

January 26, 1986

Dear loved ones,

Aloha from Hawaii in the wonderful name of Jesus!

Jackie, Jeff, Jennifer and I all say "hello!" with love. We miss all of you, and hope that you are well and in the joy of the Lord. We are finally feeling somewhat settled here at "PACU", Pacific-Asia Christian University. Our busy schedule and living arrangements have required quite a bit of energy and adjustment, and so it's been a little difficult to find time to write.

Our departure from Minneapolis on December 30 was hectic to say the least, and if it were not for the loving help of the whole Comstock family, I don't know how we would have made it! Thanks Vern, Judy, Matt and John! Well, the airline dutifully accepted our large array of luggage and we were off into the skies on time. I am sure we had the world's heaviest carry-on bags, due to our concern for being overweight on luggage and not wanting to pay extra. So our muscles got some exercise along the way.

We stopped in San Francisco to spend New Year's with Jackie's mom, brother and family. Then on Friday the 3rd, we were off to Honolulu, and then hopped over to the "Big Island" of Hawaii and the small town of Kailua-Kona. And so, here we are.

After registering on Saturday the 4th, we were shown to our room at PACU where we would be living for the next three months. We found it a little nicer (in some ways) than we had expected. We have a small bathroom of our own with a shower and usually with hot water. There is a small 2' by 2' refrigerator that keeps things cool, in fact icy, and runs all the time. Above the entry to the room and above the bath is a "loft" with stairs down to the main room. There Jeff and Jennifer sleep on floor mattresses. The floor is unfinished bare wood, and it isn't tall enough to stand up straight there, but it helps make sleeping arrangements a little easier. Our room has a large patio door opening onto a deck, from which we have a beautiful view of the Pacific Ocean. It has been unnecessary to close this door since we arrived.

In the room is a small couch, and upholstered chair, a small chest of drawers, a closet and some shelves. There is a small table next to the refrigerator, and a round table (a little wobbly) and four chairs out on the deck. Our foot locker became the coffee table, and with a couple of plants and some candles, a popcorn maker and a few pictures, the place has started to feel somewhat homey.

Two cats make themselves at home in our room quite regularly, and other living things would like to do the same, but to them we are not as hospitable. A few cockroaches must be stamped out each day; cleaning and sweeping must be done constantly to keep the ants at bay. A mouse has made his or her rounds, but has so far has not chosen personal relationship; our friends two doors down are seeking to evict a larger relative -- a rat. That's life in the tropics, I guess.

We are within a mile walk of the shopping district, and the ocean shore. Swimming beaches are only accessible by car, but it is pleasant to walk near town and sit on the rocks and enjoy the surf. Temperatures are normally pleasant, with afternoons sometimes a bit too warm, and nights cool enough for pleasant sleeping. PACU being all uphill from the town and shore means quite a bit of energetic walking available to us whenever we need it!

Classes for all of us begin at 8 a.m. Monday through Friday, running till midafternoon. After supper, Jackie and I serve on the kitchen clean up crew with nine others. We usually finish this task between 8 and 8:30 p.m. On Friday evenings, all of YWAM comes together for a meeting; there are usually six or seven hundred people at these meetings, which are enjoyed by all. Weekends are generally free; we may spend some time with fellow students and families, do necessary shopping, take the kids to a beach if possible, or do some of the homework required for our course. Sunday morning means going to a church of our choice; we have been attending a large charismatic church that meets in one of the hotels, where many YWAM'ers go.

Jeff and Jennifer seem to be adjusting well, both having made some friends their own age. Jeff has a friend whose grandfather was a missionary in New Guinea with the same mission at the same time as Jeff's granddad - Jackie's father.

Jackie and I are in the Crossroads discipleship school with 81 others. Some are families with children like us, others are couples with grown children, and many are single -- most of these have been through divorce. The average age of our class is 47. The class is made up of a few ministers, some teachers, nurses, businessmen, farmers, mechanics, musicians, factory workers, and many others. Some are new believers, some long time Christians; some are hurting, some are happy. The majority are from the USA, but other nations are represented; several come from South Africa, several from Canada, and several from New Zealand; and Iran, Singapore, Norway, France and Switzerland are represented. All regions of the USA are represented, with at least twelve (with children) from Minnesota!

We are becoming good friends with a pastor and wife from New Zealand, a high school counselor from South Africa, and a computer analyst from Norway! (as well as others) Three months of community living, sharing joys and sorrows, learning and praying together, scrubbing pots together, etc. will produce some life long friendships.

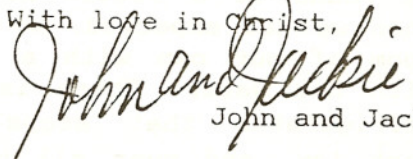
The staff of our particular school is made up of four couples who serve us as a student body in many ways. We have one teacher each week (generally) who may or may not be on the staff of YWAM. This past week was the teaching highlight for Jackie and myself so far; our teacher was pastor

Dan Sneed from Los Angeles, who pastors a Foursquare church there. Much was accomplished through his ministry, which was not only teaching but also the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit, especially the word of knowledge. He had a beautiful word for Jackie and I, picking me out of the crowd and knowing by the Spirit that I was a pastor, and then reading our hearts "by the Spirit". We would like more of that!

Next week, the first week of February, we have two teachers, one of whom is Derek Prince, whom many of you know. Each week is another strong spiritual dose! Jackie made the comment that our experience here is "more than we expected"! More of everything -- more blessings, more work, more discipleship, more physical exercise, more insects, more beautiful scenery, more fabulous weather...(meals and classes are all outside or under an open pavilion). Things we have had to buy are more expensive (and we've had to buy more of them!) We've more room than we expected, with more defects in the room...and more greatly anointed instructors! Eating YWAM food has been more difficult than expected for the family, so we've had to supplement our diet more than anticipated.

In all these things, I think God wants to teach us that He is "El-Shaddai" -- the God who is MORE THAN ENOUGH! Trials of life can seem "more than enough", but God's presence and blessings to us in Christ are also "more than enough".

Well, we'll close this letter and get it in the mail. We'll write you again soon. Keep your eyes on Jesus, and love one another as Jesus loves you.

With love in Christ,

John and Jackie