

The Joan Times

Newsletter #9
from Joan Huguenard
July 30, 1987

Surprise!!!

You didn't expect to hear from me again so soon, but I just had to say... WAIT! Do not send any letters or packages to me at Nanjing Teachers University. Here's why....

When I arrived in Nanjing on July 16th after a 27-hour train ride from Shenyang, I was met by the head of the Non-English Majors Teaching Group. Blow number one was learning I'd been assigned to his group where my teaching assignment would be dull and nearly fruitless, giving the wrong subjects to classes of 40 to 50 students with little motivation, since English for them is required, not desired. Blow #2 was also struck before we'd even reached the university. Unlike the usual Chinese posture, this man was terse and unyielding when told I'd be late returning in September because of my son's wedding. The third blow came just 5 minutes later when I was ushered into the room that would be mine in the Fall and found it to be one room instead of the two I'd been promised, and a hotel room at that! Would you want to live in a hotel for a year with a lousy teaching assignment?

I got a map of the city and jumped on my bicycle. My self confidence jumped about a thousand points as I poked my nose into here and there, followed up every lead and pedaled my legs off. Four days later I had a job in a Training Center for persons preparing to go abroad. They have a year of intensive English – nothing else – so they're highly motivated graduate students and adults. I'll do oral and aural work with them in small groups, with lots of freedom to do things in my own (or rather the Lord's own) creative ways. Marvelous.

I will share a flat with an Australian teacher who taught there last year. With the exception of the six of us foreign teachers, the building is occupied entirely by Chinese. It seems the small foreign group does a fair amount of shared cooking and eating. A regular little community. Joy. Twenty-one-year-old Chance, from America, is said to be a fabulous cook. And when none of us is up to cooking, we can buy our meal at the teachers' canteen right next-door – amazingly clean.

Mr. Wu was so anxious for me to say "Yes", he simply asked me what date I can get there, and was happy with my response of September 10th. That'll give me time to stock up in Hong Kong on my way in.

So DO, ___DO,___DO send any letters or packages to me at:

Joan Huguenard
Nanjing Aeronautical Institute
Nanjing, P.R. China

Need a reminder of what to enclose? – Cancelled commemorative stamps (I never have enough), magazines, books, greeting cards, key chains, scotch tape, stickers, scratch'n'sniff anything, postcards, pictures of everyday American life (from magazines, photos, posters, whatever). Also, books and booklets of poetry and inspiration, Guideposts, Ideals.

For me – any high fiber cereals, good popping corn, current paperbacks, slide film, cheese, CHEESE, CHEESE. It's fun to receive sample packets of anything. Your package will take about 3 months to arrive. But do NOT feel obligated to send one. DO NOT!!

Just in case you did not receive Newsletter Number Eight, let me repeat the following information:

I plan to be at Bibler's Pancake House on North Ironwood Drive in South Bend between 8:00 and 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, August 8th; and at Denny's on North Port Washington Road in Milwaukee between 8:00 and 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, August 15th. I'm hopin' some of you will be hungry for breakfast 'round about the same times.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Because this town will be a bit like China that week with DROVES of people around – because of the International Special Olympics – it will be very helpful if I can give Mr. Bibler a hint of the number of people who will join me. So if you possibly can call Charlie's by

Thursday or Friday with your name and the number of persons, I'll call in the reservations. Also, the time you plan to come. If you haven't called but find you are free, please come anyway.

The ringing phone is not likely to wake up the baby. Charlie, Jr. is altogether wonderful. Almost ready to start walking. And his Mommy and Daddy are SO happy with him. I'm having a wonderful visit. Spent a few days in Sunny Vale, California, where Frank & Yukari and John & Peg have just bought new homes. In fact, I arrived on Frank's moving day! I don't mind moving as long as it's somebody else that's moving and I was glad to be a tiny bit of help. Unfortunately (?) I'll miss Peg and

John's moving day next month. I'll be busy traveling around visiting other children and grandchildren, including the latest, Tom and Cathy's, born on June 3rd – another boy. Now I have three granddaughters and three grandsons.

From above the clouds I watched the sun rise as I approached Chicago. Spectacular. Hope the sun keeps shining on your days.

Love – Peace – Joy,

Joan