had when she got there.

NIBERT: [01:03:45] That's pretty wonderful that your daughter also did Peace Corps. I'm sure you inspired her.

DOUGHERTY: [01:03:50] And my other daughter became a missionary in Africa, so.

NIBERT: [01:03:55] Oh, wow. You continue the international interest. That's great.

DOUGHERTY: [01:04:00] And she's back, they're both back in Indiana now. So they don't have to travel all the time. They've got kids and they've got grandkids now. Yeah. Life is good.

NIBERT: [01:04:09] Exactly. And you were even the first full circle where you go back to Afghanistan to help them out. But you went back in 2004. Have you been back since?

DOUGHERTY: No.

NIBERT: But you've been helping still nonetheless.

DOUGHERTY: [01:04:23] Yeah, we every I go to school board meetings at least twice a year and we have conference calls. And I for a lot of years, I helped with technology. I was I did university technology until I retired four years ago. And so I was supported distance ed and the techniques used in our universities for distance and I had access to world class technology and internet and was able to help transfer some of that, you know, help them get set up with some computer Internet and things like Skype and a project called the Afghan Women's Writing Project. We helped set up writing workshops that American women writers worked with the girls on writing in English and developed their poems and essays into a publishable English story or poem. And then they've got a website and an anthology has been published twice their work. So and I did all I did was assist somebody else who had an idea to get a writer's workshop and write. I assisted Ted, who had an idea to help these kids move their education process along and move on to other things. And a lot of these kids who are doctors and lawyers and University professors and Fulbright scholars and one of our kids, 2005-'06 from that, I mean, ombuda Valley that lived with us in 2005 as a 16 year old is going to Ohio University in Athens, Ohio, Fulbright Smith International Relations. And he worked for United Nations Environmental Protection after he graduated from American University in Kabul. I mean, you know, his English skills are probably better than mine. So anyway, it's we it's the if you look at things while you're a

volunteer, that's one thing, right? Looking at the project in Afghanistan, I thought I accomplishing anything of lasting value. Yeah. You know, is anything that I'm doing here going to make an impact, make an impact or last. Now, I don't know that I

NIBERT: [01:07:06] I would say yes, it did.

DOUGHERTY: [01:07:08] Well it lasted. I don't know that it made a difference in avoiding Soviet invasion, 40 years of war. Many of the Children that I taught are dead or. But I doubt that I made enemies right. So I didn't contribute to that. And I and I did learn how the through the values of this culture and through the relationships that I learned to build with people in the culture that. They're capable of making a difference. Yes, and enabling them to make the difference is what it should be about.

NIBERT: [01:07:59] Yes, being the catalyst to allow the.

DOUGHERTY: [01:08:00] It's not about what I do, but it's about what we what we get from the people that we're meeting and working with. And I think volunteers should be encouraged to go with that idea in mind. That's where that's where the lasting value comes.

NIBERT: [01:08:17] We're just a small piece of the puzzle. You know, we're just we should just be a catalyst to allow the country to do what they need to.

DOUGHERTY: [01:08:23] Yeah. And I saw it happen with lots of volunteers. I mean, the programs had lots of volunteers were involved in, although I must say that the ladies that went out on horseback to do smallpox vaccinations personally put their lives on the line, personally made a world of difference. You know, and

NIBERT: [01:08:47] Getting rid of, to eradicate. Yeah, that's wonderful.

DOUGHERTY: [01:08:50] And you were able to do it without military accompaniment. They had had an Afghan meal that went along with, you know, they had medical supplies and they went into villages and knocked on doors and in areas that we now call Taliban country. And because they were women, they were allowed to open the doors. The women, the women could talk to God.

NIBERT: [01:09:15] Well, that's really interesting.

DOUGHERTY: [01:09:18] And the reason why smallpox was so long and being eliminated there and now Polio is not gone yet is the medical people could go into a village and say, we have to do this to eliminate this terrible disease. And, you know, somebody with this terrible disease and they say, OK, vaccinate me. Actually, my son, maybe even vaccinate their younger daughters. But the older daughters and wives know that this is enough. You don't need to. And the ones in the in the areas where the women were the bag over their head, the burka, the chadaree. But if it was a woman then and they could set it up according to their cultural system, that it was a woman looking at their wife, then it worked. And so for smallpox to work. But the dangers of the one of my the principal's daughters daughter became a nurse and she went as an interpreter for U.S. military military's marrying the female engagement teams of the Marines. She was not only an interpreter, but she was with female Marines who went door to door in Helmand Province to engage women because they knew and Peace Corps experience had taught that the only way you could get a an opening friendly relationship that would allow the women to communicate with an American was to have a woman do the communication. So and. So we're looking at ways that we can help train midwives and nurses and people in the region where the Taliban are most in control still, and it's part of that misogynistic Zan-Zar and Zameen problem. Uh, so it's, uh, remember, that's my women, my gold, and my land. Stay off my land, don't touch my gold or my woman. So it sounds kind of like Appalachia.

NIBERT: [01:11:46] A little bit. Or anywhere almost.

DOUGHERTY: [01:11:51] So anyway, So I'm also very proud of the fact that some of these Afghan refugees that have come to the United States are become resources for us in a war.

NIBERT: [01:12:04] Right.

DOUGHERTY: [01:12:05] And their encounters with Peace Corps volunteers and so forth. One of our board members with Friends of Afghanistan is, uh, is an Afghan American born in the United States. His father came to United States, had been taught by Peace Corps volunteers, and he has become Baktash is his name and he's on Friends of Afghanistan. He has become the first Afghan American Peace Corps volunteer.

NIBERT: [01:12:33] Yay!

DOUGHERTY: [01:12:34] You know, and he was Peace Corps. And then after he finished Peace Corps, he was a translator for U.S. military. And now he's doing documentaries about Afghanistan, educating Americans about the culture.

NIBERT: [01:12:47] And so it's full circle.

DOUGHERTY: [01:12:52] So through friends and through connections and Peace Corps NPCA groups, groups like local regional groups where you're meeting with Peace Corps volunteers from other countries or with volunteers from the country you served in. And there's an affinity between volunteers. It's the, you know, the shared outhouse experience, I suppose, but it is. And then country service groups, there's another level of shared sharing and storytelling.

NIBERT: [01:13:32] Exactly. We're just trying to make peace throughout the world.

DOUGHERTY: [01:13:37] So. Yeah, well it's going to take a while.

NIBERT: [01:13:40] It's ah well the Peace Corps has been at it for over 50 years. Yeah. Yeah. Well thank you so much for sharing your story and your full circle story of Afghanistan.

DOUGHERTY: It was fun.

NIBERT: It was lovely to hear. Thank you.

DOUGHERTY: Yeah. Thanks.

[END OF INTERVIEW]