**1967**

The family takes the biggest, longest, most expensive trip they ever have, which inspires the longest letter Dad has ever written. There are plenty of things that need to be painted. (Will there ever be a year when there are *not* plenty of things that need to be painted?) Mom directs her first choir. And sews all the clothes. And begins the time consuming task of finding a new minister. Andy stops wearing diapers. Alan has a wonderful day. Lisa runs head first into a brick wall. Lesle is the next nearsighted Smith. Dad learns to spell pulpit. But not rehearsal. There is always plenty of ice-cream. And even after all these years I am still inordinately pleased when Dad says the girls did, not just *fine*, and not just *OK*, but *very fine* on their first piano recital, and Mom says we were *the best.*

**1-?-67 – Sun 5:30 PM -** Dear Mother, Aunt Clara, M.J. & Bill, I’ll start this now although I won’t get it mailed until tomorrow. I want to enclose the Christmas pictures so will have to weigh the envelope at work. Ruth bought a Monopoly game on the way home from church and she has been playing the girls (Alan is a little young for it) for 2 hrs. They may have to stop playing for supper. I remember playing a lot of Monopoly when I was a child, especially with Richard Searl.

I was just out shoveling some more snow off the driveway. It started snowing last night and was still snowing this afternoon. I expect we have received another 6-8 inches and there has been some drifting with the high wind. These last 2 wks have had the most snow I’ve ever been in. We had some snow and freezing rain last Wed and they let us off work early. It was fortunate they did because it was getting slick by the time we got home. There was a forecast for 6-7 inches in the Southern Suburbs but we only got a couple of inches of slush; it wasn’t nearly as bad as they had predicted. However, some of the other suburbs got the 6-7 inches predicted and then with todays snow, they have really had enough of winter.

We were able to go to work last Fri without any trouble, and we shouldn’t have too much trouble tomorrow, unless it snows a lot more tonight. One of the members of the carpool quit so he could have a more flexible schedule. We have no prospects right now for a fifth person, so we’ll have to alternate on Weds. Next Thurs I have to go to one of the nearby high schools to help out on their career day. They wanted someone in the chemical industry with a biological orientation. Our consultant from the University of Michigan will be here Fri. We’re trying to finish one of our major projects at work so I’m entering a fairly busy writing phase within the next few weeks.

Yesterday AM we all drove over into Chicago Heights to leave our big family picture for framing. A good custom frame job of best quality will cost $24.00. After we got home the older kids went to a movie over at the school. After they got home we all went to the plaza to get new shoes for all the children. Ruth and I then got ready to go out and I picked up a baby sitter who fixed pizza for the kids supper. We ate at a local restaurant and then drove all the way (45 mi) to the Lake Shore Club on the Near North Side of Chicago. The Milliken University Choir was giving their annual Chicago area concert (they sing at other places in the Chicago area also) at the Lake Shore Club. This concert is more for alumna and friends in the area. We were a little bit late getting there because of the snow on the side streets etc. The concert was fine, of course, and we got to see the Hofflands and some other people we know. A year ago I was in Chicago for that Cardiology meeting at the time of the Lake Shore concert so, as you may remember, I went over by cab from the hotel I was staying at. We got home about 12:30 last night.

That was nice that they finally built the American Baptist Student Center in Lawrence. They were talking about it when I was there and it has been 10 yrs since I was last there. The minister (Rev. Allen) that was there when I left is still there although that Rev. Ernst Klein (yes, he was the one that wrote that Secret Place article) is back East. We still here from him, and some of the other people that we knew at KU at Christmas time.

As I said over the phone I had your letter written but didn’t get it mailed because of the weather. I finally got it mailed on Sat so it took just until Tues which was about twice as long as usual. We went to choir practice last Thurs night (it was called off the week before – as was church a week ago today). There was only a very small crowd at church today because of the weather, and only 16 in choir (1 tenor). Many people took 1-3 days to get home during the storm and several of the men in the block didn’t get home the first night – so I guess I’ve been lucky.

Glad to have your letters and clippings. Our organist who remembered the Lesters is a Mrs. Howarth. Her husband is not active in the church music but I believe he still composes. I doubt if the Lesters knew them personally, but they remembered the name Lester. Ruth was very glad to have the kids go back to school. The girls didn’t go back until Thurs and Alan was off all last week. We can’t do too much more on the house until we pay off some of our bills. Mon – had more snow but made it to work OK and it’s clear now. Return pictures as usual.

**1-26-67** - From Wikipedia: “The Chicago blizzard of 1967 struck northeast Illinois and northwest Indiana on January 26-27, 1967, with a record-setting 23 inches of snowfall in Chicago and its suburbs before the storm abated the next morning. As of March 2019, it remains the greatest snowfall in one storm in Chicago history. Duration: 29 hours. Damage: $150 million (1967 dollars). All transportation stopped. Funnel clouds sighted. Thousands of people stranded in offices, schools, and buses.” What I remember is jumping off the roof into the drifted snow.

**2-14-67 – Tues PM -** I just got home from work so will write this now so it can be mailed when we take books back to the library this evening. Yesterday and today have been warmer, and some of the snow has melted; there is still a lot to melt however. We had another 2 inches of snow starting last Sat afternoon although we had no problems going to work yesterday AM. Pete went to Decatur last weekend and they do not have any snow there.

My watch stopped so it is in for repair. I just had it cleaned and repaired not too long ago so I hope its nothing serious. Its worked very well for the 18 years. We all say “Thank You” for the valentines. The kids, of course, were quite excited and had their valentines for their classmates and neighborhood friends all signed and ready to give several days ago. Ruth is out right now with Andy delivering his valentines. Ruth said that Alan came home from school all excited and he said he had had a wonderful day. The girls are doing very well with their piano lessons and they have a duet that they play. I just looked at their report cards and they are doing fine there, also. Now that my chair and the rocker are in the family room, Ruth and I sit more in there while the kids are watching TV. Last evening Pinochio was on TV. Sun evening we turned the TV on for the annual showing of the “Wizard of Oz,” and the TV set wouldn’t work. Fortunately, the kids were able to go to a neighbors house to watch it. They were very unhappy at first, even though they have seen the “Wizard of Oz” every year.

When I was a boy, and when we took that trip to Kansas City to see the Chester Smiths, didn’t they take us to see “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs” at one of the big theaters in downtown Kansas City. We were saddened to hear that Rev. Moyes had passed away. He was our minister there in K. City at Roanoke Presbyterian Church and they were so good to us, and we always tried to see them. We are glad that we got to see him last June on the way back from Kansas. He had had surgery before June, but it wasn’t until after we had been there that the cancer showed up again, and it became apparent that he could not recover. They have 4 children, the oldest in college. They have an Andy 4 yrs old so it is fortunate that Mrs. Moyes will have the younger child to occupy her time.

Lesle is saying she doesn’t see too well at a distance so I guess she is the next nearsighted Smith. Choir practice Thurs night is at one of the choir members homes. We did not have to sing Sun as the junior choir sang. I guess our minister (he’s been at the church 16 yrs) has come under some criticism, since he announced that a meeting was to be held last night with the Elders and some outside men that were consulted (usual Presbyterian procedure) with regard to his leadership. They just moved into a new manse and the church building is only a little over a year old. We stayed home last weekend. I put up the shutters for the kitchen window that looks into the carport.

Last week Ruth had devotions at women’s association on Tues. She went to circle on Wed night, and to League of Women Voters for the first time on Wed AM. We had regular choir practice on Thurs night. We just finished our Valentines Day dinner. The kids each had a present and Ruth gave me a new belt. I gave her a cookbook that she needed. We were glad to have your letter. Take your time on the pictures. Yes, the houses were across the street. Yes, our house is turquoise. A favorite 60s color! I don’t recall the Winston Schmidt or Warren Schmitt. Sorry to hear about Ray Law; how old was he? Is Evelyn Law still in Wichita? Hope you’re all OK.

**2-28-67 – Tues PM -** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, I’ll write this now that we have finished supper, and then mail it when I go out after a bit to run some errands. I have to pick up some more paint for Ruth to use in the front bathroom. The man came yesterday to install the new medicine chest, and flanking coach lights, in the front bathroom. The original chest was wearing out and the wall was rusting through. I put in the shutters some time ago and they have fabric which matches the shower curtain and wallpaper. It will really look nice when it is all done. The installation of the lights and chest was too big a job for me since it involved some electrical wiring, etc.

We were glad to hear, when I called Mother and received her letter yesterday, that you had gotten along OK with your tooth work. Our minister has resigned. We did not realize that people were unhappy with him, but we haven’t been here very long, of course. He has been with the church for 16 yrs or so, and they just finished building the new church, and the new manse nearby. We went through a minister change in Decatur as you may remember.

Our consultant from the Department of Pharmacology at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor was here today and we had several hours of interesting conversation. I’m still very busy at work. Not much else going on this week, except for choir practice on Thurs. Last Thurs PM was our second blizzard, and as I told Mother on the phone I was on the Plaza Shopping Center running errands between 7 and 7:30 PM when the snow and wind came up very suddenly, and I had almost no visibility to drive home with, but I made it OK. Naturally we didn’t have choir practice. It had snowed and blown very hard earlier in the day last Thurs, but it had let up during the time we drove home.

Last Fri night I had my magic show for the Cub Scouts at church. It was very cold, and they don’t have a large pack, but they enjoyed it and I did some tricks I hadn’t done for 15 or more years. The two shows I’ve done here, and the one I did in Decatur are the only shows I’ve done since we’ve been married. Lesle gets her glasses tomorrow. Ruth is ready to paint a shelf I fixed to go above the windows in the kitchen. Ruth just finished bell-bottom trousers (matching) for the girls. I really don’t remember what year Velma Moore taught my s.s. class. I’m not sure we saw “Sound of Music.” Is warmer today and has melted a lot but there are still lots of big piles of snow. Hope you’re all OK.

**3-9-67 – Thurs PM -** If we mail this on the way to choir tonight you may receive it by Sat. Our regular choir practice baby sitter lives over near the plaza, so I have quite a drive to pick her up. I just read in the paper where UFO’s (“flying saucers”) were sighted over NW Kansas and Illinois last night. I guess a lot of people believe some of them are real? We had a long letter from the Laidigs and they are busy, as usual. They are officers in the Eastern Star this year so that takes a lot of time. They will go South sometime again on highway business and they may drive to Alaska sometime next summer. Ruth has just finished a count-thread cross-stitch sunflower with the name Kansas, and has started the Illinois violet. These are the two states in which our children were born. They will be framed and will go in our bedroom. We got our big family picture back with its custom frame and it will hang in the bedroom.

 

Still hanging in Mom and Dad’s bedroom 50 years later.

Lesle had a nice birthday and she says “Thank You.” Lesle is wearing her new dress tomorrow, after Ruth gets it shortened. For her birthday dinner Lesle requested spaghetti and sauce, and she had a nice chocolate cake. Her birthday party was last Sat afternoon and she had invited three guests. One of the three was her best friend Carol, who lives next door, but she couldn’t come because she had scarlet fever. We have all been exposed, but nobody has come down with anything yet.



Lisa and Andy in front of Lesle’s birthday gifts.

From now on, there will be pictures in front of the deacon’s bench on every birthday.

I finally got the shelf up over the window in the kitchen and we have all the mortar and pestles on it with some other copper things. Also still there 50 years later ☺ Andy hardly needs diapers at night anymore, so we’re real pleased. A week ago Spotty came in with paralysis of both hind limbs. He has gradually recovered, but still has a little limp. Last Sat afternoon during the girls party I took the boys to the lumber yard and we got lumber and built Spotty a house. I don’t know how much he has used it. We were glad to have Aunt Clara’s and your letter. I can’t think of any other news. Hope you’re all OK. We got our new lamps for our bedroom. I stayed home from church last Sun because the kids were exposed to scarlet fever and they did have runny noses.

**3-24-67 – Thurs PM –** We were glad to have your letter, and we appreciate your concern about the scarlet fever. As far as we know, none of us had it, although we did have a few runny noses. We’ve had a pretty healthy winter; Lisa’s one week out of school was the worst, I guess. I just read a story to Andy; he demands a story every night before bed. Ruth is staying home tonight, and I’ll go to choir – we’re working on Easter music. (Our baby sitter couldn’t come tonight.) I painted the living room last Sat; Ruth just finished the painting today – the doors and woodwork. It looks a lot better and much lighter; it’s an antique white. I must get busy on the income tax. I’ve started it, but that’s all. Ruth finished the other Roman Shade for the boys room and that essentially finishes everything in there. The boys do need bunk beds, however. Her next job is to make the Roman Shade (with the cloth that matches the wallpaper) for the kitchen window above the shutters.

We’ll be home tomorrow night as usual, and have our usual popcorn. Sat morning we’ll all be going to a circus at the local high school. In the afternoon the kids have their play they go to. Ruth and I plan to put up the front bathroom wallpaper (again, it matches the shutter curtains and the shower curtain). Sun afternoon we’re going with the Luna’s (the one that works with me) downtown to Orchestra Hall (I suppose that was where Aunt Margaret sang with the Chicago Symphony years ago) to hear Andres Segovia, the world famous classical guitarist. We have tickets for another concert in April, and one in May. I’m still busy at work and overall organization is improving. Our weather has been normal or slightly colder, for this time of the year. It goes above freezing every day so the snow has melted gradually. There are still some piles left, however, and it’s almost two months since the big storm. Hope Aunt Clara got over her tooth work OK. Thanks for the pillow – Alan wanted to thank you especially for it. It matches our green color scheme perfectly. Hope you’re all OK. Our kids watched Jack and the Beanstock.



Easter Sunday – March 26.

Those hats. Those gloves. Those jackets. Mom made the dresses, of course.

**3-30-67 – Thurs –** As usual, if I don’t mail this today you won’t get it by Sat. We were glad to have your letter and clippings this week. Thats interesting about the possible new Katz Store over on 3rd Street – that would about put Carl Hoyes out of business wouldn’t it? I suppose Woody would be affected, also, if he were planning to stay in business. The switch on the TV finally quit working entirely so the kids are sad at this moment. Its been causing trouble for some time, but we can usually get it turned on if we keep trying. Ruth just called the man and he will come look at it in the morning.

Today was real warm and its nice to have the kids playing outside again; it’s now much easier to keep the house clean. We’ll have to start working in the yard before long. The pieces of the swingset are in the yard but I don’t know whether I can get it back together or not. The kids have the carport so filled with their things that I can’t drive the car in. We don’t have choir practice tonight – sorta a vacation from the Easter schedule, and the choir director is also out of town.

Last Fri I painted in the family room (Ruth had started it the night before), and then we all got dressed and ate at a restaurant in Monee – the first little town I go through on the way to work. The children were very good and ate very well; I believe they did as well as they ever have eating out. We sang at the Good Friday service (we went directly from the restaurant); the children all went. Sat I finished painting the family room (blue and 2 coats) and we then had a picnic since it was warm. I took the car for oil after that.

Sun AM there were two services but we only had to sing at the second service, same as on Palm Sunday. Sun night I papered the front bathroom. I don’t like to paper but it looks OK. Mon night I cut the carpet for the bathroom, put up the wooden towel rod and Ruth bought the towel stand with bench for the bathroom; that finished the front bathroom and I believe its the fanciest bathroom we’ve ever had.

Tues at 4:00 Ruth picked up the College of Emporia’s Choir (2 boys and 2 girls) Members at the church. They came here to freshen up, and we all went back to church for the potluck supper followed by the concert. They knew Danny Musgrave, he sang with them last year when he was at C of E. They had to be taken to the church early the next AM to take their bus for Detroit and the next concert. We had volunteered to keep 2 or 4 if necessary, and they did need us for 4 since there were cancellations. Glad we could talk on Easter and hope you’re all fine.

**4-8-67 – Sat noon -** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. & Bill, You can share this with the others, as usual. I’ve been getting the Hutchinson letter off on Thurs, recently, but didn’t make it this time. No real excuse, I guess. The girls are practicing and we’ll have lunch in a few minutes. I believe they have a recital the 28th of May. They are doing fine. This morning I went over and picked up the soporanino recorder which Ruth had ordered last October. They come from Germany and are made out of wood. I had never heard of them until Ruth bought the other two which we have.

Ruth is going shopping this afternoon. We thought we might go on a picnic today, but it is colder and cloudy. We took one picnic lunch a couple of weeks ago. I need to work on income tax some more today. This years is the most complicated I’ve ever had because of the moving expense questions etc. Armour has to report the money they paid to move you on the withholding form, but you then deduct it. The Investors Mutual has some capitol gain’s, as you may know, so that has to be reported on a separate form. Thats my first time for that.

Week after next is the Federation Meetings here in Chicago. Thats the big meeting of biologists which meets every fourth year in Chicago, and the other three years in Atlantic City. I came to one here in Chicago several years ago and I’ve been to a couple in Atlantic City. I’m not presenting a paper, but my name is on a paper being presented by one of the other fellows in the department. I plan to go all week (Mon-Fri) and will probably come home each night. Ruth may go down on Wed to the pharmacology society banquet, if she can get an all day baby sitter. She would shop some. I applied for membership in the pharmacology society, but I haven’t heard anything. I’m not counting on it this first time since I failed to finish publishing that last paper on some of the work I did at Neisler. If I don’t make it, that will motivate me to finish the paper in my spare time so I’ll be in better shape to apply again next year.

Last Wed was the circle meeting here, and there were 18 or 19 ladies. That was the date to have the house in pretty good shape, so all the rooms could be opened. Ruth made it. We had the living room curtains up (the ones we had in Decatur) but I’m going to have to lower the rods some more. They are too high for our curtain length and I’ve already lowered them once. I took the kids to their science fair at school at the time the ladies came Wed. When we came home we came in the family room door so we wouldn’t disturb the meeting. We had choir practice Thurs PM and ate out last night. Last weekend was nothing unusual – I worked on income tax etc.

Hope you’re feeling more perky. Mother wrote you were “down” a bit for awhile. Mother can return the enclosures. I may have sent one of them. He was our minister in K City. Ruth wrote Mrs. Moyes today. Mom adds: Lisa fell and hit her head on the wall of the school Tues and it caused a mild concussion. She stayed in bed the rest of Tues and Wed and went back to school Thurs. Well actually, I did not *fall*, I ran at top speed with my head lowered like a charging bull right into a brick wall. My class was playing Red Rover outside. One of the lines of kids was standing right in front of a low brick wall. The line I was in was across the field. I was not athletic and my name rarely, if ever, got called. When someone finally did call my name I felt I had something to prove, and so I ran as fast as I could, with all the force I could muster, so that I would be able to break through the line of kids holding hands. The good news is that I did break through the line. The bad news is that I hit my head *hard* on that brick wall. But if you think about it, what kind of teacher has little kids playing Red Rover in front of a brick wall?! And did the teacher tell my parents the real story?

**4-13-67 – Thurs 7:00 PM –** I’ll write this now and mail it on the way to choir practice. Today has been warmer and rainy. Ruth drove over and picked up the needle-work which she had framed; the frame matches the frame of our family picture. The needle-work things were the Illinois and Kansas state flowers (violet and sunflower) and an eagle.



Here’s the eagle.

Glad to have your letter and to know that Aunt Clara got to go to some of the things that you all had to do. Hope she is feeling still better. Lisa had no after effects from her hit (other than extreme humiliation ☺), and she appreciated the card. Tonight is choir practice. Sun we go downtown to the Van Cliburn concert at Orchestra Hall. We’ll eat on the way home. I plan to register for the Fed Meetings while I’m down. All next week are the meetings. I’m not sure how I’ll go down each day. May drive some or ride with others or go on the train. Ruth plans to go down on Mon to shop since the kids are off school and she was able to get a babysitter (schoolgirl).

As far as we know the Laidigs are somewhere away from home we haven’t heard for awhile. Today Lisa had a brownie tea for their Mothers; the girls had a puppet show for them. Last weekend I did some writing and worked on income tax. I have it all ready to send in. Not much else new since I wrote last Sat. Hope you’re all OK.

**4-29-67 – Sat Noon -** I’m waiting for Ruth and Alan to return from shopping. Alan is invited to a birthday party this afternoon, and they had to go buy the present. Ruth may take the girls to again see “Born Free,” the movie about a lion – I believe the theme song won the Academy Award this year. Ruth and Alan just arrived, and they bought some jig saw puzzles for the party present; they also got some puzzles for ourselves.

Your letter arrived today, but we apparently did not receive the clippings. If they were not sent first class that could be the reason. Don’t worry about it, since they may yet arrive. If not, I’ll work something up, or ask for help. It is a week from tomorrow, and I think that is the Sun that I’m singing the bass solo parts in an anthem. Ruth has a solo line, and another couple have the soprano and tenor lines. I guess I haven’t sung a solo line since we were in Franklin Park. Today marks the end of my first 5 years in industry. I started at Neisler on April 30, 1962 (Monday).

I saw many old friends at the meetings including that Dr. Cavallito who used to be at Neisler. I went all week like I said; Ruth went down on Mon to shop. The weather wasn’t very good, but I guess it was normal for Chicago – cold, windy and rainy and then the tornadoes on the last afternoon after the sessions were over. I drove every day but Tues, so with the drive down on Sun for the concert and registration, that was the most I’ve ever driven downtown. From our house to the Soldiers Field parking lot, it is 75 miles round trip; that is farther than the distance to work in Kankakee. The Planatarium, Field Museum and the Acquarium are all near where I parked. Lesle’s class is taking a field trip to the planatarium and acquarium next month.

Its still raining, and has been all morning, so I’m glad I mowed the grass last Sun PM. It started snowing just as I finished. I was cold mowing. It was a pretty wet snow and broke the all time season record for Chicago. The big snow broke the single day and storm records. I cleaned the carport last Sat and it was very cold then. We’re glad Aunt Clara is feeling better, and got to go home on Sun. We’re pretty well. I have a touch of something, and the girls have had slight colds.

That Joe Williams that worked with me is being drafted next week (he’s 22 and single – B.S. from Purdue). We had a luncheon for him Wed, and a dinner party for him last night in Kankakee. Ruth didn’t go as we couldn’t get a baby sitter. Ruth had all the neighbor lady’s in for coffee last Thurs AM. Hope everyone’s OK.

**5-10-67 – Wed PM -** I’ll write the letter to you, and Ruth will write a note to Aunt Clara on her Mother’s Day card. It has been warmer yesterday and today, and is starting to rain some at the present. I guess Spring has seemed to be slow in arriving because of our severe winter. I cut the grass again last Sat PM. We haven’t done any other yard work so far – it’s just been too cold.

We’ve been home the evenings so far this week. Tomorrow night is regular choir practice. I missed last week because of the fever I had, and we couldn’t have an outside babysitter anyway because of Alan’s strep throat. He got over it OK, and he said his throat never did hurt very much. He had some oral penicillin, and a penicillin shot. He missed all that week of school. The kids school Pow Wow (like the carnivals we used to have) is this Sat. I’m supposed to go over awhile to help. I suppose we’ll eat there Sat noon.

Today was Lesle’s field trip to Field Museum and the Planitarium. Didn’t we go to Field Museum when we came in 1944? Lisa goes somewhere else on her field trip. I may have told you that the fellow (not Pete) that worked for me had to go to the army. We interviewed a girl today as a possible replacement. The kids each have regular jobs during the week, and if they do a good job they receive their new increased allowance. They have done fairly well, but usually have to be reminded, and, of course, would rather watch TV.

Ruth is doing some sewing for the girls (pair of slacks and school dresses, shirt for Alan). Everything went OK Sun. I gave my talk (7 mins) just a few mins after the anthem. Ruth had a solo line in the anthem, also. After church the members were invited to stay to ask questions about the drive. We’re in a new church building, which has been funded by 2-3 yr drives which just finished. The current mortgage fund drive is to cover an interum 18 month period before the mortgage fund retirement becomes part of the regular budget. They hesitated to put them both together at this time. I guess I’ll increase our building fund pledge. This Sun the canvassers turn in their pledges and the contacts are made during the following week. The pledges are to be turned in Sun 21st, the day we go down to hear the pianist Suzan Starr, at Orchestra Hall.

I can’t think of much news from last week. Ruth had baking to do for Women’s Association but didn’t go because of Alan’s sickness. The day I stayed home was a “wild one” as Ruth had a Dr.’s appointment of her own besides going for her allergy shots, and taking Alan in. Glad Aunt Clara is getting around again and hope you’re all OK. I’ll return the clippings gradually.

**5-21-67 – Sun PM -** I just noticed that I had not returned the personal property tax assessment (it has to be in by tomorrow) so I’ll write this and then mail them both. They don’t collect personal property tax in Cook County, but they do in Will County. As you may remember, most of Park Forest is in Cook County, but our Southern end is in Will. We just received a personal property tax bill from Decatur which we legally owe, since we were living there in April of 1966.

Today warmed up, but yesterday was cool. It just hasn’t seemed like Spring. I still don’t have all the storm windows off, and the furnance has been going some the last few days. Today we went downtown (Orchestra Hall) to the third of the concerts that we bought tickets for. It was Suzan Starr a young (25) pianist that we heard at the Fall Pharmacology Meeting in Philadelphia two years ago. Ruth and I both like her very much. We had a girl that lives nearby as baby sitter – she is 15 but very responsible. They like her better than the older lady we had the other two times. The kids cleaned the carport while we were gone, and we had a good report on them when we got home. We window-shopped awhile after the concert, and then ate down there before starting home. Got back about 8:00 and the kids were all ready for bed.

Everything at work is fine. Not having the second person to work with, I’ve had time to catch up on some of my reports. Tues a fellow is coming from Canada for an interview. He is just finishing his Masters in Pharmacology at the University of Toronto. If he doesn’t work out we have 2 or 3 others to follow up. Last Sun the canvasers presented their pledges at the church service, and the people were called on during the week. I went out with a fellow on Mon night. Thurs night was choir practice. Fri night we all drove to Kankakee to eat at a restaurant. Yesterday Lisa had a birthday party in the afternoon. I mowed the yard and we played croquet after supper it was chilly.

Mom adds: Thanks for the $2. I used it for a copper mold to hang in the kitchen (just need one more now, but it’s hard to find just the right size). We think the kitchen now has its own “personality,” thanks to the copper molds and trivets hanging on the soffit above the cabinets and the shelf at soffit level that holds the mortar and pestles and copper pitchers. Thanks again. Back to Dad: I guess that’s about all the news. Hope you’re all fine.

**5-29-67 – Mon PM -** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. & Bill, We received Mother’s letter today so I’ll write this tonight and may go down and mail it later. Today was a bit cooler and cloudy; it rained yesterday on the way home from church. The adult choir did not sing yesterday at church since the Junior Choir was singing. It was the last time the Junior Choir will sing under their present director. She is going to California in a few weeks. We have only had the one youth choir, and it has had quite an age span. Ruth has volunteered her services for next year, to lead a youth choir, especially the younger children. She feels that they should not all be together – the older and younger children, that is. Ruth wrote to Kay Hoffland in Decatur (the wife of our choir director there) for suggestions on music and books. A lady asked Ruth to be Superintendent of the Junior Dept, but I think Ruth would rather try working with a Junior Choir if they give her the chance.

Lisa was supposed to go on a Brownie cook-out yesterday afternoon, but it was cancelled because of the rain. It was probably best since it gave her a chance to rest some before the piano recital last night. I’ll enclose the program. The girls did very fine, and Ruth said they were the best, and some of the others had played for more than 1 year. The recital was over at the music store, and the lady who works there said she was impressed with their playing. We’ll hope that they stay interested in the piano for at least a few more years; Ruth will also want them to become interested in an instrument before much longer.

We’re expecting our insurance man to stop by later this evening. I’m off work tomorrow (worked today); we may go on a picnic if the weather is good. We need to buy a picnic table and a barbecue grill. We had an old grill in Decatur that someone gave us, but we got rid of it before we moved. We’ve never had an adult size picnic table. We may sometime take our fenced-in area beside the house and make a brick and sand patio area. We had a little cement patio beside the house in Decatur, but we never fixed it up for picnic use.

Alan is finished with school this week, and the girls are finished the next week. I enrolled them yesterday for Vacation Bible School the middle of June. We may join the Park Forest Aquacenter this summer. It costs $50 for a family membership before June 1st, and $60 afterwards. We did not join last summer since we arrived here late. Our tentative Kansas vacation dates are July 1-11. I’ll let you folks know later whether we’ll go to Oberlin or Hutch first. Let us know if Aunt Margaret plans to go to Kansas. As I’ve said before, if someone comes here, we could easily drive over to Aunt Margarets. I always forget that I have a first cousin once removed attending the U of Chicago.

Everything at work is OK. We have a quarterly review of the research program on Wed. I’ve been doing some reading, and will probably gradually have more involvement in our research on drugs for arthritis and related diseases. As Dr. Paine says, a lot of the current research is concerned with the immunological aspects (or possibly being allergic to ones own tissues). I’m quite interested in this aspect. The fellow we interviewed from Canada (31 yrs old – single – former pharmacist) last Tues has already accepted the job offer; he will start 3 wks from today and will work with me. He may have his own technician at a later time. He just finished his Masters. He comes with pretty good recommendations. They felt he was not of PhD caliber so advised him to stop at the end of his Masters.

We finally got our new record cabinet and Ruth right now is sorting the records and catalogs. It is not really designed for records, but is a regular cabinet the same size as the stereo, but not as long, and is right next to the stereo. I think Mother did the right thing by getting rid of the apartment. I don’t know prices there on something like that, but like with a house, you can sometimes wait and wait for a better price, and then you may not find a buyer. That was too bad about Ashley. I have many memories of him and the band, of course. I imagine he still played last summer? I’m sure he was playing the times we have heard the band play in Hutch when we’ve been there on vacation.

Thurs night choir practice will be at the choir directors house, and will honor that youth choir director who is leaving. A week from Sun we may go to Decatur to the Fun Fair and to visit friends. We’ve only been back once in the last year. Ruth got new glasses and I’m scheduled for an appointment. It had been 2 yrs for both of us. We have both deteriorated some, so we thought we should have new glasses before taking any trips.

Ten yrs ago we were getting ready for a wedding. I can say that we have had a most happy 10 yrs of married life, and I’m sure the next 10 yrs will be the same (Ruth will be pleased when she reads this). We usually eat out on our anniversary, but we’ll wait awhile this time.

Last Fri night we went to our first drive in movie here in Park Forest. It was “The Shaggy Dog” and the “Absent-Minded Professor” both older Walt Disney Shows that are very funny and good for kids. We took our own popcorn and drinks and did not get home until about 1:00 AM. All the kids but Lesle fell asleep before the second movie was finished. Sat AM we drove down to the Art Institute for our first visit there. The display of Andrew Wyeth paintings (American) was still there and we wanted to see them. It was – Dad changes pens and writes in the margin: Tues AM - crowded and the kids got restless. Andy got tired and had to be carried; he also didn’t care for the big crowds. Afterwards we walked into the loop (it was crowded) and had dessert, and did some shopping before starting home. I believe that was the first time the entire family had walked together in the loop.

Last week was busy for Ruth during the daytime, but we didn’t have much in the evening except for choir practice on Thurs night. I don’t recall whether we went to the Art Institute or not when we were here in 1944? with Aunt Margaret and Uncle Bill. I don’t think I had been in since. The building fund drive was very successful. Their minimum goal was $50,000 (for 18 months) and $60,000 was pledged. Glad to hear that you’re out again about as usual. Its Memorial Day now and still cloudy and cool. Almost too cool for a picnic. I can remember going to the cemetary in Hutch early in the morning before it would get so hot. I also remember playing in the Municipal Band on Memorial Day mornings. Mother, let me know the name of the new drug that you are taking. Mr. Murray will tell you if you tell him its for me. I’m going to write a letter to that fellow who had to go to the service – he worked for me. Hope you’re all OK.

**6-8-67 – Thurs 6:30 PM -** We’ve just finished supper and the kids are all watching TV (Batman) before we go out for dessert. Its cloudy and windy and looks like it may rain. It rained some last evening – it had been fairly dry. We don’t have choir practice tonight. I believe its graduation for the high school that our choir director teaches at and, of course, some of the choir members are high school students. Last Sunday at church all the high school graduates wore their caps and gowns and sat down in front. There were four high schools represented with their different colored gowns. There was a reception for them afterwards in the social hall.

We’ve had the two youngest Duvall children with us since Mon night. Mrs. Duvall (Carol) is the one that lived in Oberlin Kansas when she was little, and went to school with Ruth until they were in high school (she moved before they graduated). They live in Addison (a NW suburb) and we have visited each other occasionally when we have lived up here. They had to go to Denver to attend a funeral. They left their other 3 children with someone else, and had planned to leave the two youngest (6 and 2) with another couple, but that couple’s children were sick with the mumps, I believe. We expect them home tonight or sometime tomorrow.

We plan to go to Decatur (only our 2nd trip down since we moved) on Sat and attend the Fun Fair (rides and things to raise money for the hospitals) and then stay over to Sun and visit friends. I sent in the $50 for the Aqua Center; I believe it opens June 17th. I expect Ruth will take the kids over many of the hot afternoons that she has the car. There are no public pools in Park Forest. We bought a pole sprinkler attachment for the hose and the kids used it today. Ruth said most of the neighborhood was here. Alan wanted to keep a snake awhile ago, but we said no. We already have 2 rats, a cat and worms and caterpillars. The girls get their report cards tomorrow and thats the end of school.



Alan in the carport with Pinky and Dinky. It’s kind of hard to tell, but there are two rats on his head, not just one.

Our vacation plans call for us to leave here on June 30th after work and go to Kansas first. If Mrs. Moyes is home we should try to see her awhile in Kans City. We’ll try to be their by Sat night but don’t count on it. I know you’d like to go to church with us. We’ll go to Oberlin the middle of the week and drive back on the 10th and 11th. Your capsules were probably Indicin (Indomethacin) a relatively new drug for arthritis – they can have side effects – like most drugs. Glad to have your letter. I made a magazine rack for the back of the cedar chest in the family room. Glad to have your letter. Hope all are OK.

**6-?-67 – Sat 5:45 PM -** I’ll start this now as we’re waiting to go to a picnic supper with the couples group at church. We’ve only been to one other event of theirs, so we thought we could go to the family picnic tonight. It has been cooler and cloudy today, but has not rained. Today was the first day the Aqua-Center was open, but we didn’t go since it was a little on the cool side, and Ruth had to go grocery shopping this afternoon. The older kids did go down and play in one of the neighbors pools for awhile. I got our little pool out but I need to build up some dirt for it so it will stay together. We used it some last summer over at the other house. We’ve had several days of hot humid weather, with thundershowers, conditions right for tornadoes, etc, just about like you’ve had. It has rained pretty hard in some of the Chicago areas, I believe.

We were glad you liked the flowers. I ordered them when we were in Decatur last Sat. It was hot last weekend. We drove down Sat AM and stopped for breakfast in Monee – the first small town south of here on that highway I take to work. We got to Decatur about 1:00 PM and got our motel room at one of the motels near that shopping center South of where we used to live. We then went to the Fun Fair; we saw several people there we knew, and the kids had a big time, of course. Afterwards we stopped by a friends house. (Sun now) It rained some as we were eating supper at a drive-in. We went to the motel and the Hofflands called. They had not been to the Fun Fair so they went there, and then Mr. and Mrs. H stopped by later at the motel and visited awhile. Ruth got some names of books for children’s choirs etc.

Sun AM we went to church and sang in the choir. Mr. H directed but it was one of his last times since he has resigned and will take over the choir at one of the Lutheran churches in Decatur. The kids played at the H’s during the church service (after s.s.). The H’s had to leave so we ate lunch at a new old-fashioned mall and restaurant. Afterwards we visited friends, eating supper at the second place. That fellow who bought our house there fixed it up and sold it for $27,000. He left Caterpillar and is going to Arizona. He assumed our mortgage, but we are now free of any responsibility. We got home from Decatur about 10:00 PM.

The new fellow from Canada who is to work with me is supposed to start tomorrow but he called last week and said he might be delayed since he hadn’t been cleared yet to leave Canada, or something. We had choir practice last Thurs night and this Thurs’s will be the last for the summer. We’ll sing in a quartet in July after we return.

Went to the picnic last night and it got real chilly, but we all enjoyed it. This morning was church as usual. Ruth has been teaching s.s. as I may have said, and she leads some of the s.s. music. Bible School starts tomorrow and she is in charge of the music for that. After church today the Pulpit Nominating Committee was elected and Ruth was chosen as the representative from the Womens Association. She is the only woman on the 9 person committee. We debated whether or not she should accept. It will take a lot of time and require some trips out to hear ministers on Sun AM’s but I think she did the right thing in accepting. She offered to have the childrens choirs (the younger ones) but that wouldn’t start now until we have a new minister which won’t be before Jan 1st.

I was supposed to get my new glasses yesterday, but they weren’t ready. Hope you’re all OK. Thanks for the Fathers Day gift. I got a tie, 2 shirts, a sport shirt and undershirts today.

**7-7-67 – Oberlin – Fri AM -** Dear Folks in Hutchinson, We wish to thank all of you for everything during our visit. I think we all had a good visit. We had a good trip out here on Wed. The rivers and streams were up, but not out of their banks. We stopped at Larnard for ice cream, and at Hoxie for supper. Got here a little before 9:00 PM. It was cloudy all the way out, and has been cloudy ever since we arrived. Its been too cool for the kids to swim but I believe its supposed to clear off and warm up. Mrs. L is preaching at the Lebanon, Danbury, Neb Pres Church Sun we’ll all go there. Uncle Edgar and Aunt Dova (Norton – Mrs. L’s brother) are coming over tonight. We’ll leave Mon AM and go back a new way thru Neb and Iowa.

**7-18-67 – Tues PM -** I’m back to my old habit of not writing as soon as I think I will. Today is rainy and cooler. It has been on the cool side and the kids have been swimming only once, on last Sun afternoon, at the Aqua Center since we got back. It was cool driving to Oberlin that Wed PM. I guess I wrote that we took our time, stopped in Larned at a new drug store, and got to Oberlin about 9:00 PM. It was cool on Thurs but the kids went in the pool awhile on Fri; it was much warmer on Sat and Sun when they went in again.

Uncle Edgar (Mrs. L’s brother at Norton – the farmer and cattle man who goes to Hutch for the State Fair) and Aunt Dova came over for dinner on Fri evening. We visited some of the usual people including Ruth’s former piano teacher. She is in her 80’s Mom writes in: “83.” and still gives piano and organ lessons. We visited the museum (Mr. L worked a lot on it) and Ruth, with her fathers help, purchased a harpaphone; it is a string instrument from about 1912. We took it into the music store here to be restrung.

Ruth is practicing the piano now and has done a lot of practicing recently. It is nice that we have such a nice piano – we probably couldn’t have afforded such a good one. The girls had a lesson today and I hope are back into the swing of things. We forgot to have them play for Grammy and Grandpa like they did for you folks. Sun AM in Oberlin we all went to the Presbyterian Church first. Mr. L is still the teacher of the adult s.s. class (I’m not sure how many years Mom writes in: “at least 35.” he has taught it). Ruth and I went to his class and the kids went to s.s. The girls wanted to be sure and go so as to keep up their attendance record. After s.s. we drove over to the Presbyterian Church at the little town of Lebanon, Neb where Mrs. L was to preach. Lebanon and Danbury, Neb (where Uncle Earl – the dentist brother of Mr. L lived) have only the one protestant church (150 people in each town) in each town and they are Presbyterian. They go together for a minister and are presently without one. They had asked Mr. L before, so they asked Mrs. L this time. She talked about her trip to Wichita and work with some indigent people.

After church we ate at Aunt Myrtles in Danbury. She is Mrs. L’s older sister. Her husband has died since we have been married. Uncle Floyd (Mr. L’s younger (61) brother) who farms South of Danbury on the old Laidig farm and Aunt Ruth were also there. We hadn’t seen any of these folks for at least 2 yrs so we got to see more of the relatives this trip. It was so wet in Kansas (rained at least 2 of the nights we were there) that the farmers were a long ways from having the wheat all cut.

Mon AM we left and it turned dry and hot so I imagine the wheat harvest started again. We ate lunch in Neb and drove on to the Pioneer Village at Minden, Neb. It was started by a millionaire and is a huge place showing the development of all things in the growth of America. Cars, airplanes, appliances, etc. – lots of antique things. Quite a place and we couldn’t see it all in one trip. The things there would bring back many memories to you, I’m sure. We forgot and left the little toads in the car while we went inside and the heat killed them. I remember this. Teeny tiny little things in a glass jar. Sad. Alan didn’t seem upset. Nobody even thought about them and it might have been too hot outside also.

We drove on to a motel at Lincoln, Neb for the night. The kids swam awhile, we ate supper and then drove by the University and Capitol and walked around some sunken gardens. (Didn’t we come back through Omaha and Lincoln, Neb one time when I was a boy and we were coming back from Wisconsin?) Tues we drove all the way back home arriving about 11:00 PM. We drove about 25 mi’s too far as I made a wrong turn at Joliet when almost here. With my new glasses my eyes held up OK and I didn’t mind the night driving. Interstate 4-lane highway all the way from Joliet to where we got in in Central Nebraska.

We ate lunch at a little town in Iowa, did not stop in Des Moines, and went on to the Amana Colonies for a visit from 4-6:00 PM. They are that German settlement where they make fine furniture, woolens, etc. The L’s stopped there once. We ate supper before leaving and then drove straight home. Drove about 600 mi that day which is more than I usually like to drive. I went to work then on Wed and Ruth had her long puplit nominating committee that evening. They filled out the form that tells about our church, the mission of the church and information for prospective ministers. She has already started reviewing dossiers from different ministers.

I forgot to mention that the Laidigs may go to Alaska later this summer with John’s. They haven’t decided yet. The girls say they left their troll dolls in the cabinet they were playing with out on the front porch at your house. You probably didn’t open it up when you put it away. Last Sat AM we registered to vote and the girls registered their bicycles and got licenses. Bicycles have been stolen and damaged around here when left out on the sidewalk. We worked in the yard some over the weekend. The weeds had gotten ahead of us. We purchased a new square redwood picnic table on Sat. We ate on it both Sun noon and evening and had homemade ice cream in the evening. Went to the Aqua Center and pulled weeds in the afternoon.

Yesterday evening went shopping and to the library. Again, we thank you all for the pleasant times in Hutchinson and we hope you’re all OK. Andy just put on winter pajamas since its so cool this evening. Glad to have your letter.

**7-29-67 – Sat Noon -** We got up so late this morning that Ruth just now went to the store for groceries. The kids are all busy playing, so I’ll write now. Today is mild again although it may warm up enough for the kids to go swimming. This past week was the kids first week of swimming lessons. I guess they made some progress. They go next week also. Ruth and the neighbor lady (Mrs. Phillips to the North) take turns taking them. The Phillips have talked about moving but I guess they haven’t decided for sure whether they will or not. The neighbors to the South are still working on that big fence which they need to keep their dog in the yard.

A week ago last night we all went to see the Walt Disney movie “The Gnomemobile.” It was funny and we all enjoyed it. Last Sat we all did various jobs. I weeded in the garden area; finished it on Sunday. The yard has gotten ahead of us since Ruth has been busy with other things. That Sat afternoon Ruth took the kids swimming while I went and washed the rugs that are on the floor of the girls room. They are so big that they have to be washed in the big washer at the laundromat. After we all got home we had company for supper. Gene and Margaret Hopper – they have just moved in a few doors down the street and they are both from Kansas. She was born in St. Elizabeth Hospital in Hutch, so it is somewhat of a coincidence. She lived in Hutch until she was 6 and went to kindergarten at Allen School (didn’t my dad go there). Her parents live at Emporia and their 2 boys are staying there until they get settled. He was born at Arkansas City, Kansas. We have a new chemist who did some graduate work at K-State. When we lived on Minocqua we had neighbors who were K-State graduates. Our biochemistry depart interviewed a girl who was just finishing her masters at K-State but she took a job at Eli Lilly.

Mr. and Mrs. Laidig are planning to go to Alaska at the same time as John Laidigs; they won’t go in the same car as that would be too many. They were undecided about going when we were there. I expect they will be gone 3-4 wks. Since Johns decided to go to Alaska this summer rather than next they won’t be home when we go East. We have a motel reservation in Washington, but we haven’t finalized our plans about going and coming.

That new employee from Canada hasn’t arrived yet. I received a $1000 raise for the next year, which was about what I expected, I guess. It will probably just about cover the gradually increasing expenses of a growing family and the usual increases in cost of living and the probable income tax increase. However, we do hope to save more in the coming year since we’ve already done the basic things on the house. Ruth saves a lot with her sewing. She just finished a new swimming suit for herself and is beginning a round of sewing for the girls. Our trip East will take quite a bit of money.

Last Sun was our regular schedule. I had to help on our class discussion and Ruth taught her regular s.s. class. She won’t have her class this fall since the puplit committee will take a lot of time. In the afternoon Ruth took the kids to the pool while I finished the yardwork I had started. Ruth had her committee meeting Wed night and again it took about 4 hrs. They are already scheduling some trips out to hear and visit some ministers. It takes a lot of time reading the dossiers of the prospects plus writing the minutes.

Thurs night we had a couple over for our quartet rehersal. We are scheduled as a mixed quartet to sing in church a week from tomorrow. We’ll have to go practice with the organist some night next week. Last night we ate out and then came home for our popcorn and drinks. The couples club at church was scheduled for a get together tonight but they had so few reservations that they called it off. Glad to have your letter this week. Our cat got along OK while we were gone. The meeting in Washington is Aug 27-31. Hope the folks had a good trip.

**8-14-67 – Mon 7:00 PM –** I meant to get this off over the weekend but didn’t get it done. We’re still having a pleasant summer – sleeping under the usual blankets every night. It rained some last night with a lot of wind. Ruth made a phone call today to see if a minister in Danville, Ill would be in his pulpit on Aug 20. If so they would have driven down on Sun AM to hear him. He will not be there on that date so I guess they will have to go another time. This Wed night would be their regular 2 week meeting but they postponed it because so many of the members will be out of town. Their next meeting will be on Aug 23rd.

Our tentative schedule is to leave for Washington on Fri Aug 25 and take 2 days to go. Our motel reservation starts in Wash on the 26th and lasts through the 31st. We’ll take 3-4 days coming back and try to do some sightseeing. We haven’t decided yet whether to go a Northern or Southern way; we’ll let you know later.

I guess we’ve finally had our summer round of sickness. Alan started last Thurs with a virus that lasted about 2-3 days with nothing much more than fever. Andy had it next, and then Lesle who still has some fever. I guess Lisa hasn’t had it yet. Ruth had an infection that required special treatment last week and is scheduled for her regular allergy shots this week. I believe her allergies are better than they used to be. Lisa is scheduled for the eye doctor this week for new glasses. She has gone down quite a bit in the last year. Alan is scheduled for the dentist next week. We haven’t been to a dentist at all since we’ve been here. Alan went to the Dr. today for a skin infection which hadn’t cleared up. He missed his final swimming lesson last Fri but the girls completed theirs. The girls almost passed the swimming test and should the next time. Lesle swims but hasn’t got her breathing down properly.

The Laidigs are either on the way, or in Alaska, as far as we know. They may come East for the Covered Bridge Festival in Indiana in Oct. and then come back through here. I suppose we could work something out this fall about going to Madison to see Aunt Nellie like we did last year. Last Wed night we went to our organists house for our quartet rehersal with the Thompsons (they are about Ruth’s age). Thurs night was cool so I mowed the yard. Fri night we did not eat out since Alan wasn’t feeling well.

Sat and Sun we stayed around home most of the time. I cleaned out a flower bed and Ruth sewed. She finished a new summer dress for yesterday when we sang, and is working on new clothes for the children. Sun AM was a problem since Andy had a fever and we never hire a baby sitter when someone is sick. Ruth had to be there to teach her s.s. class. I stayed in the car with the boys and then left them while we practiced during s.s. time. At church time I left them again and we had our quartet which went OK. We left right afterwards. The boys got along OK.

We were glad to have your letter. I suppose the folks got back OK from their trip and they had a good time. No, I’ve never been to Washington D.C. and neither has Ruth. The kids have been irritable having to stay in etc. Ruth is sewing train pajamas made from material she bought in Hutchinson a year ago. I guess my raise is going for medical bills ha! Hope you’re all OK and not too hot.

**8-22-67 – Tues 7:00 PM -** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. & Bill, I better get the Hutchinson letter written, or I never will get it off. Today is cooler again, and it seems like fall. I got in the pool at the Aqua Center a week ago tonight (!), and the kids went another time or so, but it’s been too cool and rainy ever since. I believe we did get our money’s worth, however; the pool closes on Labor Day. School starts two weeks from today, and I believe Ruth is ready for some peace and quiet. She is continuing her sewing, for both herself and the children. She has made 14 outfits and 2 towels since we came back (!). Andy is very proud of his new winter coat that we just purchased. Lesle will also have to have a new coat this year.

A week ago last night we had a s.s. officers meeting at our house and we went to the library Wed night (Alan will learn to read this year). Thurs night was the car pool picnic at our house. Some of the wives (4 families) had not met each other, as was the case with some of the children. Our bigger yard (2 of the families live in the townhouses) was the logical place. It warmed up that day and everything went fine. There were the 8 adults and 11 children.

We hope that the cousins all made it to Hutch OK for the get together and that you all had a good time. We had another card from the Laidigs written from Northern Alaska. They said they were ready to turn back because of the cold and rain; we do not know whether the big rains affected them severely, or not. Last Fri it rained hard here. We didn’t do much on Sat. I had to prepare the s.s. lesson and Ruth had a Dr. appointment.

Sun AM Ruth left at 8:30 with two members of the pulpit (puplit is crossed out and pulpit written above it) committee to hear a Chicago minister. I took the kids to church and taught our s.s. class. Ruth got back during the church service; I was glad since the kids (3 older) were getting restless. We rested Sun afternoon. We were home last night except that Ruth went shopping. She has a lot of things for the kids to do in the car. The one toy a day trick to keep the kids occupied on long driving days. We’re home tonight and tomorrow night is the regular pulpit committee meeting. The older kids slept with the neighbor girl in the carport Sun night. I had the car worked on today – tune-up, brake linings, etc.

Alan has a dental appointment tomorrow. Lisa has her new glasses. This will be the last letter before the trip. We leave Fri AM and will drive to Indianapolis and then on Inter State 70 to Zanesville, Ohio where we’ll be at the Holiday Inn, US Route 40 & 22 phone 614/453-077. On to Washington on Sat where we be at the Gramercy Inn (from Aug 26-31) 1616 Rhode Island, Washington D.C. – Phone 202/Districit 7-9660. We’ll start back on the 1st and our plans are indefinite. Hope you’re all OK.

**9-10-67 – Sun PM -** An *eight* page letter!!! – I better get this written before I forget everything about the trip. The Laidigs made it back OK from Canada, and I assume the John Laidigs are home in New Jersey with school now underway. The Laidigs wrote that it had been cold and rainy most of the time in the North, but it was warmer when they got back (Spotty just jumped up on my lap – he has been much more friendly to me since we returned – I guess he really missed us this time. He was fed by one of the neighbor children and I think he lost some weight.) The rat was kept by one of the neighbor kids also and is OK. The Laidigs left Fairbanks just before the big flood so I guess they were lucky.

This AM Ruth left at 8:00 with 2 other members of the puplit committee to go hear a minister in Palatine (over an hours drive away – and North of O’Hare). It was a 9:30 service so she was back by 1:00 and lunchtime. Two other groups from the committee were also out today listening – one as far South as Danville (near Decatur). Ruth doesn’t think she’ll have to go out much overnight since she is the only lady on the committee, and that would require separate motel rooms. I don’t mind taking the kids on Sun AM, but it would be a little harder if she had to be gone overnight.

Its unlikely she’ll be gone on Sat AM since they are going to start the youth choirs next Sat. I think I told you that we formerly had only the one youth choir and the lady that directed it left for California. Ruth immediately offered to take her place since she has always been interested in childrens music; she had a chance for some experience during Bible School. At first they thought the choir should wait until we had a new minister. She told them it would probably only work if they started now, so she is having the first get-together next Sat AM. She hopes for 2 choirs 3rd-6th grades for a carol choir, and 7th-8th for a crusader choir. Another year she would hope for a cherub choir (younger) and a carillon (5-6) choir (!). I would say these are distinct possibilities if they get a good response, the church picks up with a new minister, and we’re still here. Last year they had only the one choir with a wide age span, so it was harder for them to do more difficult things.

We had our first adult choir rehersal last Thurs night. Ruth did not go since she couldn’t be there today. We don’t have a regular Thurs night sitter as of now. I hope M.J. is getting adjusted to teaching again. I’m sure she will. I guess the women will all be busy this winter. My bosse’s wife Mrs. Bastian went back to teaching last year, and is continuing again and they say our Director of Research’s wife is teaching in the parochial school.

I made coffee for s.s. this AM. We went out for ice cream cones after lunch since Lisa had a free one because of her birthday, and we’ve just relaxed the rest of the time this afternoon. Lisa had her party and slumber party Fri PM. She had 4 extra and one couldn’t come. They slept – finally – on the mattresses in the family room. They had breakfast here, and stayed until almost noon. I took the boys shopping in the afternoon to buy some toys with their own money. Your package arrived so we had all the gifts for her birthday dinner last night. As you know, birthdays are “big occasions” at our house, and Ruth does go to a lot of extra effort. Lisa says “Thank You” for her dress. Grammy is crocheting a doll blanket which hasn’t arrived yet. She got a pair of rollar skates, a basket for her bike, a dress from mommy, some jewelry, toys at the party, and 2 horses (she loves horses).

  

Lisa’s 8th birthday. Sorry for the disproportionate number of pictures of *my* birthdays – just using the pics I have ☺

This Tues Alan has an appointment with the oral surgeon for the removal of 3 baby teeth molars and any that are loose. He will use a general anesthetic for that much work. The girls went to the dentist last Thurs and they both have cavities. I think I have a cavity, but I haven’t been yet. I’ll have to pay their bills first. I guess we haven’t been too careful about tooth brushing with the children.

Ruth has been miserable the last few days with her allergies. The pollen count has been very high but a cool front came in yesterday and cleared the smog and heavy atmosphere. I plan to go to a meeting in downtown Chicago on Tues. Our former vice-president of research and development (an older man) has been removed and switched to another position. He did not exert dynamic leadership. Organizational changes may occur again since the top administration has not been too well organized. We have no evidence of any merger possibilities at this time. The meeting in Washington was well worth attending. It was on the campus of Howard University (predominantly negro) and Washington has the largest negro +60% population of any major city.

We got back home early afternoon of Labor Day, so we had time to unpack rest, etc. before the kids had to go to school on Tues.

 

First day of school – Lisa starting 3rd grade, Lesle starting 4th.

I guess they are satisfied with their teachers. Andy misses them but he has several friends nearby to play with. Wed night Ruth had circle meeting – she had the devotions. I promised to take the s.s. class the first 3 Sundays of Oct. I’m going to try to talk about drugs – psychotomimetic drugs, etc. I haven’t really prepared it yet.

Trip – We had good weather most of the trip although it rained some in Maryland as we approached Wash. We had no rain when we were on more dangerous 2 lane highways.

Fri – Got away about 9:00. Ate our picnic lunch in Indiana. Drove through Indianapolis and happened to go by Eli Lilly where I visited when I was a Junior in Pharmacy School. Drove across Ind – Ohio and had supper at Columbus. Drove on to Zanesville, O to the Holiday Inn for the first night. Sat – Drove on to Wash. Stopped for supper at Frederick, Md. It rained from there on in to Wash. I guess there had been tornado warnings out for the whole area, but we didn’t know it. After considerable driving, we finally found our motel. Sun – We got around and went to the New York ave Presbyterian Church. I guess Pres Eisenhower went there some. Went to the wax museum and I registered in the afternoon. Later went to the Lincoln Memorial and Arlington Cemetary. (Did not see Kennedy’s grave.)

Mon – The Bastians were now there and we all went to the Bureau of Engraving and Printing to see the making of money. We then went to the Justice Dept for the FBI tour. (They shoot a machine gun.) We then went to the Nat Archives to see the Bill of Rights, Decl of Ind and Const. I had the first meeting in the afternoon. Jim Bastian (my boss) and I took turns driving to the Howard U campus which was about 2 miles away. The kids went swimming at the motel pool the last 3 afternoons (Mon-Wed). It was cool and rainy the final day. During the days Ruth took the kids to the White House, Smithsonian, (I saw the Natural History Museum one evening), Home Builders Show and the National Geographic Bld. I thought Ruth did quite well alone in the crowds with the kids. They walked to the White House and took a cab to the Smithsonian. The driving in Wash was like you said Bill had said. By far the most difficult place I have ever driven. Very confusing with the circles. You don’t dare drive alone without someone beside you with a map.

Tues-Wed – Meeting all day. Thurs – Meeting in the AM. After lunch we drove to Mt. Vernon and then drove to Gettsburg, Pa where we had a motel reservation. Not a long drive. Fri – Got up fairly early and went to 3 of the commercial places at Gettsburg. One had an electric map that showed the way the 3 day battle went. (I was completely ignorant about the battle, and I learned a lot about the Civil War generally.) Another place had a movie, and then a wax museum all about the Civil War. Saw the cemetary where Lincoln gave the Gettsburg Address. We ate lunch at Howard Johnsons and then drove to the Pa Turnpike across some of the Alleghany Mts. Not very high but as much driving of that type as I’ve ever done. After the turnpike a ways we took the winding 2 lane Fed 219 straight North across West Pa to Buffalo NY. It was our hardest stretch of driving but the weather was good and the start of the week-end traffic wasn’t heavy. Got to our motel (a reservation) about 12:30 AM.

Sat – Slow getting around as were tired. Finally got to Niagara Falls in the afternoon. Big crowds. Took the boat ride and went out on the rocks at Three Sisters Islands. Spent most of the time on the American side. Too much to see in one day. Crossed the bridge to Canada and spent some time shopping there. Finally got started to our motel at New London, Ontario. (Got the reservation that day, fortunately.) Got there about 11:00 but had a long wait for the extra beds.

Sun – went to Storybook Land in one of their parks. (Nursery rhymes all illustrated by little houses, etc.) Started one and had lunch on the Canadian Turnpike. Drove straight through Detroit to Greenfield Village. Didn’t have time to see everything but I most enjoyed the reconstruction of the old Menlo Park, Orange, NJ, labs of Thomas Edison. We can always drive back there some weekend now that we know the way. We drove on to Ann Arbor (U of Mich) for supper. We had planned to drive on in that night but we were tired, it was getting dark, and since there was enough money left we got a motel there. Parke-Davis has the research labs in Ann Arbor.

Mon – Drove across Mich and had lunch at a drive-in near home. The last stretch near here was the most congested, but the weather was good and we were in no hurry so I took my time. We got home with less than $10. It was our biggest, longest and most expensive trip we’ve ever taken, but I’m glad we did it. I’m sure the children will remember a lot and it broadens their experiences. Andy still gets tired and has to be carried a lot. Another year and he’ll be able to pretty well keep up.

 

Road warriors.

I have so many memories of this trip. Thanks Mom and Dad.

Glad to have your letter and know you’re all quite busy again. Hope you’re all OK. I guess this is the longest letter I’ve ever written. I’ve taken almost 2 hrs.

**9-20-67 – Wed 6:30 PM –** I better write this now or I never will get it off. Today has been warm, and we had rain yesterday, but its supposed to turn cooler tomorrow. We haven’t had much rain and the yard was dry. I need to mow the yard at least one more time, unless we have a lot of rain. Everything is fine with the kids at school. The girls don’t have much to say, but Alan is more talkative and is doing fine.

Everything is OK at work. I might go to a meeting in San Francisco the last of Oct. That fellow who was supposed to come in June (the Canadian) was never able to get his police clearance from Isreal (he is Jewish and had spent a year over there) so we have started looking for someone else after waiting these 3 months. Apparently the war fouled things up, or something.

We’ve been at home the last two nights and will be tonight. Ruth did go shopping last night. Tomorrow night we’ll both go to choir practice (even though Ruth will be out of town again on Sun). Ruth has to lead a Womens Association Chorus for their retreat, and they will practice before the regular adult choir practice. Next Sat AM, like last Sat, will be the youth choirs. Ruth didn’t have as big a turnout as she had hoped for so the hoped for 2 choirs may have to sing together for awhile. I’m sure she can get more out with some calling and promotion. We all went last Sat AM and I stayed with the boys in a separate room while the girls stayed with Ruth for the choir. Afterwards we ate out and then went to the art show on the Plaza. We bought a stitchery picture on burlap entitled a “Child’s Sampler.” We hung it in the family room.

Didn’t have much last week at night. Ruth had (the word puplit is scratched out) (I have trouble with) pulpit committee on Wed night and I had choir on Thurs. Lesle just came in to do some homework. She has some occasionally. Alan got along fine a wk ago Tues at the oral surgeons. He had 6 teeth out since they were all bad or loose. (He had general anesthetic.) I went down to a meeting in the loop that day.

Last Sun AM Ruth went to hear a minister (4 went). I taught the high school class (their regular teacher is on the pulpit committee). He called Thurs. I don’t think I did a very good job. We studied out of Ruth. I just don’t know Bible very well. They use the “Interpreters Bible.” I must get started on my drug talks. We ate lunch before Ruth got home about 1:30. Ruth goes out again Sun. Sat night is our s.s. class steak fry. I guess we’ll have my birthday dinner Sat noon.

The Laidigs got back OK. They may come this fall when they go to that covered bridge festival in Ind. I’ve had no word from the credit card (Mobil). I guess we’ll have to paint the house this fall. Someone said there is to be a lot of Asian Flu this winter. Spotty is the cat. Hope you’re all fine. Return the pictures after getting any you want.

**9-30-67 – Sat AM –** Its supposed to be a little warmer today after several days of quite cool weather. It has seemed almost like winter as the days get shorter. Daylight saving time ends in October, I believe.

Pete is taking organic chemistry clear up in Chicago at the downtown Northwestern Campus. He is driving down with another fellow on Mon and Wed nights after work. As a result, he may have to drop out of our car pool. That would leave only 3 of us and would mean more driving. One of the fellows in the car pool (Jim Geever) has been at home a couple of days because the family has all been sick. It seems like colds and everything start as soon as the children start back to school, and come in contact with the other children and their viruses, etc.

We’re now at the church for the Junior Choir rehersal. I left Ruth and the girls, and then took the boys and we went and left Alan’s coat to have the zipper repaired. I still have to work on the s.s. talk for tomorrow but we’re not going anywhere the rest of the day, except that Ruth will have to go shopping. Ruth will be here tomorrow AM. Next Tues she is leading a womens chorus for the Womans Assoc Retreat. They have had several rehersals since some of the women were not used to singing.

I’m going to the American Heart Association meeting in San Francisco Oct 20-22 so Ruth won’t be able to go out that Sun. I’m a little busier at work now. That Canadian fellow got his clearance; he had unknowingly failed to send in a certain form which was necessary. Fortunately we had not hired anyone else before we finally heard from him. He plans to start on Oct 12th. He’s been working in a drugstore in Canada somewhere.

The girls are getting along OK at their music lessons. We had regular choir practice last Thurs. This next Thurs night I’ll buy my shoes on the way to church. Thanks to Mother and Aunt Clara for the birthday cards. I did not find the check in Aunt Claras. I’ll apply the money on my shoes. I got pajamas, a cuff link and tie clasp set (bought at Niagara Falls, they have the Canadian Maple Leaf), a record, trousers.

A week ago today we were here at the church for rehersal and we then had to take a load of folding chairs over to the house where the s.s. class had its steak fry in the evening. We had my birthday dinner that noon. I mowed the yard in the afternoon.

Ruth called her dad and they hadn’t heard yet if the house they own in Harlingen, Texas (?) was flooded. Last Sun was Rally Day and the kids were promoted. Ruth went visiting again. Last Sat night was the s.s. picnic. It was cool. Received your letter today. Hope you’re all OK.

**10-10-67 – Mon PM -** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, I guess its about your turn for a letter. I should have guessed that the check you meant was the earlier one. I just received an Investors check, so I guess we can count that as a “birthday check.” I bought my new shoes last Thurs night with my birthday money. I really needed new shoes; it seems like the kids always need something in clothes and shoes, and I always put my things last, I guess.

We’re pretty busy again but, like with all you folks its better to be that way than to not have enough. Ruth went to Milwaukee yesterday AM (left at 7:30) to hear a minister. Four were in her group, and another three went to Madison. They have their regular 2 week meeting this Wed night. They are beginning to narrow the number of candidates down but it will probably be after the first of the year before a candidate is agreed upon. All 9 members of the committee have to have heard the man, and be in unanimous agreement, before they present someone to the congregation. I guess Presbyterians are “notorious” for the care they exercise in selecting a new minister. Ruth is not yet certain if she will be going out this Sun.

Ruth can’t go out the last 2 Sundays in Oct since I’ll be gone a week from Sun and her first junior choir appearance will be Oct 29th. I’ll enclose a letter she sent to all the young people in the church. Attendance is picking up, but we now hear that there were several things about the former director that the children and parents didn’t like, so it may take time to build it up to the size that it should be. My part is to go on Sat AM’s and supervise the games for any not rehearsing (the “a” in rehearsing was added in later ☺).

The committee all stayed home a week ago yesterday on communion Sun. Ruth’s chorus went fine last Tues at the Women’s Retreat. Wed night Ruth talked about Kemmerer Home (that Presbyterian Children’s Home near Decatur where that couples group in Decatur helped) at her circle meeting. Thurs night was regular choir practice.

I took 2 of my remaining vacation days (used 5 for Kansas and only 1 on the trip East since both trips were near holidays – 4th of July and Labor Day) last Fri and today. Weather was OK Fri and Sat, but it turned cool and rainy yesterday and today.

We are just barely started with the final painting of the house. We are using latex paint which can only be applied above 50 degrees so we need some warmer days. Ruth can do a lot of whats left. We have tried to do a good job and, therefore, our biggest job was to remove a lot of the old caulking, paint, etc. I put on undercoat today. It gets dark so early that I don’t have much time after I get home from work.

I have one more s.s. lesson on my “drugs” topic. Glad to have Mother’s letter. I don’t watch TV much anymore. All business trips are on company money, of course. Hope you’re all OK and M.J. likes her teaching.

**10-24-67 – Tues PM -** I guess I no longer write on a weekly basis. I don’t know that we are really any busier then we used to be.

Ruth made doll clothes to be sold, and gave some baked goods, for the Harvest Holly Festival at the church today. She took her things over this morning but couldn’t stay since she had to stay at home with Alan and Lisa. Alan has been home from school with a stomach virus, or something. He has had no fever, but his blood count was up when Ruth took him to the Dr. last Fri. He has been feeling much better today, but I’m not certain that he can go to school tomorrow. Lisa has stayed home from school yesterday and today. She claims she has a sore throat. I don’t think she is very sick, but Alan’s sickness kinda “rubbed off.” She’ll probably go back to school tomorrow. The neighbor boy has had something like Alan has had.

Ruth painted on the final coat (light green) of house paint today. She has almost finished the West and North sides, and should be able to paint quite a bit tomorrow since I’m driving the car pool. Ruth is doing all of the final coat since she does a better job than I do. We’re using latex paint which streaks badly unless you go slowly. She, of course, is home during the days and can take advantage of the warmer daylight hours. The latex paint can only be applied when the temperature is above 50 degrees or it will peel. I finished the undercoat last Sat afternoon. We had the youth choir in the morning. It was a good painting day so the choir interfered.

Ruth had planned to go to Michigan last Sun AM to hear some minister. They found, however, that it was Laymen’s Sunday so the minister wasn’t preaching, and they didn’t have to go. It simplified things since Alan couldn’t go to s.s. and church. Ruth stayed with him and did some painting, which was interrupted by rain. In the afternoon I went to the first rehersal of the that Chicago Heights Chorus (we sang the Messiah last year). Ruth will go to next Sundays rehersal while I’m gone.

We’re home tomorrow night and I go to San Francisco sometime on Thurs. Ruth expects her folks up sometime next weekend, and since the kids do not have school next Mon they may meet me at O’Hare when I return. Today I rode up with one of our engineers to visit Baxter & Searle Labs (those were the 2 companies I interviewed for a job) and see their dog quarters. We hope to get some new dog quarters and the engineer is helping to design them. The Laidigs will go to Indiana first and visit the Covered Bridge Festival and the relatives there. Not much last week. Hope you’re all OK.

**10-31-67 – Tues PM -** I’m at home alone while Ruth is out with the kids trick-or-treating. We’ve, of course, had quite a few stop here. I think the kids have been almost as excited about Halloween as they are about Christmas. They have just come back in and Ruth will now drive them over on Minocqua where we used to live and then they may go to the Bastians and to the Thompsons (people at church). Alan is a knight (a hard costume to make, I helped a little), Andy is a clothespin monster, and the girls are queens or princesses with tall conical hats. I took some pictures and will send them to you when they are developed. It was rainy earlier today, but was only foggy tonight and not too cold.

  

Next door neighbor Carole Phillips is the king, and Elaine Decker who lived across the street is also some sort of royalty. Looks like we had some kind of theme going on. Except Andy.

Tomorrow night is PTA but I’m not sure whether or not anyone is going. Thurs night is regular choir rehersal. Our former regular Thurs night baby sitter is now busy on Thurs nights so we have a new one. She charges more than the others on a week night so I hope she is good. The Thurs I traveled to San Francisco, I did not go to work in the morning even though my plane did not leave until the afternoon. I ran some errands and Ruth did the grocery shopping that AM so she wouldn’t have to while I was gone. I took the train downtown and took the regular O’Hare bus out to the airport. Another way is to drive a rented car from here to O’Hare, but I decided to try the other way this time. The weather was excellent (after bad weather earlier in the week) and, as I said over the phone, it was clear most of the way so I got my first view of the mountains from the air. (We need to drive to Colorado or the mountains sometime.)

The meeting was well worth attending and I’m working on a report now. There were continuous sessions worth attending all day Fri, Sat Sat night and Sun. I did take time to ride the famous old cable cars (they really pack them on) over to the shore and saw the park there, and one of the old lumber sailing ships. Sun evening I took the bus to Livermore, Cal (about 43 miles from San Francisco) and stayed all night at the Cormans as I said. We had a good visit. I had not seen their 2 oldest children. He is a physicist (he has a PhD from KU) and works on nuclear missle and anti-missle research for the government. He took off from work on Mon AM and after showing me around Livermore a bit, he drove me to the San Francisco airport. I just barely made it in time. Since I was late I didn’t get a window seat, but it was cloudy most of the way, so it didn’t matter too much.

The folks did not get to the airport by the time I had arrived, so I waited awhile. The Laidigs had arrived earlier in the day from Indiana and Ruth had driven everyone to visit the Duvalls in Addison (a suburb) before going to the airport. I guess she had to drive through heavy rush hour traffic. I’m glad she’s willing to do that. We showed the kids around the airport a bit but it was too dark to see many planes. We drove down and ate at a drive-in in Franklin Park where we used to stop when we lived there. We drove by the house where we lived and then drove home (probably 40 mi or so from there).

Mr. Laidig moved our patio area fence back to the back edge of the house. We hope to brick the area in sometime. The fence will have to be painted. Ruth painted some while I was gone, but is only halfway across the front. It will take some Indian Summer weather to get it done before winter. The good weather was always on the days that we had other commitments, and the weather has been cold and rainy on the other days.

A week ago tonight the new fellow from Canada, Norman Calof, stopped by for the evening. He is 31 and single, Jewish, and almost didn’t get the job because of the delay. The Laidigs left Wed noon since he had a Highway 83 meeting in South Dakota the next day or so. Ruth had (puplit is crossed out) pulpit committee that night and we had choir on Thurs night. I called you Fri night. Sat AM I stayed home with the boys and Lesle (she had a touch of something so we thought she should stay home) and Ruth and Lisa went to choir practice. They practiced marching, etc. I cleaned the carport in the afternoon.

Sun morning I had the opening exercises for the Junior Department (Lesle is in there) and I guess I’ll be doing it for a few months. Ruth’s choir did fine at the service. We signed a pledge card during the service. Next Sun we’ll call on those who have not pledged. After lunch we went back to an open house at the new manse where the interim minister is living. Ruth helped serve. The kids went and I brought them back to be with a babysitter while Ruth and I went to hear Leonard Pennario (pianist) with the Chicago Heights Symphony. I guess that brings everything up to date. Andy has a touch of cold but we’re all OK otherwise. Hope you’re all OK. Spotty was found dead the other morning so I guess we’ll have to go get a kitten. We don’t know how he died.

**11-12-67** – I’ll write this tonight but I won’t drive the car to go mail it as the gasoline strike is still on. The news on the radio just said (after I wrote the first sentence) that the contract was accepted and the strike may be over by tomorrow night. Today started off sunny, but ended up cloudy and cooler. It was too cool to paint, and we had that chorus rehersal this afternoon anyway. We got one of the high school girls at church to come. The money we paid her goes to the church to help pay for the high school retreat, and their other activities. This Wed night we all go to the high school sponsered spaghetti dinner at church, it is also to raise money (they call their baby sitting and other odd jobs they do for you their “slave days”) - last year we had several of them come wash our storm windows and put them up.

Ruth painted Thurs (it was warm Fri but too rainy) and yesterday. (I did the grocery shopping yesterday afternoon while Ruth painted.) She got the front of the house done and started on the South side of the car port yesterday; it rained last evening and washed some of it off. We’re still hoping for 1-3 more warm days so she can get the rest finished, but at least the front is done so it doesn’t look so bad.

The fellow from Canada moved into one of the Co-Op’s here yesterday and starts in the carpool tomorrow, if everything works out we’ll all have to drive only the one day a week like we used to. Everything at work is OK. We’ve had so many outside things recently that I haven’t spent as much outside time on job related studying and writing. As the children get older I see that they will continue to need time with me so as I say I may even put that ahead of job related things. Last week I started teaching the kids how to play chess and checkers. I have played checkers (we used that checker board I made in the 7th grade – is Mr. Wykoff still living?) but have never really played chess. I thought we could learn the basic moves of chess, and there would be plenty of time later to get better at it.

Lesle is working on her homework now; I think they start them younger than when I was in school. We hope that M.J. is enjoying her teaching this year. The Crusader Choir (7 & 8) sang this morning (I’ll enclose the bulletin) for the first time together and did fine. The choirs are working on their Christmas music. They will not have rehersal next Sat AM since there will be a Christmas parade here in Park Forest. The church approved several hundred dollars (along with $200 of gifts) for new Junior Choir robes. The old ones were in bad shape and were not attractive.

Ruth will still be going out of town some more with the pulpit committee. The fellows on the committee said they would not make her go overnight to Des Moines, Iowa for “my sake” ha! Its fine with me if she doesn’t have to be gone overnight. I had the opening exercises in the Junior Dept for the third Sun this morning. This morning I had a chalk talk, and last Sun I did a sermonized trick. They have scripture reading, hymns, etc. Yesterday morning I went to church and helped watch kids during the choir rehersals. Late yesterday evening we went to a neighbors house for a surprise birthday party for the man.

Ruth has had a bad case of hives on her forehead, but is gradually getting over them. During the past week she had a bad case of laryngitis and could hardly talk (could not sing) last weekend and the first part of this week. I’ve only had a touch. I had my flu shot at work this week. Andy has a runny nose, Lisa has had a cold, and Lesle has been coughing for some time. Andy hurt his eye, got some infection, and had to go to the Dr. two days in a row. Anyway I’m now $100 behind on Dr. bills.

A week ago Sat morning was regular choir rehersal. In the PM we cleaned the boys room. Last week while Ruth was inside she started painting our bedroom and cleaned our closet before painting. Ruth visited another church a week ago this morning and in the afternoon I helped in the every member canvas calling and then went to the chorus rehersal. Ruth did not go since she did not have any singing voice. Later, she did go to lead the high school group (they meet on Sun evenings). They want to have a choir and will sing at Christmas, on Youth Sun and maybe some other time. They sing real well.

Although Ruth volunteered her services for the choir program - she will be paid. I guess I’ll have to get my pledge paid up to cover her salary ha! The Laidigs got home OK and are busy as usual. Glad to have your long letter this week. Last Fri night we all went to the movie to see “Bambi” and “Those Magnificent Men and Their Flying Machines.” The kids thought it was the greatest. My report was not published. Hope you’re all OK. Spotty was found dead week before last in a neighbors carport. A week ago yesterday the people that we bought the house from called and said they have a kitten to give away. So we have a new kitten called Inky. He was born in July. We’re keeping him inside.

**11-25-67 – Sat PM –** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, I’ll write a letter now even though we all got to talk a bit on Thanksgiving. That was nice that you took everyone out to eat; it saved a lot of work cooking and I imagine there was less chance of overeating. We hope that all of your Thanksgiving day was pleasant. We spent most of Thurs AM cleaning and straightening the house. Ruth, of course (of course?), had all the cooking to do. We had turkey, rice dressing (stuffing), cranberry and fruit salad, sweet potatoes, peas, cherry and pumpkin pie. We still have some of the turkey left. Our guest, Norman Calof, came just a few minutes before you folks called. He is that Canadian fellow (single) who works for me. He is getting pretty well settled in his Co-op (2 bedrooms, living room, dining room, bath kitchen and basement) and beginning to do his own cooking. He always lived in a room in Canada and never did much cooking. He is in our car pool; he takes his driver license test next Mon. His parents live in Winnipeg. He is taking the place of that fellow who was called into the army (Joe Williams).

Norman seemed to enjoy the good dinner and then stayed all afternoon. He has lots of questions about decorating, etc., which Ruth can help him with. He is just a short distance from Pete Luna, the fellow who came with me from Neisler. (We don’t hear much about Neisler. I guess their sales are about the same. I saw my former boss in Washington at the Pharmacology Meetings in August.)

We were home Thurs night. Yesterday AM we bought new shoes for Alan, and then went up to the Museum of Science and Industry (the only other time we had been there was a year ago last summer while we were living in that other house). We had lunch there and left at 4:00 PM when they closed. There was a tremendous crowd since it was a school holiday and many fathers didn’t have to work. We should try to get there once or twice a year as the kids get older. We haven’t gone to Field Museum of Natural History as a family, but Lesle went with her class last year.

This AM Ruth had her regular choir rehersals; I went to help watch our boys and the ones not rehersing. The Carol Choir (3-6 grades) sings at the service in the morning. I’ll enclose the bulletin. Ruth has worked hard and has built the membership up. The church approved the money for new robes (I may have written this); they had gifts of $200 and needed another $400 for the 50 robes. The robes are ordered and hopefully, they will arrive before the Christmas programs. Ruth sends out letters etc. She is being paid $10 per rehersal and performance, but she volunteered her services at the start because of her interest in childrens music.

This afternoon I stayed home with the kids while Ruth went shopping and to have her hair cut. It is in a new style for her and looks real nice. We’ll be home tonight. I have to get my opening exercises for in the morning. I may use a trick again to illustrate a point. Tomorrow afternoon is rehersal for that chorus. A week ago Fri we ate out after I was home from work and then did some shopping in the Marshall Field store on the Plaza. We let the kids spend quite a bit of time looking at the Christmas things and toys. A week ago this morning Ruth did not have choir rehersals because of the parade here in Park Forest. We saw it near the High School and got very cold since it was windy. We did have a blanket for the kids to get under. Ruth shopped in the afternoon and in the evening we went to the Couples Club (Chu-Co(?)) dinner and meeting at the church.

Last Sun AM Ruth left early with the pulpit committee, they were heading for a town in Indiana about 3 hours driving time away when they realized that the town was in the Eastern Time Zone and they had not taken that into account. They turned around and came back and I, of course, was surprised when Ruth walked in the door. She helped get us all off to church on time. We had our rehersal in the afternoon.

Last Mon night Ruth had her pulpit committee meeting. We were home Tues night. Wed night we sang in the choir for the Interfaith Thanksgiving Service at one of the Catholic Churches in Chicago Heights. There was a big crowd Mom takes a turn. most of which went to the basement afterward for a social hour provided by the host Catholic church. This was a first for the area – Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish congregations combining in one worship service. At the museum Carroll ran into a former roommate – Wilbur Shoemaker – and I had known his wife at KU. We always seem to run into someone we know in odd places. Back to Dad. When I was in San Francisco I ran into another fellow I knew at KU. He has an MD and a PhD, and is a Professor of Physiology at the University of Indiana. We’re all pretty free of colds and everything at this time. We hope you’re all well and that everything is OK. The Laidigs spent Thanksgiving with Deloris and her family in Manhatten. Deloris teaches there and he works. They still live in a trailer.

**12-5-67 – Tues PM –** I’ll write this now and maybe one of us will mail it later. Today has been warmer, although somewhat rainy, and tomorrow will also be warm. It hasn’t been warm enough to do any more painting on the house, however. I doubt if it will get done before spring unless we have real unseasonable weather.

Inky is the black cat and I guess he is an adequate replacement for Spotty. He has calmed down and doesn’t jump or snap as much at us. Andy is not afraid of him anymore. Inky is much more friendly to me (probably due in part to his being a kitty) than Spotty was, and will even jump up on my lap. Inky has only been outdoors a few times under supervision, and will stay in at least through the winter.

In his sermon Sun the minister said he had to sit down when he read the letters from his daughter since her description of all their activities was so exhausting. I had to smile as I thought of some of my letters to you folks. Yes! Ruth has circle meeting and PTA tomorrow night and Thurs night we have an extra long choir rehersal in preparation for the Christmas music. Ruth will have her choirs next Sat AM and we’ll probably get our tree sometime during the weekend. Ruth has to go out next Sun to a town in Indiana (the one they started out to that other Sun). She won’t be back until the middle of the afternoon since it’s quite a distance. Next Sun our Junior Dept. will practice for their part in the Christmas program Dec 17th (afternoon).

Ruth had her big (40 mins) program for the Women’s Association today at the church. She said they had a good crowd and it went OK. She called it In Christ There is No East or West and it was based on Madona’s etc. in different lands. She did one something like it in Decatur. Ruth took our Nativity Set (the one we got with Aunt Clara’s money last year) and had some other things to show. She is setting the set up now on our record cabinet by the stereo. Ruth also is in charge of all the Christmas music for the Christmas Eve service at church. Our adult choir director will be out of town. All of the choirs including the high school group (4 choirs) will sing that night.

Last night we went shopping and the kids all got to pick out a new book. We had a contest last week to see who could show the best manners, especially at the table. To save any difficulty, and there really wasn’t much difference, we declared a four way tie and said they could all have a prize. They are doing better, and we really shouldn’t have to have a contest for something like that.

Last Sun AM Ruth visited a church in Bellwood (a suburb not far from Franklin Park). She was back at our church before the service was over since it was an early service. They are making progress and hope to have a minister for installation by shortly after Easter. Sun afternoon was the concert at Bloom High School (Chicago Heights) Auditorium with the chorus and symphony orchestra. It went fine – only a moderate crowd, but good weather. I like to sing in a big chorus. It was the Childhood of Christ by Hector Berlioz. Sun evening Ruth had her choir (high school). Sat AM was the Junior Choir rehersals. Sat night was the dress rehersal for the Sun concert. I’ve lost track of the money we’ve spent on babysitters.

Glad to have your letter and clippings. The cable car in San Francisco that crashed was just like the one I rode. They pack the people on. The jet plane that crashed was not the same model that I rode. We were home last Fri PM. Last Thurs night was regular choir rehersal. Hope you’re all OK.

**12-13-67 – Wed PM –** I’ll write this tonight but I won’t take it out to mail like I sometimes do. I guess I’m back to my old week to 10 day schedule of letter writing to Hutchinson. Today was clearer after about 12-14 consecutive days of intermittent rain and cold. We’ve only had about 1 or 2 days when the roads were a little slick. The car pool is still working OK. Norm, the new man, is getting used to the schedule. He made us wait a few times in the evening because he was slow getting his work cleaned up, etc.

Ruth is at pulpit committee meeting this evening. It is 9:30 so she should be home almost any time; she gets home earlier than she used to. I had a hard time getting the kids into bed this evening; they are getting so excited over Christmas. They were excited this evening about my putting up the outside lights on the shrubbery in the front yard. We got an extra strand of lights for out there this year. We got our tree last evening and I put it up in the family room. The kids and Ruth strung popcorn and cranberries, while I put it up and got the lights on.

Tomorrow night we’re having the regular choir practice at our house. The choir usually goes to peoples homes about twice a year. We’ll have to bring in some extra chairs since some of the wives and husbands usually come. The choir here is not as large as the one in Decatur. Unlike we could in the house in Decatur, we can’t shut off the kids bedrooms so they will probably be awake most of the time.

Friday is the annual Mid West Pharmacology meeting up at G.D. Searle & Co. I’ll either drive or ride with Jim Bastian. Searle is one of the companies I interviewed and I have some friends there. We also stopped there that time I drove up with the engineer to observe their dog quarters. The’re located in Skokie which is a suburb Northeast of Franklin Park.

Sat AM Ruth is having extra long rehersals for her choirs. Sat night is a progressive dinner for the Couples Club at church but I’m not sure we’re going. Next Sun afternoon is the annual Christmas program and Party at Church. All the Sunday School Departments will participate in the program along with Ruth’s choirs. Afterwards at the party I will give a magic show. I’ve had to work up some new tricks since the kids would remember some of “sucker” tricks I gave at the same party last year.

I took one of my last 2 vacation days yesterday. I helped on some house cleaning and sorting getting ready for the choir tomorrow night. I worked on my magic and did some odd jobs around the house.

A week ago tonight Ruth had PTA Open House and Circle Meeting. Last Thurs was regular choir rehersal. Fri night Ruth had a meeting at church. Sat AM was regular youth choirs. We were home Sat evening. Ruth was scheduled to go visit a church in Ind. Sun AM, but stayed home with Alan since he was running a fever. He missed school Fri and through today. He will probably go back to school tomorrow.

I helped lead the Juniors Sun AM for their program part. I wrote a report Sun afternoon and evening. Hope you’re all OK and are having a nice holiday season.

 

Christmas Eve finery. The same dresses two years in a row! Also Alan’s 7th birthday.

**12-31-67 – Sun 4:00 PM -** As usual, I’m slow getting around to this letter. After a little snow this morning it has cleared off this afternoon. It is very cold and tonight will be our coldest night of the year. We’re not going out or having anyone in tonight.

Ruth went with one of the pulpit committee members to visit a church at Belvedere. Its about an hour and a half drive on the Ill Tollway. She drove our car to the church and the fellow picked her up there; I got a ride with some other people. Church attendance was down slightly because of the snow and cold. I’m still doing the opening exercises for the Juniors. I did a little trick last Sun. I guess I’ll have to do it for awhile yet, since the regular man is on the pulpit committee. Ruth got home a little after 2:00 this afternoon and we then got ready for Andy’s birthday party. He had 4 of his preschool friends in. One of the mothers stayed and the others stopped by later to pick up their children. We’ll have Andy’s birthday dinner after awhile. I’ll send the Christmas and birthday pictures later.

We thank you all again for the Christmas presents. We are undecided on how we’ll spend the money gifts. One possibility is to have bunk beds made for the boys. The type we want are not readily available in the stores; they are the type with storage drawers underneath. I was supposed to make them, but I don’t think I could do an adequate job on the drawers etc. I don’t mind some woodworking, but I just don’t have the knowledge and experience to do anything very complicated. Without a basement we don’t have a very good place to work. Good tools are so expensive but of course, you can save a lot of money on various projects. I guess I’m offering excuses, but my job related reading and work still dominates most of my spare time.

We’ll be home tomorrow. We’ll take the Christmas tree down and just relax around home. The rest of this week will just be the regular schedule with choir practice on Thurs, etc. The kids got the usual toys and games for Christmas, and some clothes. I believe they have already spent at least part of the money gifts. I got a new dressy sports jacket, socks, ties, pajamas, another volume of the Interpreters Bible, a magazine binder. Ruth got all weather lined boots, blouses, slacks, etc.

Yesterday morning was Alan’s birthday party and lunch. Alan had 3 guests. Ruth shopped in the afternoon for additional for both boys. Its quite a financial burden to have two birthdays right after Christmas. I’m afraid some of my profit sharing money from Neisler (its paid back over 10 years) will have to go for bills. We had originally scheduled some of it for paneling for the family room, but that will have to wait for awhile. Although I haven’t figured it out, I think our medical expenses for 1967 have been our highest ever. I’m sure we have some to deduct for income tax.

Ruth called Oberlin on Christmas. Eldon’s were there and Ruth talked to him for the first time in several years. (I’m not sure I ever mentioned that Eldon completed his PhD in education at the University of Texas last August. As you may remember, Eldon has been going to summer school at Texas for a number of years. He was in residence there all last school year finishing his thesis. He is a principal of a junior high school in Arvada, Colorado (Denver suburb). I’m not sure whether Eldon wants to be a superintendent, or whether he wants to go into college work.) When Ruth called Mr. Laidig was in bed with the flu, and some of the others there (Deloris and her family) were just getting over it. There has been a lot of sickness here, I guess. We hope that everyone in Hutchinson is now well. I had a flu shot earlier; I don’t know whether or not it has made any difference, but I’ve been freer of upper respiratory problems so far this winter than I usually am.

I’m not sure whether I wrote after the Christmas program 2 weeks ago. Ruths choirs sang during the afternoon program, and the various s.s. departments also participated. Afterwards everyone went to the social hall for a light supper provided by our s.s. class. After the supper I gave my magic show. I used the pup tent for the first time ever, and several other tricks that I had not used since I was in Hutchinson. I couldn’t use all of the tricks I used last year, since the kids would remember some of them. I also produced and vanished our rat; that was the first time I had ever used a live animal in a show. I let Alan and Lisa help me some. I produced some candy and passed it out to the children.

Last Sun was Ruth’s big day as she had all the days music. The adult choir director was out of town. In the morning both the Carol and Crusader Choirs sang together. Several children were absent because of sickness. In the evening was the Christmas Eve Service. The high school choir sang the introit and the two younger choirs sang separately from the balcony. The adult choir sang with orchestra accompaniment. There were 450 people there. The weather was good which helped the crowd. The snow started during the service and that was the snow we got for Christmas.

Glad to have your letter this week. We wish you folks all the best for 1968. Why don’t you plan on coming up when the weather warms up. The Fall Pharmacology Meeting is in Minneapolis this next August, so we might not go to Kansas until then. We could drive you up to Madison in the spring. Hope you’re all OK. Love, Carroll & family