

Joe Zingsheim Oral History Interview
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Biographical Note

Joe Zingsheim served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Honduras from 1965 to 1967 on a rural community development project.

Access

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Oral History Interview

with

Joe Zingsheim

October 13, 2008
Glendale, Wisconsin

By Paul Kinsley

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

KINSLEY: [00:00:04] Today is October 13th, 2008. This is Paul Kinsley, and I'm interviewing Joe Zingsheim, who was a Peace Corps volunteer in Honduras from January '65 to January '67 as a rural community development worker. Okay, Joe.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:00:33] Right now I'm 66 years old. I live in Port Washington, Wisconsin. I've lived there since 1976. I am retired and worked for state government for 29 years. Currently, I do volunteer work at River Edge Nature Center one day a week and also Harrington Beach State Park. Do a lot of reading. I do a lot of vegetable and flower gardening.

KINSLEY: [00:01:05] Okay. And now can you kind of think back to the year before you joined the Peace Corps and tell us about life then?

ZINGSHEIM: [00:01:12] That was 1963. I was a junior at St. Norbert College in Wisconsin, and I had always thought about this kind of work. I

remember when I was a young, young boy reading about Dr. Schweitzer in National Geographic magazine, and I had always wanted to do something like that. Life was a lot simpler back then. We used to hitchhike home from college. We used to hitchhike from home to college. Today, you don't see any more hitchhikers on the road at all. It was pre-Vietnam, my, November of my junior year 1963 is when they assassinated John Kennedy, and I can still remember exactly where I was when I heard that it had happened. And I was watching TV on Sunday morning when they shot Lee Harvey Oswald live on TV. So it was very interesting times.

KINSLEY: [00:02:23] Okay. Let's see. I guess the, you know, the most. You kind of mentioned this, but why did you join the Peace Corps?

ZINGSHEIM: [00:02:34] I just wanted to see the world and help humanity.

KINSLEY: [00:02:40] Okay. How did you hear about it and what made you decide to apply?

ZINGSHEIM: [00:02:44] Well, I can't remember the first time I heard about it. I remember when it was initiated in I believe March of 1961, because Henry Reuss, who was from the Milwaukee area in the House of Reps, was one of the men behind it. Uh, so it was always kind of in the news and I knew it was there and I probably saw something on campus because they did give an exam at St. Norbert College sometime my junior year, I believe. It was a written exam. I don't know how long it lasted, maybe an hour or two. And that was the first step of seeing if I was going to make it as a volunteer.

KINSLEY: [00:03:29] Okay. Did you have any specific country or project in mind?

ZINGSHEIM: [00:03:33] Not really, no. I had, uh, a year of French my junior year in college, so I thought they would send me somewhere where I could use my French. But no, they decided to send me somewhere where I'd have to use Spanish, which I had never had before.

KINSLEY: [00:03:52] Sounds typical. What were your friends' and family's reaction when you were accepted? You know, was there any hesitation or reservations either on your part or their part?

ZINGSHEIM: [00:04:03] None that I can remember. I think my dad was always, or something like that, he was always for looking at the rest of the world. And I don't remember anything from anybody saying that I really shouldn't do this.

KINSLEY: [00:04:19] Okay. What project were you invited to join?

ZINGSHEIM: [00:04:23] I was invited to go into training for the rural community development for the Dominican Republic. It was training group number 13, which would assemble the last week of January of 1965 in Philadelphia for a week of physical exams and meetings. And then we would fly to the training center in Puerto Rico, which was called Camp Crozier. It was named after one of the first volunteers that died while in service. I think it was, oh boy, was he in Colombia or? I don't remember where he had served.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:05:12] So we arrived there the first week of February of 1965. It was up in the mountains south of Arecibo, and we were there for three and a half months of training, which would end approximately in the middle of May of 1965. We did various things there but the first three weeks we had intensive Outward Bound training, which I guess they don't do anymore. We did drown proofing. We did work with ropes on mountainsides. We did hiking. We did sleeping out in the rainforests at night. Various things like that, along with a lot of language training those first three weeks. And after the first three weeks, we had lots more language and then a lot of different kind of training as far as things that we might use once we were volunteers.

KINSLEY: [00:06:17] Just going back a little. How did you prepare yourself and others for dislocation, you know, knowing that you're going to be gone for two years? Did you do much along those lines?

ZINGSHEIM: [00:06:30] When we, uh, before we met in Philadelphia the last week of January, they had sent us information about what to do as far as if you had life insurances and things like that. But being young and single, there wasn't a lot that I really had to do. All I had to do was get enough living items together to live for three months. They sent a list as to what to bring, if you had any kinds of medicines that you had to have, which I didn't have to worry about. So as far as I can remember, it was a fairly simple process. Not a lot of things to get ready.

KINSLEY: [00:07:18] Okay. During training, what was your reaction to other trainees, do you recall that or? And also, if you want to talk about the selection process, surprises, disappointments.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:07:31] Yeah, the selection process was that we knew approximately halfway through that we would have a deselection, which I guess they don't have anymore. Uh, that you were always being evaluated and halfway through that they may decide that you weren't the one they were looking for and you would get sent home, and the same thing would happen at the end of training. So right before that first deselection, you were always very, very worried as to whether or not you would make the grade. And also at the very end also. I can't remember how many were deselected halfway through. I think we started out with about 50 volunteers. We might have lost five or six halfway through and then lost another five or six at the very end.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:08:20] But as far as the 50 individuals, they were from all over the U.S., mainly young, between 22 and 25. We did have a married husband and wife that were 65 from California. I'm 67 now. And boy, when we met them, 65, we thought they were really old people. We also had, we actually had three married couples. Of those 50 volunteers, they were from all over the U.S. Gosh, the one striking thing was there were very few Southerners. In fact, I think there are only one or two. And they, uh, the trainers were mentioning that at that time they got very few Southerners signing up to be volunteers.

KINSLEY: [00:09:19] That's interesting.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:09:19] Yes.

KINSLEY: [00:09:21] Did you feel that the training prepared you and was it useful to your Peace Corps service?

ZINGSHEIM: [00:09:26] I think it was. Uh, very stressful not knowing, you know, how they were looking at you and what they were really looking for.

KINSLEY: [00:09:33] Yeah, it was a lot more psychological.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:09:35] It was a lot of psychological stuff, yeah. Mind games, seeing how you worked with one another. We didn't know that, of course, but it was interesting. But I think by and large, the, even the physical training was psychological more than anything else. They wanted to see how you reacted to working on rock faces with ropes and, you know, swimming with your legs tied up and things like that.

KINSLEY: [00:10:07] Yeah, we had a heavy psychological component and I guess the ones that were suspect, they'd actually bring in a psychiatrist to talk to them.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:10:18] Yeah.

KINSLEY: [00:10:19] So it was, it's not like that now, I guess. Uh, talk about your initial entry into and reaction to the country.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:10:29] Okay, I was actually trained to go to the Dominican Republic and they had elections scheduled for mid-April of 1965. Because of what had happened in Cuba in 1959 with Fidel, Lyndon Johnson was real skittish about anything left wing happening anywhere near the USA. So right before the elections in April, they had some leftist rumblings and uprisings and he sent in the U.S. Marine Corps and the U.S. Army. This was early to mid-April, and we didn't know what was going to happen with that group. We didn't know if we were going to get shipped home or get sent there or what happened.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:11:16] So the last day of training, right before they were going to have graduation, they met with me and about five or six others and said, we don't think we have slots for you in the D.R. We're going to send you home and we'll let you know where we can find a slot for you. So the night of graduation, I was kind of depressed, not knowing where I was going to go. And I think they ended up sending between 30 and 34 of us actually to the D.R. And they sent six of us home and says, we'll call you when we can find a slot for you. So I flew home to Milwaukee. I was home for approximately a week, week and a half. Somebody from the main office in D.C. called and said, how about Honduras? Fine. When do I go? I didn't know a darn thing at all about Honduras, except the language.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:12:12] So I threw some long underwear into my locker that was going to ship to Honduras and shipped that off and flew to Miami and met Donna Mattingly, who was a nurse, who was also sent to Honduras from our group. We met up in Miami and we looked at each other and said, boy, if it weren't for our lockers getting shipped ahead, we kind of felt like flying back home because we were so lonely. Because we didn't know a darn thing about Honduras and we were the only ones going.

KINSLEY: [00:12:51] There are just five or six from your group or just?

ZINGSHEIM: [00:12:55] Just me and her went to Honduras. Two went to Belize. And I can't remember where the other two might have gone. Maybe there were only four of us. I can't remember. But that's how it ended up. We went down.

KINSLEY: [00:13:12] So there were only two of you going to.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:13:13] Yeah.

KINSLEY: [00:13:15] Wow. Can you describe the project, the Peace Corps staff, and the impression of the local people? Physical environment?

ZINGSHEIM: [00:13:24] When I first arrived, since I didn't know anything about Honduras, they sent me and Donna on flying around the country for a week. We got a grand tour of Honduras. And on the way home from the northern area of Honduras, we drove south on the national highway to Tegucigalpa. And one morning we stopped for breakfast and I didn't feel like eating and I was half asleep out in the bus, you know, waiting. And I said, boy, this is a nice little village. And it happened to be that's where I ended up being stationed. You know, coincidence.

KINSLEY: [00:14:07] Just by coincidence?

ZINGSHEIM: [00:14:09] By coincidence, yeah. It had a nice. They really didn't, uh, have a set project for me. So I went and visited a volunteer that was up. I ended up in Taulabé which was on the main road between Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula. And they sent me to, uh, live with a volunteer called Jim Mack from New York, who was up the road about a half hour north of there. And he knew a little bit about Taulabé. So him and I kind of went down there together, looked around, met some of the local residents, and then eventually I moved there on my own. I was kind of sent in without any specific project. In those days, rural community development meant going into a small village or situation and trying to find out what the residents wanted to do and then move on from there.

KINSLEY: [00:15:22] Yeah, it sounds like what we.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:15:23] Yeah.

KINSLEY: [00:15:24] We didn't really have any set.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:15:26] Yeah.

KINSLEY: [00:15:28] Can you describe the living conditions, a typical day, and relations with the people of the country?

ZINGSHEIM: [00:15:35] Yeah. I eventually found a small house, one large room to rent. It was just one large adobe room. And I rented that. I ended up working with a United Nations seed and fertilizer project. Jim Mack had been working with that so. And I had grown up on a small farm north of Milwaukee, so I knew a little bit about raising things.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:16:11] So we would go out and work with small subsistence farmers we had, mainly raising corn. It was a new variety of corn from the Rockefeller Farm in Mexico. They had developed this, I believe his name was Norman Borlaug, who won the Nobel for his work there in the Green Revolution in the 1960s, developing new strains of wheat, rice, corn, and I don't know if it was sorghum. So we were using that strain with fertilizers and then we would go out and set up a demonstration area which measured 10 yards by 30 yards. And we used different seeds and different fertilizer blends in that area to show the farmers how this might work.

KINSLEY: [00:17:12] Okay. What about some individuals that you encountered? You know, stories about, you know, individuals that you remember especially? Either that or other PCVs or the staff.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:17:29] I was working mainly with the school teachers also in Taulabé. They were very progressive. Taulabé didn't have any safe water, didn't have electricity. Many of them that worked there were from other cities and, uh, they were the easiest ones to work with. And then I also worked with a lot of the subsistence farmers in the surrounding mountains. Taulabé was in a small valley, about 600 meters. The mountains around it went up to anywhere from 3 to 5,000 feet. And a lot of the subsistence farmers were farming on hillsides that no one else wanted. Many of them had moved in from southern Honduras. They were Lenca Indians. Very short, very hardy, very hard working.

KINSLEY: [00:18:41] What was the role of language? And if you want to talk about your work time versus your leisure time, maybe describing how life and work changed over the months?

ZINGSHEIM: [00:18:53] It revolved around the rainy season a little bit, working with seeds and fertilizer. They usually planted corn twice a year, once in like May to early June, and that would be harvested in November. Before that harvest came in, they would plant in between those rows, like in October, and that would harvest in like March. So the area that I was in had a very short dry season. It was only mid to late February through April, so you could get a lot of production out of the same land. But the thing was, once you did your seeding and got your seeds out, then I would try and shift over to working with individuals to try and plant vegetable gardens.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:19:49] Because the interesting thing is when I grew up in Grafton, which is about 25 miles north of Milwaukee, it was mainly still a small rural city. Everybody had vegetable gardens, all the farmers did. So when I get to Honduras, hardly anybody had vegetable gardens. It was interesting, and I couldn't figure out why, because it was, hey, you could raise them virtually all year round. So I tried to get them to get vegetable gardens going so they would have a more diversified diet. To do that, I'd had to get seeds from the larger cities, usually up in San Pedro Sula, which was about a two and a half, three hour bus ride. I would head up there maybe once a month and get seeds that I would sell to the local farmers for face value.

KINSLEY: [00:20:47] Were they kind of skeptical about starting, you know, having not done it before? Did you have to really work to gain their trust and to think, to make them feel that it's actually worthwhile?

ZINGSHEIM: [00:20:59] I had to work with them to gain trust initially as a foreigner from the U.S. because first of all, they didn't know if I was a CIA agent. And what had happened with Fidel, you know, in 1959 and the U.S. invasion in 1961. And no one else had helped those individuals. The idea of volunteer service in Honduras for Hondurans was virtually nonexistent. No one helped them, no one had ever helped them. They'd only helped to rob them. And you had to overcome this resistance as to, you know, who is this guy? What is he trying to do here? And it was initially very, very hard.

KINSLEY: [00:21:54] And so you lived by yourself then?

ZINGSHEIM: [00:21:57] I lived alone. I was able to eat my meals at a local restaurant because we were on the main highway, which was about halfway between Tegucigalpa and San Pedro. So it was kind of an area where the busses stopped for meals. So luckily I didn't have to fix my own food.

KINSLEY: [00:22:19] Well, that's a great.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:22:20] It really was. I wouldn't have known what to do if I had to pick my own meals.

KINSLEY: [00:22:26] How about relationships with the women there? Did you have any or?

ZINGSHEIM: [00:22:30] No, none at all. I, you know, got along with the young ladies and certainly a lot of them were very attractive. But I was skeptical about making any romantic relationships because I didn't really know if they were really interested in me or they were interested in me as a way to get the United States. Have to be real honest about that.

KINSLEY: [00:22:56] Yeah.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:22:56] And that was kind of unfortunate that I felt that way, but that's just the way it was.

KINSLEY: [00:23:03] Yeah. Okay. Talking about like the end of your first year, what were some of the notable events? And looking back after a year? Joys and woes, unexpected events, relationships.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:23:15] I actually arrived on site in June of '65, and one big thing that I loved the most that first year was Christmas of '65. It's really unique in Latin nations how they celebrate Christmas. It was really neat. Everybody celebrated all night long. Every house was open and you just saw friends. You went in, you had something to eat. You had a drink. That was really, really special for me that very first year.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:23:55] Uh, the first six months or so was really getting used to the heat and humidity. It was very, very hot there. Even though I was up 600 meters, it was hot during the day. At nights it was really nice. It was about 70, 75 at night. Rained a lot. But once I got used to the heat, that took me until about November, December, before I really got used to that.

KINSLEY: [00:24:23] Okay. Did you have any other health problems or what about vacation or travel?

ZINGSHEIM: [00:24:30] Vacation, we had 30 days a year and I decided I wanted to see Honduras. And since I didn't have any American friends that I went down there with, I kind of had to look around myself. I used my 30 days to just travel around Honduras. One of the main, one of the main areas I went to that first year was called the Bay Islands, which now is a mecca for U.S. tourists and scuba diving. Back then it was just local people. And we did have an older woman up there who was a volunteer on one of the islands. I had heard about her, I didn't know her, but I went up and saw her. And that was an interesting area because it was a mix of Black, white, and Indians, and they had a language that was a mixture of everything. And they told stories of Nazi submarines surfacing there in the Second World War for fresh fruits and vegetables, which I thought was very, very interesting. This was 1965.

KINSLEY: [00:25:44] Wow. That's amazing. Let's see. So you traveled based, or strictly in Honduras.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:25:54] Strictly in Honduras, yes.

KINSLEY: [00:25:56] What about, did you get together with other volunteers either on a, you know, for conferences or just informally or?

ZINGSHEIM: [00:26:04] We had conferences in Tegucigalpa. We also had a training in co-ops that we got together as a large group. We had some training at the Pan American School for Agriculture in Zamorano, which was

founded through the efforts of United Fruit Company back in the 19, late thirties or 1940s. A wonderful site. I got to know some of the local volunteers, but not really well because I'd only see them at these meetings which weren't held that often. So basically I was kind of there alone for, yeah.

KINSLEY: [00:26:52] That's kind of the opposite of mine. We started out with 100 in our trainee group and when we, they cut us back at, they deselected after one month and we lost 50 percent. So only 50 went, but there were, you know. Yeah, that's unusual.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:27:12] Yeah, it was kind of a.

KINSLEY: [00:27:13] To not have a group, you know.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:27:14] Kind of a lonely thing while it was happening. I didn't really have anybody to visit.

KINSLEY: [00:27:21] Yeah. Did you like go to the big cities every now and then?

ZINGSHEIM: [00:27:25] Yeah. I would go into Teguc once every 4 to 6 weeks or so just to show up at the office we had there. And I went up to San Pedro Sula every three or four weeks. Uh, that was about it. And I can still remember one time I came back from Tegucigalpa and I forget what month it was. It was after I was there maybe a year, a little over a year, and we're on the mountain road. And I could see my small village down in the valley, and I said to myself, I'm home again. I really felt at home, you know, from then on.

KINSLEY: [00:28:14] Okay, now we're kind of winding down to the end of the tour. If there's anything that you want to talk about or express that you haven't, you can do that. But also kind of, uh, what was your sense of achievement versus failure? Pluses and minuses, regrets, satisfactions, plans for the future.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:28:39] It was hard to see how much success you were having with the new varieties of seeds we were using because farming is a long-

term project. It would have been nice if I could have stayed there five years, but you could see some success there. But you wondered what would happen after I left. The interesting thing, the seeds that we were using weren't hybrids, so they were open pollinated that, you know, they could use every year. Uh, I had a sense of frustration because you don't see a lot of success. And when you're that young, you want to see immediate success. And looking at it now, having went back there recently and seeing some young volunteers there now, there's other ways to measure success than what I had thought when I left in 1967. And I wish I would have had that maturity then that I have now. But that's one of the faults of being young.

KINSLEY: [00:29:50] Yeah. I know one guy in our group, he was deselected because he was too ambitious and they felt if he got over to Turkey and tried to do all this stuff and couldn't do it, and it's probably true because you really have to do. I think myself, I just kind of realized I was going to learn more than I gave. And once I did that, it cleared things up.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:30:15] One of the slogans that we learned was the old slogan of, don't just stand there, do something. We had that in reverse and it said, don't just do something, stand there. And observe what's going on and learn how things are operating in your village and who the headman is and how things operate. But that's hard to do when you're there.

KINSLEY: [00:30:48] Yeah, yeah, it sure is, you want to. I think like with me, you know, they knew that if they did some of the stuff we told them, they could have probably had quite twice the yield of the crops, but they were happy with what they had.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:31:06] True, true.

KINSLEY: [00:31:06] And you know, why, why mess with that? Okay. Now I want you to kind of think about evaluating your service in light of the three goals of the Peace Corps. First one is to provide technical assistance where requested. So elaborate on that.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:31:27] That I would give myself maybe a B-minus because of that resistance to a foreigner coming in. And who the heck are you and you're only, actually, I was only in site a. [tape break]

KINSLEY: [00:31:44] Technical assistance.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:31:45] Yeah. So I would say that's a B-minus because of the only having one year, nine months on site, and raising crops is a long term project.

KINSLEY: [00:32:01] Okay, and the second goal is to provide better understanding of the U.S. How do you feel you?

ZINGSHEIM: [00:32:06] I think I did a lot there because at night we would sit around. We didn't have TV, we didn't have electric. So you'd sit around in somebody's home and, you know, talk about international affairs, what was happening in the U.S. We were landing in Vietnam then, 1965, '66. Everyone that was able to save up had a radio, battery operated, and they all had shortwave on them. So they were listening to Radio Moscow, Radio Havana, Radio Netherlands, the BBC, the Voice of America. And the average citizen there, even though he might not know how to read and write, was very up on world affairs and knew what was happening. It was a shame to come home and see how American citizens were so ill informed about what was going on in the world. So I think that was very successful.

KINSLEY: [00:32:58] Okay, and the third goal is to promote better understanding of other peoples by Americans.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:33:05] Ever since I've come home, I've tried to let everybody know, friends, neighbors, family, about what the rest of the world was like, and Honduras. After I returned home in 1967, I went back to Honduras for three months in 1968 to the same site. Went again in 1970, 1973, 1976, and then had a hiatus until February of this year, 2008, and went to see my old village again. And interestingly enough, the Catholic church of West Bend, which is about 20 miles from where I lived, is

linked up with the Catholic church in Taulabé, where I had lived. And I'm associated with that group now. And we this year have 45 young men and women in Taulabé, Honduras, in scholarships to go to high school.

KINSLEY: [00:34:14] That's good. Of course, yeah, you kind of alluded to this, but have you continued any kind of involvement with your country of service and contact with the people?

ZINGSHEIM: [00:34:25] Yes.

KINSLEY: [00:34:26] It sounds like you did early and then you came back.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:34:27] Yes, and it's still on ongoing. Hopefully I'll go back there this next winter or next summer. In fact, six individuals from Taulabé were up here middle of last month and a husband and wife stayed with us for six days. And I had known her in 1966. I knew him a little bit in 1967, just before I left. So we have a lot of things in, in common.

KINSLEY: [00:35:07] Okay, well, and have you had any continuing Peace Corps involvement since those days?

ZINGSHEIM: [00:35:13] I'm a member of the group in Milwaukee. I'm not super active, but I make some of the meetings and some of the early events and know some of the returned volunteers here in the Milwaukee area. I think we have maybe about 30, 40 real active members. We should have more because there's a lot more returned volunteers in Milwaukee. But that's just the way life is, I guess.

KINSLEY: [00:35:45] Okay. And I guess you've, have you been involved in other third goal activities since you've been back, you know?

ZINGSHEIM: [00:35:58] Yes. I have went to various high schools and civic groups to show them photographs of Honduras and the work that we did there.

KINSLEY: [00:36:11] Okay. What do you feel your, uh, the effect on you of your Peace Corps service has been, either immediate at the time or in career plans or long term?

ZINGSHEIM: [00:36:27] It was a long-term thing. I knew right then while I was living there that I, I liked the Latin way of life. And I think that it's made me slow down in my life here a little bit. That made me live a lot simpler here. It made me save a lot of money and live simply. And for that, I was able to retire early. My wife is from Nicaragua, which is right next to, right south of Honduras. So we have a lot of the same interests as far as the way of life and listening to Latin music and eating Latin foods here too.

KINSLEY: [00:37:11] And where did you meet her?

ZINGSHEIM: [00:37:13] I met my wife in Milwaukee. She had, uh, had moved to the U.S. in July of 1960, so she was here even before I went to Honduras.

KINSLEY: [00:37:30] Okay, I think that's pretty much it unless there's anything else you want, you know, you want to expound on or any little phrases or tips or words of advice.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:37:43] Any words of advice to new volunteers, I would say keep a diary or some kind of a log. I did, but it wasn't elaborate enough. I look at it now and I kind of forgot a lot of things. I wish I was a little more detailed as far as writing things down so I could remember them 40 years later. So anybody that's doing it now, write down a lot of information, although sometimes it's not complimentary toward some of the citizens you're working with. So you want to make sure that you don't let anybody see it.

KINSLEY: [00:38:27] Yeah.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:38:29] Also, I would say don't be super goal oriented when you first get there. Make a lot of friends. Find out how things operate in your site. After you're there a while, things will move along, but more slowly than here in the U.S. because here we're used to hopefully getting

results quickly. There you're working against centuries and centuries of inertia, and that's just the way it is. And there's nothing wrong with that.

KINSLEY: [00:39:06] Yeah, I think that's true what you said about having a diary. I didn't have a diary, but I did write letters regularly and my parents kept those letters so.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:39:17] Oh, yeah.

KINSLEY: [00:39:18] And that's one of my projects hopefully for the future, to get them all together, because I think it would be an interesting.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:39:25] One thing I've seen now, I've seen current volunteers having blogs on the internet. You've got to be very careful what you say on those blogs. I've looked at some of them and some things that they are saying, you know, again, isn't very complimentary toward the people they're living and working with. And you've got to be very careful about that.

KINSLEY: [00:39:48] And you might not even realize it. I think a lot of people don't realize the effect that it has.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:39:54] No, you have to be real careful what you're saying in these blogs today. So I would say be very, very neutral if you're going to do that and watch, you know, what you open yourself up to there.

KINSLEY: [00:40:08] Yeah.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:40:09] It could be bad.

KINSLEY: [00:40:11] Okay. Anything else or is that pretty much it?

ZINGSHEIM: [00:40:15] Can't think of anything else right now. This has been a lot of fun though.

KINSLEY: [00:40:17] I've really enjoyed this and get to know your experience a little bit better. And yeah, you're a real loner.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:40:25] Yeah.

KINSLEY: [00:40:26] Yeah. That must have been tough, I mean.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:40:28] It was.

KINSLEY: [00:40:28] I guess I can, I mean, you could have possibly gone with, well, there were what, 30 that did go to the Dominican Republic? So you could have been one of those.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:40:38] But I wasn't, you know.

KINSLEY: [00:40:41] For any reason you think?

ZINGSHEIM: [00:40:43] No, you don't know, they, who knows why they thought I wouldn't fit in with the situation in the D.R. because of the U.S. invasion. God only knows. They never really gave you a good answer on that. I have no idea.

KINSLEY: [00:41:00] Getting back to the, did, uh, like the FBI talk to friends and relatives?

ZINGSHEIM: [00:41:07] Oh, yeah. Before I was selected, my neighbors told me that there was an agent that came around from the FBI asking what kind of guy I was, etcetera, etcetera. I guess they don't do that now.

KINSLEY: [00:41:21] I don't think they do.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:41:22] But all the neighbors, you know, let us know that was an FBI agent in the neighborhood asking about me.

KINSLEY: [00:41:28] Yeah.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:41:29] Yeah.

KINSLEY: [00:41:29] Yeah, they, like they did the same with me and, you know, like they interviewed my doctor and stuff like that. I don't know if people were more free with the information then or what. We both made it, so I guess you couldn't have been too bad. Okay. Well, thanks a lot, Joe, I appreciate it.

ZINGSHEIM: [00:41:50] Thank you. It's been a lot of fun.

[END OF INTERVIEW]