

Don M. Boileau Oral History Interview
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Administrative Information

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Biographical Note

Don M. Boileau served as a Peace Corps volunteer in South Korea from January 1968 to November 1969 as an English teacher.

Access

Open.

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Oral History Interview

with

Don M. Boileau

January 7, 2019
Reston, Virginia

By Evelyn Ganzglass

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

GANZGLASS: [00:00:02] This is Evelyn Ganzglass. I am interviewing, uh, I was a Peace Corps volunteer in Somalia from 1966 to 1968. Today is January 7th, 2019, and I am interviewing Don Bolger.

BOILEAU: [00:00:21] Boileau.

GANZGLASS: [00:00:22] Boileau, who was a Peace Corps volunteer in South Korea from 1968 to 1969, and he was an English instructor at the Central Officials Training Institute. Don, why did you join the Peace Corps?

BOILEAU: [00:00:41] To avoid the draft. Typical of, the majority of males in my training group were trying to avoid the draft because of the Vietnam War. I was advised by the people in my local draft board that the chair told my mother that I would be taken very soon and I was teaching at Central Washington at the time. And I was the debate coach and that had just happened that two weeks later, I'd be taking

the debate team to San Francisco State for a debate tournament. And so I said, well, I'd like to meet with the person at the head of the draft board, which was available at the beginning of the war.

BOILEAU: [00:01:33] And so I met with them and I said, well, what I would really like to do is I do not want to go into the war, but I would like to be a debate coach. And I knew that when I was a freshman at Stanford University, that this, one of the guys who was a senior went into the military and became the debate coach at West Point because the academies at that time had very strong debate programs.

GANZGLASS: [00:01:59] Hmm.

BOILEAU: [00:01:59] So I asked him if I could go to officers candidate school and develop, and he said that would be great. And I said, well, what about Peace Corps? I had applied for Peace Corps earlier when I was engaged. I was working on my master's degree and Vicky and I thought we would go into Peace Corps right after we got married. So we both applied and unfortunately we broke up before we got married, six weeks before, not advised. And, uh, and we finally heard from Peace Corps a week after we would have been married, that they were, where would we like to go? And I was really upset at Peace Corps at the time. So I sent them my response written on toilet paper with a marker. And I thought, oh my gosh, if they pull that out of the file, I'll never get in.

GANZGLASS: [00:02:49] Well, it wasn't their fault that you got, uh, unengaged.

BOILEAU: [00:02:53] Yeah, well, they, but the other part was they just didn't say anything to us until it was really late. If we had got married, we wouldn't have known. So we'd already made plans to do something else. But anyway, that's how I had taught at Portland State and taken, she got a job in Portland also. But it was an interesting phenomenon. So I applied and I got accepted into Peace Corps and that's why I joined. And when I got to training in Bisbee, Arizona, talking with the other guys who were trying to also avoid the draft. So I didn't feel too bad about that.

BOILEAU: [00:03:35] The other, the other aspect of why Peace Corps that I think is important is when I was a senior in college, Kennedy was assassinated and approximately 10 percent of my graduating class went into Peace Corps eventually over the next ten years. It was a huge amount. There were several people in Korea that were Peace Corps volunteers. In fact, the leader of my dorm, when I was a senior, I was a dorm counselor. And the guy that organized that visited South Korea because there were so many Peace Corps volunteers from Stanford in Korea. And but for us as seniors, that, that afternoon after he was assassinated with the university closed and the bells rang steadily all afternoon.

BOILEAU: [00:04:36] And I remember walking across campus to give a paper to a professor. He said it was due 5:00 Friday. And I got to his office and he said, as he took my paper, you think that that's important now? And, um, as a dorm counselor, I had to not only myself to rectify this assassination, but there was just, people forget that it was Kennedy's Peace Corps, in our view, and he was assassinated. And therefore, we should do something to honor him. And I know from my friends, and I have a good friend who was in Liberia in Peace Corps, that that was a really strong feeling.

GANZGLASS: [00:05:23] So, so what is your, your background? Where did you grow up?

BOILEAU: [00:05:27] I grew up on the Oregon coast. A lot of Oregonians also, on a per 100,000 or per million ratio, a lot of Oregonians went into at that time into the Peace Corps. I grew up on the Oregon coast in a logging community, and that's relevant to later on probably. And that it just was that that feeling about Asia, which made South Korea an acceptable sort of thing for me.

GANZGLASS: [00:06:03] And what did your family think about you going into the Peace Corps?

BOILEAU: [00:06:08] Oh, they were ecstatic. My mom and dad and my sister. And we actually had, before I went in, I was originally assigned to Tonga, and I really wanted to go to Tonga because they wanted to start a high school curriculum. And I had taught two years in college, one at Central Washington, where I was did the course, the methods course, for people who were going to teach high school speech and drama.

GANZGLASS: [00:06:34] Mm hmm.

BOILEAU: [00:06:34] So I was going to be able to develop a speech and drama program for Tonga, and that was just really excited about that. And then irony of ironies, um, we actually had a family trip. My mom and dad went up to Vancouver and I, the three of us went across to the World's Fair. And my sister flew up from New York. She was an attorney and actually at that time a vice president of a chemical company. And she came up. And so we had a family all get-together, which was significant because she died while I was in Peace Corps.

GANZGLASS: [00:07:10] Hmm.

BOILEAU: [00:07:11] And but anyway, my family was very excited about me going. And they thought that that was a good thing to do.

GANZGLASS: [00:07:19] To avoid the draft or to go explore the world? Or both?

BOILEAU: [00:07:23] Both. Actually, they weren't too excited about the draft motivation, but they thought this was good to be a helping profession.

GANZGLASS: [00:07:33] So you applied for the Peace Corps with, oh, well, this was post girlfriend now?

BOILEAU: [00:07:38] Post, well, actually, yes. Post girlfriend now. And I applied and I got accepted and assigned to Tonga. And I was, so when I was at the World's Fair, I spent most of my, a lot of time at the Tonga exhibition, not even looking, thinking about South Korea. And when I got back, I opened the letter that I had been moved because of my

high language ability scores and that, that's why I said the irony of irony is because consistently, um, my Korean was, I was a poor student. We had 60 people in our training class, and the first test we had around, I ranked 60th out of 60. And when we left for Korea, I ranked 40 out of 40. I was still at the bottom of the group. And I always used that example when I was teaching research methods. If you use gain scores, always be, because I had the biggest gain score.

GANZGLASS: [00:08:39] Yeah.

BOILEAU: [00:08:39] My friend Al, who was very fluent in Korean, only went from 5 to 4 and so his gain score was one when mine was 20. No question that I was very poor. And when we left Korea at the end of the two years, I was 36 out of 36. We lost four people, including my friend Al, during that period of time.

GANZGLASS: [00:09:04] So language is not your thing.

BOILEAU: [00:09:06] Language is not my thing. And I at that time regretted very much because I really wanted the professional challenge of developing a high school curriculum. That was my career goal at that time, what I wanted to do was work with high schools, speech teachers, which was where my training, even when I went back for my doctorate afterwards.

GANZGLASS: [00:09:27] So you were, um, where were you living? You were living back in Oregon at that point?

BOILEAU: [00:09:35] Yes.

GANZGLASS: [00:09:35] And you had your training in Bisbee?

BOILEAU: [00:09:38] Yes, Bisbee, Arizona. So we did our training, which was one of those great things. We were supposed to go to a ski resort in Pennsylvania, but they canceled the contract right before. And a woman in the national Peace Corps office, they came in and said,

what are we going to do about Korea? And she said, let me call my brother, who was an attorney in Bisbee, and see if they could host it, because they're in the middle of a copper strike and they need the money. And our \$10 checks for the 60 of us was the big economic, besides the other food and stuff and lodging, but the other big economic input. And again, that was significant.

BOILEAU: [00:10:21] We went to Bisbee, Arizona, and no relationship at all. We had 12 Koreans come over for the language training and that that was fantastic. But Bisbee had no relationship at all to South Korea in terms of.

GANZGLASS: [00:10:42] Well, neither did the mountains in Pennsylvania.

BOILEAU: [00:10:45] Neither did the mountains in Pennsylvania. But the mountains of Pennsylvania sounded exciting to me at the time, and I'm actually glad I went to Bisbee. We learned a lot. Our Peace Corps training to do, because we had a lot of teachers in our group, people with teaching backgrounds. So about ten of us formed a reader's theater group and we did Winnie the Pooh things and went to the schools to do readings for kids. We'd do a reader's theater thing on Winnie the Pooh. I was Eeyore.

GANZGLASS: [00:11:14] Oh, wonderful.

BOILEAU: [00:11:15] And that sort of thing. But that was our contribution.

GANZGLASS: [00:11:18] So you were, were you a trained teacher at that point? But what was your?

BOILEAU: [00:11:22] Well, I had taught college for two years. I taught at Portland State for a year and Central Washington for a year. And that's where I got assigned to train teachers. And I spent time visiting teachers around the state of Washington. So I've learned a whole bunch of different approaches to teaching.

GANZGLASS: [00:11:42] So what was the training like in Bisbee?

BOILEAU: [00:11:44] Training was intense. For language training, we had an hour of Korean before we had breakfast, so we started our first class at 7:00 and the last class would end at 10:00. And we were in a really weird converted warehouse. And so, like there were four of us in one room, and they put four beds across there and there was six inches left. So that when we made our beds each week with our new linens, we'd start with the one against the wall and he'd have six inches. So the four of us had to coordinate how we made the bed so we could move it over. I was in the third bed and so there was no room there.

BOILEAU: [00:12:28] And that made the other sort of thing that was I found intriguing in training is that we would go from like 10:00 to 11:30 up to Jesse's Bar, and Jesse would sell beers for 25 cents for the first one and 15 cents for the second one. I corresponded with Jesse for about four years after Peace Corps. I would send him a letter and he would respond back and I'd sent him a couple of letters from Korea, and he just was fascinated. So we got community involvement in Bisbee.

GANZGLASS: [00:13:01] So from 10:00 to 11:30 in the morning, this is?

BOILEAU: [00:13:05] No, at night.

GANZGLASS: [00:13:05] At night. Oh, I thought you were drinking beer early in the morning.

BOILEAU: [00:13:09] No, no. We'd have our beers then go back and go to sleep and get up and start the day again. And then they'd intersperse the language with lectures on culture. The other significant thing was Bob Coles was our director, and he became probably one of the top, top three of in a field called intercultural communication. And because he had spent time in Korea and was also spoke Korean and he was just a wonderful person to lead our group. And I came in contact with him after I returned.

BOILEAU: [00:13:54] I, I look at my contributions to Peace Corps in a very different way so that the top two were, one, it's important to understand that South Korea was not only the first country where we weren't on the equator, so we got two pairs of Sears, the new fancy mesh long underwear, and I literally wore that. You just you just wore that all the time. It was so cold in Korea. But so, so we were the first ones in addition to our clothing allowance, which allowed us to buy Bermuda shorts and a t-shirt, we got long underwear as a contribution because we're going to be in Korea in January. And then secondly, Korea was so short on housing it was the first country where it was mandated you live with a family, so that there would be no impact on, for the volunteers.

BOILEAU: [00:14:49] I was in group 5 in Korea, Korea V. So there had been groups before us. And, uh, but anyway, the big contribution was I lived with a family that when I got there the very first week, the daughter who was the fourth daughter, Houk, Houk Song. Houk graduated from Korea University with an English major. And, uh, what, what happened was that while I was in Korea, my sister died. My older, she was nine years older than I was. My sister died from cancer and Houk actually at the end of a year and a half of my tour went over and spent a year living with my parents, who were grieving a lot from it, but they had to immediately help Houk.

BOILEAU: [00:15:50] So she went to community college so she can get her English up. And then she went the next year to Central, this was all planned, to Central Washington for a masters in theater, which was one of her interests in English. And so she went to Central Michigan and she had really good, some because her, her oral English, the spoken English was not up. And then that's, by interacting with me and stuff and then the year with my parents, got really good at that. So Houk then after her master's degree came back to, uh, Korea and taught for a couple of years and then went back to University of Oregon in the very same department where I got my doctorate, she got her doctorate in drama.

BOILEAU: [00:16:49] I was on the speech, in the speech and drama department, I got my doctorate in speech, and she got hers in drama. And that whole time that she, Houk was blind in one eye because of food deprivation and medical lack during the Korean War. The family, she had gone down to Jeju-do, which is the island south of Korea, and but in that period of time, she lost her eyesight. And so her parents were actually looking to, could she get to the United States and have a really top ophthalmologist just look at her eyes? And we got one of the top people in Oregon and actually had her examined and helped by University of Oregon Medical School, the ophthalmology program there. And there was no help.

BOILEAU: [00:17:38] But anyway, so Houk took a little longer to read and do stuff to get her doctorate. But in that whole time, my parents were 2 hours away from the University of Oregon, living in North Bend, Oregon. And that whole time she would spend Christmas and summer and spring break with my family. So we made it a family exchange.

GANZGLASS: [00:18:01] Mm hmm.

BOILEAU: [00:18:01] So the very first week that Houk went to the United States, my family refused to have, be paid the allowance that they gave to the families that we lived with for food. They gave a food allowance to each of the families. And so the Songs refused that because she was living with my folks in the United States.

GANZGLASS: [00:18:28] Uh huh.

BOILEAU: [00:18:28] So, so that was a subsidy. The other, the other, II, the son which was the fifth child in the family. II means number one in the Chinese alphabet that the Koreans used. And II most people would say is a spoiled, because four girls, other older sisters. And his grandmother lived, moved into the house and fed him until he was five years old. I mean, she was so excited that he had.

GANZGLASS: [00:19:00] A son.

BOILEAU: [00:19:01] A son. When Houk was born, Dr. Song's really close friend came over in mourning clothes because he had had four girls, and Dr. Song chased him down the street according to the story. I have no way of verifying, but it was very consistent with his theory. He was, he was yelling at them, girls are as good as boys, girls are as good as boys!

GANZGLASS: [00:19:24] So he was a medical doctor?

BOILEAU: [00:19:25] He was a medical doctor. And he, his clinic was in our house. And so because Korea was in a curfew, I was, I would say not a week went by that I wasn't woken up by someone knocking on the door or yelling, [speaks Korean], and trying to get the doctor. And because the curfew very, hardly any doctors except for Dr. Song, Dr. Song would go out at the risk of his life, of being shot. While I was there.

GANZGLASS: [00:19:55] Why was there a curfew?

BOILEAU: [00:19:56] The curfew is because the North Koreans might come down because they came at 4:00 in the morning when they started in the Korean War, they came down. And so Korea had a curfew for a long time. And I was there in a very exciting time. The first week we were in Seoul when we were all together as a group, the North Korean group of about 30, 30, 32, I can't remember the number or somewhere, North Koreans attacked the Blue House, which is their White House. And, um, and so we had people running through the streets. You had to get back into your, getting off the streets. We were under martial law at 7:00 and we were in a restaurant and we hustled about the three blocks over to our *yoglon* so we could get there. We heard firefight the whole night. We could hear guns being shot.

BOILEAU: [00:20:54] They killed most of them, but not all of them, because the Koreans just faded into the crowd and spoke Korean and looked like Koreans. And so that was kind of an exciting time. The next month, I

was awakened by tanks going through the streets. We were near a major street, so they were leaving from the U.S. Army base in Seoul to going up to the DMZ. And so I thought.

GANZGLASS: [00:21:22] These were U.S. tanks?

BOILEAU: [00:21:23] Yeah, U.S. tanks going through the streets. And I immediately turned on the radio and then heard about the Pueblo affair from BBC. The U.S. ship had been taken. So there was, there was that tension that was going on. In fact, one of my favorite stories was that I got a call from Peace Corps headquarters saying that, asked me to come down so that the staff could evaluate and see visually, because if we had an evacuation and they had to evacuate, we would immediately go to Gimpo and to be evacuated. They didn't want us gathering any, just to meet, your job was figuring out how you could get to Gimpo, which is the major airport at that time in South, in Seoul. And she wanted to be able to visually identify me because I was the only volunteer who hadn't come into the main office.

BOILEAU: [00:22:22] I mean, after I saw where it was, I never went there. I didn't go to weekend meetings because I was having a good time in Korea. I didn't, I figured here I was here to meet Koreans, not to spend time with other American Peace Corps volunteers. And so they didn't know who I was. So they asked me to come in and be visually recognized. So it just shows you that.

GANZGLASS: [00:22:43] So where were you stationed?

BOILEAU: [00:22:44] I was in Korea, in Seoul.

GANZGLASS: [00:22:45] Oh, you were stationed in Seoul?

BOILEAU: [00:22:47] Yeah. So I was just part of, rode the bus actually within a block and a half of the Peace Corps office when I would go to work. But I just, you know, knew where it was. I was here to meet Koreans and work with Koreans. I didn't go down there.

GANZGLASS: [00:23:03] So let's just back up to the, to the training again.

BOILEAU: [00:23:08] Yeah.

GANZGLASS: [00:23:08] So you had the training there. Do you think it prepared you for going overseas, the cultural training, the language training?

BOILEAU: [00:23:16] Yeah, I have high ratings for them. I often thought, you know what, what should have they done that they didn't do? Well, nothing. They tried to serve us rice once in, we were at the Copper Queen Hotel where we had our, we had our meals, and they made rice. It was so bad the Koreans complained about it. So we never had rice again. And at that time, anybody, I was, two things. My mother would have told you that I was a finicky eater and I hated rice. And I was worried about eating rice three times a day when I got to Korea, which never was a problem. I just took to it like water. But it was so different from anything my mother had served or anything we had at the Copper Plate Hotel, which the Koreans themselves said, that's not right.

GANZGLASS: [00:24:05] That's not right. So. Okay, so you finish the training. And then how many of you went overseas?

BOILEAU: [00:24:12] 40 of the 60. And we lost four people during the period of time, one was my friend Al, which was a medical leave. And another one was Kevin, who was, who was probably also one of the top five in Korean language skills. He just, he had worked in a TB thing and just felt it was, um. For example, of the thousand vaccinations that they did in that, in a six month period, he did 800 of them and there was four or five other Koreans that were part of the staff and they just were, didn't do much. And he just got disgusted and quit.

GANZGLASS: [00:24:57] And just quit.

BOILEAU: [00:24:59] Yeah, because he thought, I'm not, I'm not doing any good here. And they're not, they're just letting me do all the work and then

they won't do anything when I leave. So, uh, I mean, you quickly learned that your individual thing. And like 35, or 30, 39 of them went into middle schools and I went to a government training institute that trained. COTI was set up to train civil servants. In other words, the GS people, and we focused on what would be equivalent to GS-12 and above, trying to train them. And the reason that I was there was to help the director of our institute save face because they lost the USAID contract with University of Minnesota that sent a professor of public administration.

BOILEAU: [00:25:57] So when the powers that be went through the things they saw, oh, he's taught college for two years. So even though it's in speech, they didn't care what it was in. Then we have him. He still has an American professor. Well, I had only a master's degree and I didn't do anything. The only thing I really did is they once had me give a lecture to 600 people on why the U.S. is in Vietnam, which was an interesting.

GANZGLASS: [00:26:28] And what is it that you said to them?

BOILEAU: [00:26:31] Well, I followed what was the rationale I could guess, get out of Time magazine. I subscribed to Time or my folks did for me for the two years, and it was my first experience with censorship. I didn't ever receive a Time that didn't have either pages ripped out or marked out in big black letter or anything that said about the Vietnam or protests of the Vietnam War. And so I had a.

GANZGLASS: [00:27:00] Who was doing the censoring?

BOILEAU: [00:27:02] The Korean government. The post office, people in the post office. Korean government.

GANZGLASS: [00:27:08] Didn't want to have anybody know there were protests against the Vietnam War?

BOILEAU: [00:27:13] Yeah.

GANZGLASS: [00:27:16] And why is, I'm sorry, why did Korea not want to let people know about protests?

BOILEAU: [00:27:25] Uh.

GANZGLASS: [00:27:25] What's the connection? I don't know what's the connection between Korea and the Vietnam War.

BOILEAU: [00:27:30] Well, the Koreans. There's a couple of really great stories behind that that most of us in Peace Corps said the Brown agreement got Korea involved in, uh, and Secretary Brown and secretary flew out to Korea to negotiate the situation. And the Koreans said, well, give us \$115 or \$117 a month per soldier. And Brown said, they didn't expect to do that. They were thinking maybe \$40 or 50. And so Brown actually flew back to talk with Lyndon Johnson, because they didn't. Everything was top secret at that time. And he flew back and he talked with Lyndon Johnson. And Johnson says, give them what they want. We got to get people in there, because Korea was the only really the very large, serious force of soldiers there.

BOILEAU: [00:28:26] The debate in the legislature was very few people talk about, the debate in the legislature was not about should we go and get all this money and stuff. The debate in the legislature was over the question, do we have an obligation to the United States as an older brother because they saved our country in the Korean War? And, uh, it was because Korean troops had never served beyond the Korean border in the 2,000 year history of, you know, the Mongolians coming across or the Japanese going up the peninsula into China. All these forces that were there. And the Koreans just said, okay, we'll get you out, we'll fight you and get you across our borders, and then we stop. We pushed the Japanese down and when the Japanese went back to Japan that was fine. They didn't try to invade Japan, never invaded China, never invaded to Mongolia.

BOILEAU: [00:29:31] The Korean dress, that's another just, I got fascinated by this. The Korean dress makes, it looks like the women are pregnant,

and the Koreans did that and designed that *chima jeogori* to, um, so that because they would respect a pregnant woman and wouldn't try to rape a pregnant woman. So all the Korean, all the young women in Korea wore this *chima jeogori* that made them look like they were pregnant because of.

GANZGLASS: [00:29:57] Yeah.

BOILEAU: [00:29:57] It starts at the bust line and runs right down and then you have a top over the top of it. And, uh, and I just thought that was a curious thing. But that's part of understanding that, that Korean sense is that we never go overseas. So Vietnam is the first time a Korean troop had been in a foreign country. But they were paid a tremendous amount of money. I mean, that, that's what built the army for, for South Korea was all this extra. The soldiers still got less than \$12 a month out of that \$115.

GANZGLASS: [00:30:30] \$115 a month?

BOILEAU: [00:30:32] Yeah. The U.S. paid for a Korean soldier. Or it's \$117.

GANZGLASS: [00:30:37] Something like that.

BOILEAU: [00:30:38] Yeah. I mean, it was just.

GANZGLASS: [00:30:39] A tremendous amount of money.

BOILEAU: [00:30:40] Yeah. 90 percent of the money went into the coffers of the army.

GANZGLASS: [00:30:46] Wow. So. So what is it that you actually were doing in the training institute? What?

BOILEAU: [00:30:55] Good question. I couldn't tell you at the end of two years what I was actually, you know. My official assignment was I sat in a room with six people that they hope would go overseas and get doctorates. Now, one of the six already had a doctorate from France

in public administration. But he was kind of, he was my assigned mentor. And he was the one that found the Songs' house. There's two great stories there, or one great story. With what Peace Corps Korea said is whatever school you're assigned, you have to find a family to live with. So when they went to COTI, they told them that. And the director's wife said, we can't, we can't take an American because we don't have a throne toilet. We have a ceramic pit toilet, and which is very rare, I mean, because it really was nice, a very fancy sort of thing.

GANZGLASS: [00:31:56] A fancy pit toilet?

BOILEAU: [00:31:57] Fancy pit toilet. And so you have to squat. And that, so if anybody in the staff said, well, we'll take the American, they were one upping the director's wife. So they decided I would sleep in a classroom and on a kind of a twin bed, which I had my winter sleeping bag that had an insert in it for the winter and sort of thing. And they put a screen around it and that was where I was going to expect. And I remember talking, doing a tape that I sent to my parents that they never arrived, where I was complaining about it. And this, this is, I said, I don't know how I'm going to last two years. The food was just terrible because I'd eat at the restaurant in the basement of our institute. We had a served lunch, but they also served breakfast for people who wanted to. And then they would do dinner for me. And that was the idea.

BOILEAU: [00:32:57] And I remember going down the second day that I was down there and I went to, to the, to, to eating breakfast. And I thought, I remember praying, God, if you can get me. And I immediately calculated how many days left times three and it was like 2,100 something meals or whatever. And if you can get me back, I'll never complain about food the rest of my life, which I have honored. And as I said, my mother would say I was a very finicky eater. Korea just destroyed finicky eating because I was always eating unknown stuff. And the, but the food was really terrible. Anyway, the, uh, one of my, my group went down to eat lunch there and they thought the

food was terrible too, and went to the director and we got, they were fired and they got a new group in. But by that time, Dr. Pak.

GANZGLASS: [00:34:01] Dr. Pak was the director?

BOILEAU: [00:34:03] He was the, my mentor. He was the guy in the, in the group. He found, he was, his father was a good friend of Dr. Song. And when, when his father died, then Dr. Song stood in for him. That's what good friends do. And so he was like, then his mentor was Dr. Sok. So he went to Dr. Song and says, here's this American. And Dr. Song was thinking, oh, well, maybe my wife, my daughter, who I couldn't help during the war, could go to the United States. So we'll take the American. And so we actually fulfilled that duty by having her go to my parents. That wasn't planned, but that was in the back of their mind I discovered later. And so it was, in the first year I spent a lot of time with Houk and her friends, and that was just a great introduction. They were all young college graduates and they.

GANZGLASS: [00:35:05] Was she your age about?

BOILEAU: [00:35:06] Yes, yeah. She was just a couple of years younger. I was 25. She was 22.

GANZGLASS: [00:35:11] Yeah.

BOILEAU: [00:35:11] And then the next year, Il, the son. We spent a lot of time together. Almost every night I would come up, because you'd be home by at least 10:00, 10:30 because the curfew. But Mrs. Song, and it really wasn't, she kept her name. In Korea you don't take the man's name, but anyway, so she would bring. I always called her Mrs. Song. So she, she would bring up colas and like pears or some other fruit or something. And Il and I would talk for one or two hours.

GANZGLASS: [00:35:51] Hmm.

BOILEAU: [00:35:51] And so we really got, I mean, I noticed between the time I left his English was, he could go anywhere and be in a fluent, follow a

conversation, where at the beginning we really struggled and but that.

GANZGLASS: [00:36:04] All of this was in English?

BOILEAU: [00:36:06] All this was in English. So here I am in Korea. I'm sitting in a room supposed to talk English from 9:00 to 5:00. I go home and I'm supposed to talk English to make the kids talk English. My Korean didn't really grow the way other people did. I mean, it's just, the only time I had one day where I was completely in Korean. When we had, we had over the period of the two years I was there, we had two different maids. They were sisters. Now, I don't know, maid is the best English word I can use, but it's not really. In Korea, if you're orphaned, people in the community will take the girls in or the boys in and take care of them. And so we, from this, it was a neighboring town to where Dr. Song's family had their, where the family compound was. And, um, and so he. Uh.

BOILEAU: [00:37:10] The, oh, first May finally got married and so her younger sister came up with the Songs, and then the Songs would give her room and board and clothing allowance and take care of her that way. And there are a couple stories in there. It was really the oldest, the first one, when they realized that I'm going to have to use the squat toilet that didn't have ceramic. It was just a hole in the boards, which was the irony of why I couldn't be at the other place. But they didn't worry about it. I didn't worry. I was so delighted it was inside the house in the winter because most people had to go to outhouses.

GANZGLASS: [00:37:46] It was cold.

BOILEAU: [00:37:46] Really cold. And but anyway, I couldn't squat. When I squatted, I was so high in the air they just thought that was really funny. So I remember the maid and my sister Houk, they're there trying to push me down to get my muscles to go down. And so I went through about two weeks of these exercises to stretch my muscles and they would laugh and they thought it was so funny, you know, like, how could I even go to the bathroom? Which I needed to go

quite a bit. Like I often say, Korea was two years of diarrhea. I had just terrible problems with the food.

GANZGLASS: [00:38:26] Hmm.

BOILEAU: [00:38:27] And when I woke up in the morning, we were in a Japanese style house, which meant two stories, wood sort of thing. But I would run down the stairs and people would hear me coming and everybody'd just squat so I could get into the bathroom as quick as I could because it was always a different sort of thing. And we were in a very upper class neighborhood. A block away was the Secretary of Education. There was a Peace Corps volunteer that was staying with him, who was a friend of mine. I didn't know he was that close until eight months into my training, because I never went to the weekend Peace Corps stuff. I just, finally something happened and I found out, whoa, we live near each other. So I was over there a couple of times, but we just, we lived very different lives because our jobs were very different. He was teaching in a girls middle school and had a lot of contacts.

GANZGLASS: [00:39:26] Have you stayed in touch with the Song family?

BOILEAU: [00:39:30] Have I? Yes. I emailed both Il and Houk in the last week. We dropped out of contact for a while because I couldn't. Il would send me an email or Houk would send me an email and I'd hit reply and I'd get it bounced back because it wouldn't go through. And so we just kind of drifted apart for a period of time. Il visited Kathy and I three or four times, once spending a week. Sometimes he, he had a, you know, I should explain about Il. Il came to Central Michigan where I was teaching and did an MBA degree. He lived with us for six weeks. And then my, my first wife Jan kicked him out because he wanted to be waited on and he wanted to have his meals whenever he wanted to. And it just didn't work.

BOILEAU: [00:40:26] And he, I say I converted to their, their culture and he couldn't convert to ours. And that was probably the, what I call the Peace Corps difference because he did his masters at Central

Michigan. I mean, after he lived with us, he moved to the dorm. And the irony of ironies, he had a Japanese roommate. They actually went into business together in New York and sold leather coats for a long time. And then he went to a doctoral program at Syracuse. So I look at, so Houk and Il both did American degrees, both got doctorates. So I'm, you know, for Dr. Song who I, when I was, when he was alive I kept writing to, he felt really good all three of his kids got doctorates. The other three, the other three were very successful women. I mean, they were married.

BOILEAU: [00:41:22] I would use this example, which I thought my family. The first daughter had a completely arranged marriage, saw her husband to be once at the engagement party. The second time was their marriage. The second daughter, the parents picked him out together, arranged their marriage, and then they dated several times over a six week period before they got married. The third daughter, Young-Ja, she and her husband to be told their parents that they were getting married. They could have the engagement party, but they, they were choosing each other. So you see that in that cycle, in that family, we moved from old Korea to modern Korea.

GANZGLASS: [00:42:10] In what period of time was that?

BOILEAU: [00:42:12] Well, you talk about eight years.

GANZGLASS: [00:42:14] Eight years?

BOILEAU: [00:42:14] It's post, post Korean War. And then Houk never did get married.

GANZGLASS: [00:42:21] Mm hmm.

BOILEAU: [00:42:21] And she was the professor. And Young-Ja also.

GANZGLASS: [00:42:25] And taught where, in Seoul?

BOILEAU: [00:42:26] In Korea.

GANZGLASS: [00:42:27] In Korea.

BOILEAU: [00:42:27] She was head of the drama department in Korea and she has. She did a Hamlet production that was really fantastic. So she also wrote books of poetry.

GANZGLASS: [00:42:40] Are you still in touch with her?

BOILEAU: [00:42:41] Yes.

GANZGLASS: [00:42:42] Oh, great. That's excellent.

BOILEAU: [00:42:44] So both Houk and Il, you know. And what's interesting is they're both singular names. Like the others would be Young-Ja, but they both had a single name. So you don't find that very often in Korea for the first name, it's generally it's a hyphenated name.

GANZGLASS: [00:43:03] Oh. That's significant?

BOILEAU: [00:43:05] It's just, it's part of the Songs being kind of modern, ahead of the game sort of thing. He was, Dr. Song was. I wanted to write an article and I never did. You know, Reader's Digest had The Most Unforgettable Character You've Ever Met?

GANZGLASS: [00:43:22] Mm hmm.

BOILEAU: [00:43:22] He was who I would write about. He was disowned by his family because he wanted to be a doctor, and to be a doctor, this was during the Japanese occupation, you had to, you had to be fluent in Japanese because all the higher education was in Japanese. And his father was what's called a yangban, which would be like a country squire. In his village, he was the one that owned the rice bin, you know, storage and sold the rice and the farmers sold their rice to him and then he sold it off. They all, um, so. So Dr. Song was disowned by his father because he wanted to be a doctor and studied

Japanese. He wrote poetry in Japanese as well as Korean, and he was just a really remarkable man.

BOILEAU: [00:44:17] He, in his retirement, did sculpturing. In fact, he did a whole life-sized body sculpture of his wife. And it was a nude, and she was very embarrassed by it. But he was just a fascinating guy. And so the last, he worked on his English with me, so we'd have breakfast together the last year I was there. And so it was very, uh, significant. That's why I think the family thing is, because I feel, you know, we help, my family helped Houk and Il get their doctorates in the United States and launch their careers, which was similar to mine, to be a university professor.

BOILEAU: [00:45:08] Il did a hour long documentary, he was a business professor, on the importance of trade and about the deal stuff. And he did a one hour documentary and he came and he stayed with Kathy and I, and he interviewed Kissinger.

GANZGLASS: [00:45:23] Mm hmm.

BOILEAU: [00:45:24] I mean, he had that power to. First he had, he asked me to arrange a thing with Kissinger, and I had no idea how to do that. He said, I'll do it myself. So, so he did, because it was easier in one sense. Kissinger wouldn't responded to me, but would respond. But, but he then became nationally famous in Korea so.

GANZGLASS: [00:45:44] Very successful.

BOILEAU: [00:45:44] Very successful. Both of them are successes. And so I look at that as a family thing is that, the first thing. The second thing I wanted to talk about is my relationship to growing up in North Bend was part of Peace Corps. Um. I was depressed a little bit the first couple of weeks on the job because this was a no job, sitting in an office, just chatting with people from, telling them what was in Time magazine. And, you know, just like the image of huts and villages of the world just wasn't working that way.

GANZGLASS: [00:46:23] Yeah.

BOILEAU: [00:46:24] One was we were supposed to dress the way our colleagues did, which meant I had to have tailor made suits. And I mean, here's this kid from Oregon that's never had a tailor made a suit in his life and hasn't since. But I had to go to Korea and get tailor made suits. The first suit I had, the guy said something and he goes like this. And I figured it was with my pants. And he used the word whether it was, what do you want for your fly? Do you want buttons or a zipper? And I didn't know enough Korean to know the difference between the two. And I said, I just wanted to respond, I got buttons on my pants. And I thought, well, that's my grandfather. And because I had diarrhea a lot, the buttons were often a barrier, that I would be swearing to myself.

BOILEAU: [00:47:13] But those two suits lasted me until 1988. I mean, at least I was the same size, didn't have to deal with that. They were really well done. I had to get tailor made shoes. I mean, this is just.

GANZGLASS: [00:47:28] And why was it tailor made, because mass production wasn't good?

BOILEAU: [00:47:31] You didn't have the mass production. Yeah. For for suits and stuff, you're just, everybody. But it just seemed to me weird. They had, they had a jeep pick me up, and I finally told them after six weeks, don't pick me up in a jeep. I want to want to ride the 10 won bus, which is like a three cent bus. It's the stand up buses.

GANZGLASS: [00:47:51] Yeah.

BOILEAU: [00:47:51] I got to be somewhat Peace Corps-ish. And I remember the impression I felt because I'd get off and I'd have to walk a block. I'd walk over, over a hill and then up to this thing. So it was about three blocks to the school. But the kids in this one place were in a school. They'd always call me a monkey. And then one day I wasn't worthy of being called a monkey. And that kind of depressed me. I thought either, A, I'm accepted or, B, I'm accepted or I'm just not

important anymore. And I realized I'm not important anymore. I'm just part of the landscape sort of thing.

GANZGLASS: [00:48:32] And that, that depressed you or you felt better about that?

BOILEAU: [00:48:35] Well, I didn't know which way to test. But it was a significant thing for me just along that line, that I had blended in. And so that was wonderful. Now, back to my job. So after about three or four weeks, Dr. Pak, again, my mentor, arranged for me to be a tutor to the director of the Department of Forestry and the assistant director and the chief financial officer and one of their friends. So I thought, hey, that's good. I can do something. And the reason behind that, and I did that for a year, I was tutoring five nights a week. I'd go down, take the bus downtown and be at their office. And I'd go to a tea room, and then I'd have tea. And then I go upstairs and teach what they, what they wanted.

BOILEAU: [00:49:38] And they were going to New Zealand to get trees. The Korean War, the trees that weren't cut, they were knocked down by mortar. And if, you know, the Korean War was vicious, we just blew up a lot of trees and denuded Korea. And the, uh, they were going to New Zealand to get trees. And so they wanted training in English. So having worked at Weyerhaeuser for three years in the summers going to college, I wrote my mom and my mom went down to Don Dills, who I knew, who was their PR person, and said, could you send Don materials? And so I was enriched by being able to teach them because I could teach them about clear cutting and.

GANZGLASS: [00:50:28] Ah. All those terms.

BOILEAU: [00:50:29] All the terms, you know, the logging terms and the lumber terms. And I just thought that in reality, my biggest contribution was helping them be successful on this tree thing. So when I went back four years ago and traveled around Korea, there were huge forests and they, all these trees, I would say, hey, those are my trees that Korea has now got. And you saw that somewhat in the Olympics with all those trees around in those mountains up there. But that was all

gone. They were, people used it for firewood when they couldn't afford coal.

GANZGLASS: [00:51:06] So they had a major reforestation program.

BOILEAU: [00:51:10] Oh, yeah. If you, if you look at Korea, when we were there, there were only two bridges across the Han River, and now there's 23 or 32 or something like that, incredible number of bridges. And all the south side of the river has been developed, which was just farmland when I was there. But Korea was still in the bottom 10 percent gross national product at one time. Right after the war, it was third from the bottom. And so now that it's in the top 10 percent, top 5 percent of economies in the world. It, it's just, Korea's the amazing miracle of all, of all the countries that we were in in terms of progress.

BOILEAU: [00:51:53] And the wonderful thing is that the embassy and people have always said they've attributed Peace Corps to helping them get the English to be able to get over that hurdle. I mean, when I think about it, now that there's 30 some thousand kids, people teaching English in Korea that are Americans, you know, and here we were several hundred. But we, we were, you know, like my, my friend that I mentioned that lived in the next, the middle school he taught in was the school that, you know, the president's kid, the cabinet's kids, their girls went to and stuff like that. So we really did make a difference. Several of the ambassador's wives learned their English from Peace Corps volunteers in a period of time. So Korea was very appreciative of Peace Corps. And I always thought that made a tremendous difference.

GANZGLASS: [00:52:46] So before the interview, you, you mentioned this trip that you went on. Why don't you talk a little bit about this?

BOILEAU: [00:52:52] This was a thank you trip. The South Korean government has, did this with soldiers, appreciative of soldiers for the, that fought in the Korean War, and brought them over. And then they did this. Someone suggested they do that for Peace Corps volunteers. And so the Friends of Korea, which is the, kind of the Peace Corps, a lot of

leading Korean business people and stuff like that belong to Friends of Korea. But it's basically the Peace Corps group, our group, used that. And then they, they, they would take them groups of 50. I think I was in the eighth group and I was, I didn't respond to that because I was teaching all the time and I never could.

BOILEAU: [00:53:49] And then I got near retirement and so I had to leave. And so I applied for that period, which was the last one, which hasn't been the last one. But at the time they thought it was the last one. They would bring over 50 volunteers. And so they're from all the groups. There's 39 different groups in Korea. K-39 was the last group. We were cut in the Reagan administration. He had to cut something. And so over the protests of the Korean government, he cut Korea Peace Corps.

GANZGLASS: [00:54:18] Well, maybe they had outgrown Peace Corps.

BOILEAU: [00:54:20] Well, that was their argument. The Korean government says, no, we, you know, it's, we still got pockets and we need help in different ways, which it was, they were on their way up. So I didn't feel too bad about that, but I just felt bad that they're cutting it because by then it wasn't the economic impact, it was the personal contact. And that, that's why I would say you still want people in different, to be able to deal with it, because Korean culture is different. Anyway, that they would bring over 50 volunteers and your spouse.

GANZGLASS: [00:55:02] Right.

BOILEAU: [00:55:02] And you would pay your plane fare over there and then you would go to a hotel and it was a suite hotel. It was downtown. It's two blocks from the royal palace. So it's really well situated. It's across from the Japanese embassy. We had a suite, we had a living room, we had a kitchen area, we had a separate bedroom.

GANZGLASS: [00:55:23] Wow.

BOILEAU: [00:55:24] Yeah. And, well, the best I've ever been able to do for my wife, to take her to a real elegant hotel. And what we did was then stay two weeks afterwards. And I spent it with my Korean brother. And he was going.

GANZGLASS: [00:55:38] With Lee?

BOILEAU: [00:55:39] Il.

GANZGLASS: [00:55:39] Il.

BOILEAU: [00:55:40] And he's successful. He has a car and a driver and from his other sorts of work he does consulting. And, um, and little things happened. His, Il had two daughters. One of the daughters married a guy who's a really good lawyer who did a year at an exchange with the law school at University of Virginia. So Il and his wife Kang-ho came and stayed here with us for three or four days and they bought a car for them. And so when they flew in, then we helped them move down. They took, took their SUV filled with their luggage, plus our CR-V to get all the stuff down to the house that they had rented for the year. And then we had them up here for Thanksgiving.

GANZGLASS: [00:56:41] Nice.

BOILEAU: [00:56:42] And so, so when we went there, we had already met her and her husband. Anyway, the other daughter, Sugi, and this daughter, they went together and they arranged to have Kathy and I go down to Jeju-do, which is the island south, off of South Korea, and which is. And we spent three days there. And Il sent two of his students to go down and rent a car and drive us around. And so but they paid for our flight down, the daughters did, at Thanksgiving. Now, Kathy and I made a book for both Houk and Il, a photo book of some of my photos. Well, the interesting thing was when the daughters, Il's daughters, saw that, they had never seen a picture of their mom and dad before they were married.

GANZGLASS: [00:57:31] Oh.

BOILEAU: [00:57:31] And here they were, you know, drinking and eating and, you know, up in my bedroom, we had always sort of did our stuff. This is amazing. This is mom and dad when they were, before they were married. Wow. Wow.

GANZGLASS: [00:57:44] Yeah.

BOILEAU: [00:57:44] They thought that was really cool. And we had a picture of a nephew that I got to meet and I went to a poetry reading. So we just had a wonderful two weeks in Korea.

GANZGLASS: [00:57:54] So clearly the two families are joined.

BOILEAU: [00:57:57] Two families are joined and that to me is a significant part of my tour. Now, the other year, I said two years. I want to go back to my other. The second year, Dr. Pak got me working with the committee in Korea that works on ports and harbors and commerce and harbors in Korea and dredging of harbors and, uh. And so if you feel that, I grew up in Coos, on Coos Bay, which is the largest port between San Francisco and Seattle, but there's a port there.

GANZGLASS: [00:58:30] And what were you doing with them?

BOILEAU: [00:58:32] Well, I was teaching them English, but my big thing was there's high tides in Incheon. That's kind of, you know, MacArthur's invasion and that sort of thing, to be able to do that. Anyway, the high tides were there, and so they were losing cranes that were picking up these logs they're buying from Indonesia that are big and they're really heavy. And, you know, a crane like that goes over the edge because the weight sort of. So I said, well, why don't you do what I did, what we did at Weyerhaeuser, because we're a tidal community and you do, you float the logs in and then you have chains that pull them up like this. So you don't have any crane that has to reach over and it can go up and down. And so if you have 12, 20 foot tides, it doesn't matter because you just have the chains go down.

BOILEAU: [00:59:27] So I drew that out for them because what we were talking about at one time and I just drew that out and says, here is something you can do. And sure enough, they did it. So that was, again, is my night teaching that is where I had an impact. Can I take a quick break?

GANZGLASS: [00:59:44] Sure.

BOILEAU: [00:59:47] So my impact from my night job were really, uh, to me, to me the significant part of doing what part of the Peace Corps trying to help the other. Because in one sense, I had one day where I really wanted to quit and, uh. I was downtown and our institute was out and I could walk across Namsan, which is the big mountain in downtown Seoul. It's like a Central Park sort of thing. And I decided I needed some time to think, and I would walk across there and I'd walk into the and tell them I'm quitting. Just I've had it. The sexism was really apparent. I didn't feel like my job was worth diddly squat. And but it was in my second year.

BOILEAU: [01:00:48] So anyway, I walked across and it was, it was not in the middle of summer. It was kind of cold. So I think it was in the spring. And so I'm kind of dressed warmly. And it would take about 2 hours to walk across that. But I gave that. So I'm walking across and I, the view part where you sit and look at downtown Seoul and the attractive part of the park, but then there's the back side and I'm on the back side. And I come across this group of retired people that I could tell by their clothing were not well-to-do, either lower middle class or poor. And there were about 20 of them, but they were singing songs and dancing, and their music was created by hitting with a stick on pots and pans. And they invited me to join them in dancing.

BOILEAU: [01:01:45] Well, I refused because I'm really down and I'm not doing this anymore. And I, that's my big regret, I never, I should have joined them. And later on, it becomes even more significant why I should have joined them. And I'm walking away from them and I said, they have almost nothing and yet they're celebrating and they're enjoying

each other. What? What, what are you so tied up about? Trying to save the world? And you're not frustrated because the Peace Corps volunteer, you're not saving the world. You got to learn from them just to enjoy life.

GANZGLASS: [01:02:23] Hmm.

BOILEAU: [01:02:23] And that was really significant for me. The, the other part of that became, which was almost in a different paradox, was my sister had written me that she would come out. I told her the fall was the best time to visit and she was going to fly to Korea and spend a week with us. And I said, come in October because that's my favorite month. And that, that would be really great if you could do that. And then two weeks later, I get a call from Peace Corps that my sister's dying in New York and I have this tremendous gratefulness of. They didn't need to fly me back, but they did.

GANZGLASS: [01:03:11] Mm hmm.

BOILEAU: [01:03:11] I got a call that they would be sending a car out with my tickets, they've already made the arrangements. The next day I was to take such and such a flight that would take me to New York City, and I would meet my mother there. And they had made all those arrangements without my, you know, just quickly to be able to deal with that, because she, she was in New York. The company she worked with was in New Jersey, but her home was in New York City. She had had a cough and went to a ear, nose, and throat specialist. And he put her in the hospital and 21 days later she was dead.

GANZGLASS: [01:03:48] Wow.

BOILEAU: [01:03:49] But anyway, I got to spend several days with her, and I just thought that was wonderful. And my dad got back there. So again, there were three of us that, at the beginning of Peace Corps. We had had our time, wonderful time at the World's Fair together, which then had double significance. But they flew me back for that, and I made the arrangements because we had her cremated. We

had a service in New York at the church she went to, and then I made arrangements. My folks went back and then I knew that they couldn't fly back with her ashes emotionally. So I made this crazy idea, I had to meet a lawyer or something, and which was my friends were lawyers. My friend in the Peace Corps was a really good lawyer.

BOILEAU: [01:04:41] And so I did that. And when we got to my house, I picked Jan, my first wife. We were engaged. She had, she'd actually come over in the midterm and we'd had a Korean engagement ceremony.

GANZGLASS: [01:05:01] Hmm.

BOILEAU: [01:05:01] Korean clothes.

GANZGLASS: [01:05:03] Oh.

BOILEAU: [01:05:03] Korean toasts, a whole thing, like my Korean family sponsored the engagement ceremony. So, um, it just is an important part of my life that we really like intertwined. You know, my engagement party to Jan was done by my Korean family. So that was, so we had a Korean engagement party. So I met Jan in Portland, Oregon, and drove the 4 hours down and we actually stopped and saw Ken's parents and had lunch in Eugene, Oregon. We got to my, uh, my mom walked out of the house and walked out to our car and said, we're going to the, your dad's in critical condition. So I got another two week family emergency leave because my dad almost died that night. But they operated for 5 hours, took out 12 pounds of his lower intestine. And so that gave me another. So I was gone actually a month on this trip and, uh, so that that made it really a different sort of experience for me.

GANZGLASS: [01:06:19] And then you went back?

BOILEAU: [01:06:20] Then I went back. And then that's when Houk, we made arrangements within the month for Houk to go to the United States. And that was another funny story. She was having trouble. I think one

of the things that bugged me was the corruption in the government. And the guy wouldn't give her a visa because he wanted a bribe. So we worked out this wonderful how can we do this as a Korean situation. And so we arranged, very typical of when you give a bribe, you go to a coffee shop or something like that, and then you give somebody money for a taxi or something and so you're doing a favor. And of course, taxi's 50 won and you give them 10,000 or 15,000.

GANZGLASS: [01:07:06] Yeah.

BOILEAU: [01:07:07] So this young guy at the embassy that was holding up her visa, we met at Chosun Hotel, which was the hotel in Korea. So it's all kind of feel this is really nice. I'm going to get this really big chunk of money. You figure that 15,000 won was what a teacher made. 10,000 was a significant amount of money. And anyway, so we met and we had tea and coffee and, uh, and we're talking with him. And Houk and I had all worked this out. So I said, now that I know your name and that you're responsible for Houk, I want you to know that Sunday, when I see the U.S. Ambassador to Korea. He and I go to the same church, which was true. We went to a Catholic church that was run by Dutch priests and there was only about 20 of us that went. But I, that was my one thing that I wanted, that's my American thing that I wanted to hold on to.

BOILEAU: [01:08:09] So my Sundays were very typical. I'd go to church downtown, then I'd meet a friend of mine. That's another great story. And so, so I told him. And so now that I have your name and I will be thanking him for your help in getting Houk, getting her visa. And you could just see his face just fall because he could tell he wasn't going to get any money and that if he didn't, he could be in trouble real quickly. It was the only time I tried to play a power play like that.

GANZGLASS: [01:08:41] But it worked.

BOILEAU: [01:08:43] It worked. I actually wrote an article in the, uh, after I left Korea, I wrote an article for the Korea Times about how to handle bribes and corruption, you know, in a way, by using fees. Put a visa

fee, and then it's a public sort of thing. And just as you. And my argument was that, uh, make it so that because the Korean government isn't paying you enough so you can't pay your people enough and use the fees as a way to get to get your stuff up. And so I did have my one public administration thing that they printed because I was teaching at Central Officials Training Institute.

GANZGLASS: [01:09:25] Great.

BOILEAU: [01:09:26] The American Peace Corps volunteer that was there.

GANZGLASS: [01:09:29] Yeah.

BOILEAU: [01:09:30] So, yeah, it had some of a small impact. That was post going back and I made sure it was published after I left so nobody would be, family wouldn't be involved or something. And so that was interesting. The other thing I wanted to say about that church thing is then I would meet a friend that Dr. Pak again arranged. It was a young man that didn't go to Seoul National Institute, and all the Fulbright scholars were graduates of Seoul National. That's their Harvard. And, uh, and what they would do is be finalists. And then a group of wives from the Army base would come out and they'd interview them and see how they were and then rank order them for the for the Fulbright scholarships.

BOILEAU: [01:10:20] Anyway, this person went to a, I can't remember the name of the college, one of my age problems now, but it's a college that specialized in foreign, in languages, all languages, sorts of things. And so he, he and I would go to a movie, generally one in English, almost always in English, and then we'd talk about it afterwards. And so I got his conversational level up, and then we had several sessions where I just worked on interview questions that are typical of what American wives might ask you about why you're interested in and all that stuff. So he got very fluent. He was the first, he was ranked number one, and much to the chagrin of Seoul National. It wasn't a Seoul National person, and I always took my little personal pride.

GANZGLASS: [01:11:05] That's right.

BOILEAU: [01:11:05] That I made a difference, you know, into the power structure to be able to deal with that. But, but that's the way I went. So, so I had him on Sundays, which was a non family, non work, non sort of thing. It's just like my closest Korean friend, well, to do that, while Houk and Il are family related sort of things. So I felt that I'd made an impact on that. But I, as you can see, my, my Peace Corps experience with my job wasn't my Peace Corps impact.

GANZGLASS: [01:11:37] Which was fine.

BOILEAU: [01:11:38] Which was fine. I just had, I was able to take advantage of the friendliness of Korean people to be able to do that. I have other really.

GANZGLASS: [01:11:49] Okay.

BOILEAU: [01:11:49] The big question is, what did it do for your life?

GANZGLASS: [01:11:52] Yeah.

BOILEAU: [01:11:54] And, um.

GANZGLASS: [01:11:55] I was about to ask that.

BOILEAU: [01:11:57] Well, the personal side, you've already seen because Houk and Il became part of my family and she actually visited my, came back and visited my parents before they died when they were both in a nursing home. And I have always greatly appreciated that. But she appreciated what they did for her. They took her on family vacations for four years, so she got Pacific Northwest because they'd go out and they were retired. They didn't have any time restrictions, so they could just, they'd take her around to meet people, that my mother had a lot of friends all over sort of thing. So that was just a really great impact.

BOILEAU: [01:12:34] Professionally, um, I came back and immediately started my doctorate. I taught for a year at Central Washington for another year and got married in that period of time and then did my doctorate at the University of Oregon. And my doctorate with, focused on training high school teachers. Again, missing, still mad that I didn't get to go to Tonga. But by this time, the family stuff and my personal contacts were such that, so what?

GANZGLASS: [01:13:08] Yeah, right, exactly.

BOILEAU: [01:13:08] I just, it was a great, great experience for me. Now, professionally, it helped because in the mid seventies, or '74, in the field of communication, which was then called speech or speech communication depending upon your department, there was a new movement for an idea called intercultural communication. It came from the work in anthropology that focused on the difference between cultures and learning cultures and that sort of thing. Intercultural communication deals with the communication between people of different cultures, not that you want to know what's the difference between when the American goes to Japan and, because that's kind of the anthropology view. What are the differences of culture that influence communication?

BOILEAU: [01:13:57] This is how is your communication change when you? And so the general principles that you have, it doesn't matter whether I'm talking to someone from Turkey or someone from China or someone from Indonesia or someone from Brazil. And so they, our national organization had a big conference to introduce that, people like Bob Coles, my director, was one of the speakers. It was really fun getting to see him. But so there's about 50 to 60 people gathered in Chicago. And my second year of teaching or third year, I can't remember which, second year of teaching at Central Michigan. They sent me to the conference. So I got to the conference and I participated and they split up into committees on how can we promote intercultural communication. I was on a committee of four people and I was chair

of the committee that said, well, we need to have a model syllabus of how and what should be the basics in that.

BOILEAU: [01:14:52] So I was chair of the committee because of my Peace Corps experience. I had all these wonderful stories about things that you need to adapt to and how you, you know, attitudes you need and all that sort of stuff. So I got to write the first big national syllabus for intercultural communication. There were other groups that had things done, but I, mine was, this was how do you approach it just from a communication perspective. And now there are so many people. There is an international and intercultural division of our association.

GANZGLASS: [01:15:27] Mm hmm.

BOILEAU: [01:15:28] It's gone in ways that I, very different from what I think they should be doing. But anyway, that doesn't bother me. You reach an age and you just can't keep up anymore. So my primary focus of training high school teachers shifted then to intercultural communication. And then my career and my background academically is rhetoric and public address. But my 27 years at George Mason teaching at college level, I became an intercultural communication specialist. And that, that always made me feel.

GANZGLASS: [01:16:08] Full circle.

BOILEAU: [01:16:09] Full circle. Peace Corps. I would never have been able to do that. I would not have had anything that I could have done. So the last ten years of my teaching at George Mason is always at least two courses in intercultural communication. And I, and I loved it. I had some unique approaches. For example, just give me one example. In our training, they wanted us to get an experience in an interculture, how could you integrate into a village when you don't have any real contacts or background? So we, in one blustery cold December day, we got on busses in Bisbee and drove all the way up to the Hopi River, one of the plateaus in, on the Hopis, which are in the middle of the Navajo, but we were dropped off, 45, 46 of us. We were given a

sack lunch that had a sandwich and stuff, so we didn't put a burden on the people.

BOILEAU: [01:17:13] All right. We were supposed to get inside a *hogan*. That's the Navajo term, so I can't remember the Hopi term, but we're supposed to get inside a house and be able to meet with them and spend the day with them. And then at 4:00, at 5:00, we'd leave and then the bus would come back up to the top and then we'd all get on the bus.

GANZGLASS: [01:17:31] Mm hmm.

BOILEAU: [01:17:32] So I was wearing my London Fog raincoat that I had purchased when I was teaching beforehand. And because we wanted to dress nicely and of course I had as much clothes and sweaters on as I could get because it was really cold, below freezing up there. And we spread out and by 10:00, we were dropped off at 8:00. By 10:00, all but two or three were in places. And every time I approached people, they'd run away. And I spent the whole day, I was the only Peace Corps volunteer. Of course, I'm thinking I'm going to get kicked out of Peace Corps because I couldn't figure out how to integrate. So finally, at 4:15, a little boy came up to me and said, you want to come to my grandmother's house? Of course I wanted to hug him, which was inappropriate. But yeah, I just wanted to say, thank God. I could say I made it into something.

BOILEAU: [01:18:35] Very interesting. I got into her little hut that she was in, or whatever they called it. And the amazing thing to me, it just blew my mind, was a whole wall where pictures of Kennedy and his assassination and newspaper articles on the assassination. And of course, being what I call this, you know, I call, I'm part of what I think the Kennedy generation was, volunteers in the sixties. They just idolized Kennedy and thought this was reason we should go in. And here I am. She's saved. He's saved. I'm in the house with somebody that appreciates the same person, that I thought was really cool.

GANZGLASS: [01:19:15] That's very cool. Very nice.

BOILEAU: [01:19:17] And so that was just a really. And so we talked for 45 minutes and then I left. And then I found out why some other people got told because I was wearing a London Fog, which is what the Social Security inspectors wear when they come up. And they're trying to catch people that are claiming too many kids. They have a feeling that one, one or three, you know, that a five year old or a six year old might be credited to seven or eight huts. And they had been trying, they were in '69 were trying to figure that out. And they figured that I had integrated that, the Peace Corps thing. But people had said, there's this guy out there and they said, well, we think you got a person. And they looked out. And then I'd walk by and they'd say, oh, no, that's Don Boileau, he's part of our group.

GANZGLASS: [01:20:11] So how did you find that out?

BOILEAU: [01:20:14] From other volunteers because they came up to me and said, I heard about you. People would tell them that they thought that they weren't quite trustworthy, that Peace Corps was trying to let this.

GANZGLASS: [01:20:25] Non-verbal communication.

BOILEAU: [01:20:27] Non-verbal communication with them. So it was a, to me it was just a really interesting. And then I didn't mind, but boy was I cold all day long. It was just, the wind was up there and it was something else.

GANZGLASS: [01:20:44] So. So one more question before we end. So you've talked about the impact on you and your family. You've talked about the impact of Peace Corps on Korea, English, as well as friendships. What do you think has been the impact of Peace Corps on the United States, or has there been any?

BOILEAU: [01:21:09] Uh. Another big story.

GANZGLASS: [01:21:11] Okay.

BOILEAU: [01:21:11] Teaching in Central Michigan.

GANZGLASS: [01:21:13] Yeah.

BOILEAU: [01:21:14] A volun-, one of my students. She was, I was her adviser on her master's degree. One of my students was a Peace Corps volunteer in Columbia, and she was fairly active. And I got a call at 8:00 in the morning. She said, Don. Or 7:30 actually. She said, Don, when you go to church today, get your church to be willing to sponsor a Cambodian refugee. So Joni and I organized, we got, 30 refugees came to Mt. Pleasant, we got five churches. I got my church. Joni didn't have a church, so she was dependent. But we got five churches to work together to bring in 30 people from a refugee camp in Thailand that were Cambodians. Um.

BOILEAU: [01:22:03] And Sit and Kenai Train were the couple that we had, they had lost a child in the march out of Cambodia, starved to death and died in Sit's arms. And Kenai, Sit couldn't stand up, Kenai could. That's the wife. And she, she did that. Anyway, we met them at the airport in Saginaw. And your life possession are in one paper bag. And you have a picture of a son that died. They have had two kids. Kathy and I been to both their weddings. We saw Sit and Kenai last April when we were out in California, spent a day with them. And so Peace Corps' impact is, I think it's been huge on the United States.

BOILEAU: [01:22:53] If you look at my work with the first model syllabus for intercultural communication. And we brought in another group of Cambodians, about 40 or 50, and then we expanded and took some of the other smaller towns around Mount Pleasant. So there's about a community, there are about 100 people now. Sit and Kenai, having lost their child, when Dofu, which is their first child now. Uh, he has an American name everybody calls him, but I'm still Dofu. Here's the little things. When Dofu got pneumonia, Kenai goes to the hospital and climbs in the oxygen tent and holding him because she's not going to let him die without her being in there. I get a call from the hospital and the administrator said, how in the hell, what are we going to do? This is against, we can't do this, it's a violation of stuff.

BOILEAU: [01:23:51] So I worked out a compromise. Maybe my argument was basic. You've got to understand, she lost one child. She can sit cross-legged all night long. Don't worry about that. She will not break your tent. You know, that's their concern. Don't worry about germs. If he dies because of germs from his mother, that's different from, he's dying because with his mother outside the tent. And you have to adapt to that. Well, we can't by. I said, you just do. You just do that because that's the human thing to do.

GANZGLASS: [01:24:27] Mm hmm.

BOILEAU: [01:24:27] And I, and I just, you know, we had training in Peace Corps about what do you do when you got this cultural difference and how do you offer and how do you. The first thing is you sympathize with their standards and that sort of thing. And I says, I know, you know, your whole thing is, but who's going to say anything? We're not going to complain. We're going to hope that Dofu is alive in the morning and Dofu is out of the oxygen tent in whatever your doctor says, two days. It actually was the next day. He improved so much, he was out of the tent. And I said, those are the little things that Peace Corps volunteers suddenly gets called to.

BOILEAU: [01:25:09] I, one other thing that whenever. The first day of class, I walk around the George Mason for 20, 26 or 27 years. First day of class I look around, I'm looking for international students holding a map and just completely lost. Their English isn't good enough. And I walk over and volunteer to help. And I just did that because I was a Peace Corps volunteer. Because I was two years getting lost in Korea and people helped me so much. I had this huge debt I got to take care of I just felt for the rest of my life.

GANZGLASS: [01:25:43] Good. And always the people to volunteer.

BOILEAU: [01:25:45] Yeah. And so, you know, I'm active in the Northern Virginia Peace Corps.

GANZGLASS: [01:25:52] Mm hmm.

BOILEAU: [01:25:52] I'm on the board. You just kind of do those things. And I look at, Peace Corps is verified. It's not that what we've changed the world like we thought we were going to do to help the huts and villages. It's that we changed the world by coming back and, and doing things and, uh, I. Saturday night at a party, I met a couple that were Peace Corps volunteers in Nigeria, and they spent 51 years in Saint Croix helping them try to develop economically, as economic advisers. But they'll tell you the same thing that I just said, that it's what they did when they came back. Saint Croix is part of the Virgin Islands, you know, that are part of the U.S.

GANZGLASS: [01:26:44] Mm hmm.

BOILEAU: [01:26:45] And so you just do those things.

GANZGLASS: [01:26:48] Yeah.

BOILEAU: [01:26:48] And some are more direct, you know, like Phil with his camps and stuff that have a really direct, some are indirect like myself. But it's, but it's your whole lifetime of being able to, to do that.

GANZGLASS: [01:27:03] That's great. So thank you.

BOILEAU: [01:27:06] Thank you.

GANZGLASS: [01:27:08] Excellent interview.

BOILEAU: [01:27:08] Love to talk about it.

[END OF INTERVIEW]