

7 AM - 14 OCTOBER 1964

LADAG, LACAS NORTE
PRINCIPALIA TEXICANO HOTEL

WISCONSIN STATE UNIVERSITY

STEVENS POINT

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

54481

My Dear Family -

It is early morning in this northern city located on the China Sea - I was awakened this morning at 5 AM with the sounds of early morning - roosters crowing - dogs barking (I hate to say it but at this point I even miss Buff & his barking!) and the occasional wail of a jeepney going by. Now I want to visit with you before the day gets any further along - in activity or in heat.

Yesterday was full and interesting - It started off in a most interesting way. I needed to be at the airport by 6 AM so I was up by 5 and caught a taxi at 5:45. This particular taxi driver didn't seem to understand English yet I communicated with him sufficiently to explain that I wanted to go to the domestic airport - Manila has two, the international being the other one. We started south on Roxas Blvd. - at the usual break-neck speed when all of a sudden the hood on the car flew up blocking the driver's vision. He stopped on the breaks and managed to come to a safe stop - just two feet away from a cart loaded with all kinds of junk. The interesting thing about it was that when he got out to fix the hood he swore - rather profusely - in English. Such is another of the facets of life in the Philippines -

Our plane was full - a DC-3 (Santoyaga plane that North Central uses in Stevens Point). The area in front of the first seat was piled high with cargo to be unloaded at Basco, a town on the Batanes Islands and just 70 miles from Taiwan (Formosa). We stopped twice before landing at Lacey - once at CAWAYAN and again at TUGUEGARAO - both on the Eastern or Pacific side of Luzon. Both towns are in nice growing areas and it was interesting to see the rice fields in various stages of growth

under cultivation.

Somehow the word had not gotten to the people at the Northern
Lutheran Teachers College that Mr. Augustine and I would be arriving for no one
was at the airport to meet or greet us. We took the jeepney into town - along
with 11 other people - and came direct to this "hotel".

The Texicano hotel is "the best hotel in La Laguna" - it is owned and
managed by an American from Texas who came here during the war, married a
Filipino girl, and stayed. The word icano means "American from" in the local
dialect. Hence the name of the hotel, Texicano, means the American from Texas.

My room is very simple yet fairly clean and I had a fair rest last night.

This is Mr. Augustine's home so he was most anxious to see his family
and be with them. Coming in on the plane he was very excited to see
his home town - pick out his home and point out to me the points
of interest. I could understand his feeling for it is how I feel when I was
Stevens Point and the plane flies over Park Ridge - how I will feel on
the 2nd of November when I come home.

We went out to the school and toured the grounds, met the Supt. and
Mr. Santos, the candidate for here, and some of the faculty. Then
Mr. Augustine brought me back to the hotel and he went to have lunch with
his daughters (who are going to the college and rooming with friends) and visit
with them. He returned at 3 pm to pick me up and return to the College
where I again visited with Mr. Santos and was a guest at a "social".

Yesterday afternoon was the day that they inducted the officers
of the senior class and that means that they used the occasion for a
"social". They had a guest speaker - the dean of graduate programs from
Northern Christian College here - the president and vice president of
the senior class spoke - they introduced me and I spoke - and in
between each they had a dance. After the formalities they served
sandwiches and ice cream followed by more dancing. This was
supposed to start at 4:30 - actually got underway at 5:15 and
I got away at 7:30 p.m.!

There are three Peace Corps volunteers teaching at the college. Two of them are from New York State and one from New Jersey. The two from NY have been here (Levy) just 10 days and in the Philippines about 6 weeks. The one from New Jersey has been here about 26 months and plans to stay at least until May - the end of the school year. The two from NY are teaching English and Science - the one from New Jersey is teaching modern Mathematics.

Melvin Beeble, the one from New Jersey invited me to have dinner with him last night - following the "social" so I went to his "house" and spent a ~~fantastic~~ very interesting two hours with him. He has a young man from a nearby town who takes care of his "house" - does his cooking, washing, etc. and is a companion and friend. Mel seems to optimize all that you would want in a Peace Corps volunteer. He has made a point to learn the native dialect - and speaks it very well. He is warm and outgoing and the people (students at the college and the children at the campus school) respond to his work and personality. Mel wants to return to the States and work on his master's degree - hoping to teach in college when he can. The chance to visit and get to know the work of these three young men was worth the trip itself - not alone the value of seeing the college & talking with the other people here.

You can see that yesterday was quite full! I find myself thinking so much of you and wanting to be with you. I am thankful for my wife and children and am grateful to God for watching over all of us while we are apart - and trust him to write us soon.

Love,
Jim