

MERRY CHRISTMAS



HAPPY NEW YEAR

14 Lake Park  
Champaign, Illinois  
December 1964

Dear Friends,

I am sure the Kokernots set the record this year for getting out the latest Christmas letter. Looking back over 1964, it seems as if we haven't really done anything terribly interesting or startling, but it has been a good year for us.

We moved into our new house the 15th of February. Naturally, a blizzard hit and lasted through the day. A most unique moving day it was. We certainly go from one extreme to another, from the tropics with hand labor available and R.F. paying for it to an Illinois blizzard and our doing most of the work!

When the ground thawed Bob began planting trees. We were not prepared for the cost of landscaping, and with few shekels left for such folly Bob found a place to "Dig Your Own"--and that's just what they meant. Despite Bob's sacroiliac we have some beautiful shrubs and trees and are hopeful that they will survive. The bluegrass grew, and the weeds . . . . and that little item took up the rest of the summer. About the time we would have liked to go on vacation St. Louis encephalitis arrived in Illinois--and that was that! Bob worked day and night far into the fall. We did squeeze in a short week near Bob's field station in southern Illinois and had a pleasant time cooking out, hiking and swimming, but for the most part the summer was spent swimming, sunbathing and loafing at every opportunity (excluding Bob). (In between the "opportunities" each child had to weed for a total of one hour daily plus the other usual chores of a new garden!) All the children are good swimmers, and Jan and Peggy were on a swim team which practiced every morning at 7:30. Walter went to the YMCA Day Camp for a month. Diana learned to swim in the lake. Jan passed her Junior Life-saving Badge--a torture for all of us on whom she practiced.

All this seems like history now as the present trend is toward ice-skating on the lake. We have amazed ourselves in learning to skate so easily. Even Diana has learned--on one blade, too. To tell the truth, you'd think we had all been raised on this iceberg, the way we've taken to winter sports. (I'm not talking about form, just fun.)

We have enjoyed getting to know many of the foreign students and faculty here, which is in many ways as interesting as travel. University life is certainly a new experience. There is always so much going on!

Jacques has settled down at his lake home and has quite forgotten he's a poodle, though he did father five adorable poodles last August. Our little Mimi, his daughter, is precious. Our cat, Thomasina, has the look of a black china cat and is Mimi's favourite playmate.

So you can see that life is fairly quiet for the Kokernots. (You think so! Just spend the weekend in our house!) We have our pictures, our objets d'art and, best of all, many pleasant memories. We miss our old friends and look forward to your letters and visits, which always bring into focus again how much your friendship means to us.

With every good wish to you and yours,

Bob and Edith, Jan, Peggy, Walter and Diana

