

11-JAN-D-1

TRANSITION FROM MINDANOA TO NORTH LUZON BY WAY OF BANAUE, IFAGAO AND SAGADO ENROUTE TO OUR WORK WEEK IN ABANTO

11-JAN-D-1 Index to transition from Mindanao to N Luzon by way of Banaue

2 Fly out of Gen San to Manila, brief stop in Mall of Asia for Wi Fi connection to learn of a Cairo coups which disrupts our LA Times coverage in Sudan, then begin nearly endless rough ride ten hours out of Manila to N Luzon to arrive after four AM in Ifagao

3 A day of phenomenal anthropologic/cultural photojournalism begins in Ifagao, N Luzon, and continues through Banaue and its three millennia cultivated rice terraces, with a lunch stop in Bantoc, and a tour of Sagada and its hanging coffins and cave burial sites as we drive through the avalanches of northern Luzon

4 The tour of Sagado, with Children's Program for Festival Week, then walk through the graveyards of Echo Valley and commence long drive through high mountains of Cordillera to Bauko for the start up at hospital Luis Hora, site of our next week's work in N Luzon

11-JAN-D-2

FLY OUT OF GEN SAN TO MANILA, BRIEF STOP IN MALL OF ASIA FOR WI FI CONNECTION TO LEARN OF A CAIRO COUPS WHICH DISRUPTS OUR LA TIMES COVERAGE IN SUDAN, THEN BEGIN NEARLY ENDLESS ROUGH RIDE TEN HOURS OUT OF MANILA TO N LUZON TO ARRIVE AFTER FOUR AM IN IFAGAO

January 28-29, 2011

Let's start with our starting point and wind up with the location of our destination---a very long way away in a very rough ride that seemed endless.

TECH= 06* 14.66 N and 124* 48.55 E

It is here we have been operating for a week and then we will go from the love bombing adulation of our long "Culmination Program to Gen San from which we fly to Manila and there stagger around for a while getting an untimely late start in a convoy of three vans with drivers as a substitute for the bus we could not negotiate after three weeks of Jun's trying. That, it turned out, was fortuitous since a bus would never have made it into the areas to which we are headed for our interval R & R in the World heritage regions of the Banaue rice terraces of the Central N Luzon and we will see what we can there, after getting in after four AM and a very tough road trip.

DESTINATION TRAVEL: THE CORDILERA MOUNTAIN TRIBES OF N LUZON

IFAGAO= 16* 65.48 N and 121* 03.62 E

After the five AM packing out of TECH and the ride to GES by van, we flew an hour and a half by Airbus to Manila. The domestic flights back and forth from Manila to GGES were a second charge item for us through MMI and the holiday in Banaue is an out of pocket fifty dollars for which we got quite a bargain.

In departing, everyone wants to have the pictures everyone else took and all the correspondence connections. I made that simple by loading up all the articles, the text of the journal and the photos on a USB thumb drive for Allan and added all the videos of the Rwanda Sudan and prior year's travels with the Year End letters for the last couple of years. I tried to load the Mission to Heal Calvin Lecture, but it is too big as a Power Point to fit on the stick, so I left with Allan the Ppt from the ACS presentation which Tesha and the other Cagayan de Oro docs had asked be given this coming December in their major invitation lecture. I loaded the CV and bio sketch for that possibility and learned later that Shawna Willey from GWU had been the

last lecturer on the subject of breast operations, the special inters of the one surgeon with whom I went running on the single time I could run with anyone here at South Cotabato.

I was initially wary of the climate into which I would be operating here at TECH particularly after the bizarre call from Brian Piecuch from MMI central saying they had a black ball report on my conduct and competence, but it seems that strange report was as bizarre as it appears, and I am now invited as the Master Surgeon to conduct their formal annual program! I am also leaving with Allan the one copy of Gifts from the Poor that I had brought. Next year the return to TECH is January 21 with a second week presumably at Palawan ending Feb 4 2012.

I saw a library book that Jason our anesthesiology resident had checked out of the library entitled “Invented Edens” about the complexities of the Tasaday hoax I anthropology and the Robert Henley report of 26 Stone Age people in the Mindanao Monobo mountains found in 1971, discovered by Manuel Elizalde, a Philippine “minister.” This report got the attention of the NGS and a cover story which later unraveled over the nature and character of the principle promoter of these people. A “Tasaday Preserve” was set up of 45,000 acres to keep anyone from intruding on them, and an anthropologist named Robert Fox was brought in by Elizalde to report on them. It is much more complex than all that, and my own fascination with eh Manobo peoples—recall that I operated on a diminutive but regal Manobo Princess, who was a proud woman with a goiter and horribly betel-stained teeth, just this week.. I must get this book.

MANI = 14* 30.7 N and 121* 00.8 E

I like the sign “Please Fall in Line” and I keep threatening to carry out these instructions to the letter.

I also said in passing what was marked as one of the great fundamental urban truths as we made our way through the traffic of crowded Manila: “There is no human need that cannot be satisfied at any Manila intersection and that within the timing of a red light.”

Vendors do everything from squirt your window to necessitate their services in cleaning it off, to selling the most useless gimcracks to showing up with a hat, sunglasses, an umbrella or any other item the moment it is needed. That applies to various “commercial sex workers” as well who literally work the streets.

I am also convinced on seeing the parade of all tricked out young women in the tight and well groomed uniform of the PAL Flight Attendant that march out smartly at the conclusion of every PAL flight, that there is a great silent conspiracy I have figured out and should report. They take the best looking slimmest and trimmest young women and trick them out in the uniform at age 21, and then at age 24 they take them all out behind the airplane and shoot them. That is because there is an endless supply line of such young women, but there are no old or retired ones.

We stopped at Shalom to find out if any luggage needed packing out and I had hoped to leave a few postcards at the desk I had written in Tiboli land. They cheerfully took out the few postcards I had written on the long transpacific flights coming in which they had not mailed and added them to the pile so that the two would be going out together even if written a week apart.

We then went to the mandatory stop everyone needs in Manila—we went to the Mall of Asia—the Chinese Filipino who is the Sam Walton of the Philippines, Mr. Sy. He is the tycoon of the megamall, starting with Shoe Mart and making big plazas everywhere, including now back in China where he was born. I said to John Sutter: “Why is it the whole world has learned merchandising so very well that there are interchangeable shopping mega malls everywhere, when the same amount of effort could have invented the perfection of World Peace?”

I went to a perfect restaurant for my purposes: Burger King. Not only have we “ODed” on Philippine cuisine, it was for quite another purpose that I went there: they have a free wireless access for WiFi. I got a sandwich in order to get their access code—BKSM—and took a very quick look at the emails that had come in for a week for the first and only time. The first one I saw was that David Zucchino and the LA Times photographer I had made such efforts to get into our entourage into Sudan and CAR have been diverted to Egypt as David Zucchino’s first message was that he was on his way to Nicaragua, and the next message that he had been pulled out of Nicaragua to go to Cairo since there are big riots in Tahir Square for the overthrow of Hosni Mubarek and his twenty plus year authoritarian reign, based in the encouragement of the Tunisian success in overthrowing their government. It seems that Arabic governments are learning that permanent autocracies can be toppled, with messages clearly directed at Northern Sudan and the Saudi and Middle Eastern allies of the USA. This is very big news for a transition in US policy, but also makes a big difference to my trip since I now have gone from competing media coverage to NONE for the Sudan and the CAR initiatives.

I only had time to learn this and tried to send a message in return within the few minutes we had in the SM MegaMall Burger King. Almost immediately I got a Skype Phone Call from Zachary Smith telling me of these events I had just seen and asking to set up regular Skype conversations—since he lives in a land of continuous well wired communicators and does not understand that this was the ONLY time I have been in communication and that only by making the effort to get to the transient connectivity of a Burger King in the Mall of Asia—not the kind of place I typically do remote medical missions. He was still talking as we had to pull out and get to the vans in order to start our way toward the North, which is a VERY long way from the mall of Asia and the well wired world.

In fact, it is a long way from anywhere, and to get on our way we first had to transit the endless sprawl of the confluent Manila cities within this megacity. I had just had time to email AA Loki and tell them about canceling the Zucchino LA Times special flight in and the mcNulty special flight out and confirm the hard core of passengers we are down to, when we were “settled” uncomfortably into the vans with our excellent urban combat drivers threading through

the town by feinting and bluffing other vehicles .We went through Rizal park and the Mania Hotel, which was the MacArthur HQ during WW II. We then went through Quipo—Old Manila which had once been the Central Business District before the move to Makhati and other new cities within Manila. The Makhati centers were the site of the bombings that killed six people while we were in Tiboli land.

We then went passing Santo Tome the oldest university in the Philippines, and a member of the MMHOF. It was founded in 1611 and had such students as Rizal, who studied here then went to Spain to learn ophthalmology. It is now celebrating its 400th anniversary this year as all the banners proclaim. “UST-400” states the banners along Espana Blvd where a string of other universities were started near Santo Tome. Manila has thirteen million inhabitants by day and about ten million by night. It took us another four hours just to get out of Manila before the long and twisting mountain driving by night to get us in the Boondocks of Ifagao.

Ifagao =BOON= 16* 55.48 N and 121* 03.62 E at Elevation 998 meters

We arrived after four AM in what looked identical to the Himalayan tea houses that I had stayed in on trek through Nepal, but we saw little of that in trying just to crawl in out of the van to be anywhere but inside that churning washing machine of a long ride.

11-JAN-D-3

**A DAY OF PHENOMENAL ANTHROPOLOGIC/CULTURAL
PHOTOJOURNALISM BEGINS IN IFAGAO, N LUZON, AND
CONTINUES THROUGH BENAUE AND ITS THREE MILLENNIA
CULTIVATED RICE TERRACES, WITH A LUNCH STOP IN BANTOC,
AND A TOUR OF SAGADA AND ITS HANGING COFFINS AND CAVE
BURIAL SITES AS WE DRIVE THROUGH THE AVALANCHES OF
NORTHERN LUZON**

January 29, 2011

Ifagao=BOON=16° 55.48 N and 121° 03.62 E at elevation 998 meters

We are starting our gradual stirring in the “destination travel” I had attempted several times before but had never achieved—the “Boondocks” of N Luzon. This is the only English word from Tagalog origin, and refers to the time-out-of-mind prehistoric rice terraces, where generations of stoop labor have created an archaeologic soil for growing food along the rugged Cordillera of Central Mountain Province N Luzon.

We got up and out slowly, since we arrived after four AM. Besides, it was chilly, at this elevation, we had lost the heat and humidity of the Manila or Mindanao lowlands and were about to experience a week of downright cold temperatures, almost always being at or above a mile high.

I saw the traditional mountain house, in which a store house is built on sturdy wooden stilts with a large carved round wooden obstruction on the legs of the stilts to prevent rats from climbing up and getting to the rice stores. Access to the living loft is by ladder pulled up at night to prevent the other predator, the wild boar, from entering the stilt house. Along the outside are skulls of carabao and a few of the barking deer. It seems that the house where we stayed has five generations of these stilt houses and I could inspect each before any of the others got out of their cold mats on platform beds.

I saw the hand tilled rice paddies and the trickle down irrigations schemes that keep them going. They are able to crop almost continually and can have one paddy harvested while others are just panted or almost ready for transplantation. It is a labor intensive effort, and it is all hand labor. It is too steep and remote for water buffalo.

One breakfast item on which I took a pass is the Balut=duck embryo eggs. This might be an ultimate test of one's status as a true Pinoy—the eating of a feathered duck embryo still nestled inside the egg shell.

Bangus is the milk fish, a staple of breakfast and the item that is produced by all the aquaculture ponds along the Manila Bay.

There is a Lusong, the mortar made of carved wood in which rice is pounded, very similar to the African staple of the millet pounding that precedes their one meal per day.

Ancestor carvings were also found on the stilt houses and were a source of reverence if not worship by the proprietors of our guest house. They were amused by my interest in the anthropology of the materials culture around me as I took pictures and made notes of what I saw, which to them are just items of daily living.

After I marked the GPS I figured the bearings to everywhere else we had been and at this moment we are 780 miles north of TEC at bearing 162*. We are 166 miles north of Manila at bearing 183*--hardly a distance that should take over eight hours by road trip, but that it did can tell you we are really in the "Boondocks."

This is Ifagao Province—named for the remote hill tribe here. The people wear a colorful red G-string that is part of the dance ceremony. They live in these carved wooden stilt houses which have no nail in them and can be picked up and moved off their stilts when it is necessary to rotate crops on other terraces. Here are symbolic "Paley" sheaves of dried ripe rice on the stalks which are the unit of purchase for rice buyers, and it is a symbol of the fertility of the area, even now being improved by the introduction of various hybrid rice species\

VIEWPOINT-IFAGAO ELDERS= 168 55.42 N AND 1218 07.04 E at 1,187 meters elevation

We drove over to a viewpoint with all the UNESCO World heritage scene of the Boondocks stretching out below us. I saw a few of the elders of the Ifagao, a diminutive people dressed in the colorful reds of their tribal costume and wearing a ring hat of rooster feathers stuck up as an Indian headdress. Of course, they had to put that on my head, which must be about twice their size so I had to be careful not to have it slip off the point of my scalp. None of these elders, talking among themselves in the Ifagao language, no doubt making observations on the anthropologic feathers of his mixed batch of bizarre tourists in front of them, were under age 75. They were weathered and wizened, but appeared just like the shuffle board crowd at a retirement retreat home in Florida making small talk about the weather and the intrusion of these new young people and whatever were they doing to make themselves useful as they had always been all their lives in planting and transplanting rice and tending terraces.

In fact, as an anthropologist participant/observer, I note that one of the two groups is far more bizarre than the other, and I would mean the group not wearing red colored G-strings.

There were carved ancestral deities and seated guardian/sentinel figures. One very well endowed young woman carved in wood was riding a rampaging mount which could be recognized as an erect penis. The fertility of the fields and females seems linked here as it is in the cattle cultures to which I go next. I suspect that the MMI team perhaps chose not to make such observations as they made obligatory gift shop shopping forays next to such statues.

The 90 year olds at the viewpoint were working for tips and probably netted more than those who were working in the fields or the gift shop, so they could hardly be considered retired, since they were the source of the balance of payments in currency exchange.

I tight-roped along the muddy rim of one of the rice terraces to see an elderly woman knee deep in the paddy. I had heard there was no Schistosomiasis here, but I did see snails in the rice paddies, probably just not the right species to host the disease which is endemic in Mindanao as *Schistosoma Japonicum*. One thing I did spot writhing around her leathery skin of her knees were squirming leaches. So, there may be occupational hazards beyond backache in these millennia of stoop labor.

The pre-historic rice terraces antedated the introduction to the carabao or the internal combustion engine so none of these are part of this agriculture since they seem to be difficult to put into such a steep mountain terrain. The food produced here is by the careful lovingly tended terraces and ingenious irrigation schemes. I have a question that baffles me: where is the source of the water? These are mountain top, so it is not that there are ground water sources like springs except lower down on the porous volcanic pumus.

“Aquian” is the name of this viewpoint, but it is arbitrarily chosen from among hundreds of vistas to see as we crawl up the mountains into higher terraces still. This must be among the most intensively farmed areas on the planet, in which this inhospitable steep mountainside is tilled to make agronomy possible in eh mountains and of a non-mechanized kind. It is also an acknowledgement of those who went before as I saw several rice offerings to the ancestors. The view from Aquian is the picture on the 1,000 peso note, and is the UNESCO portrait of Banaue.

We drove up amazingly good roads, under constant work at the switchbacks like the Himalayan “Himank” road crews clearing avalanches and washouts. We drove from the altitude my NGS Himalayan watch tells me is 1,100 through 1,545 meters at a pass where a large plaster statue of the Virgin Mary is erected. This pass marks an elevation over a Mile high.

PASS=Mount Data –Virgin Mary=1,841 meters= 16* 58.57 N and 121* 02.53 E

We had to wait a few times for road crews to clear an avalanche that had closed several of the successive switchbacks along our route. It is very reminiscent of the Himalayas and the care attending both the roads and the fields in order to eke a living out of this marginally habitable terrain and get to and through it. I keep wondering what were the forces that pushed these Ifagao peoples up in to the high mountains to work so hard on this labor intensive

agronomy, when mechanized farm plots in the valleys would have made rice growing so much easier? They must have been displaced from easier cultivation since I do not believe that they sought out rice growing with “degrees of difficulty” geometrically increased for reasons of a skillful art form alone.

I saw the “Gavian Engineering” once practiced by the Romans—that is, baskets of rocks are placed to support and as they gather silt they become semisolid to divert running water. The romans may have woven the baskets of reeds, but here it is of chicken wire. That explains how to channel water down mountain but still does not answer the fundamental Hydrology of the upper terraces of the rice paddies.

We descended to a valley and a town along a ridge next to a river. This town is Bontoc. That Bontoc is not to be confused with Bangtok—capital of Sikkim which I have also visited, nor Bangkok, capital of Thailand. But it is also a major center just now since it is in the middle of its “Town Festival” and it is the capital of the Mountain Province of the Cordillera.

BUNTOC=17° 05.27 N and 120° 58.26 E at elevation 868 meters

We will stay in the Traveler’s Inn at Sagada later this evening, but stop here for lunch in Buntoc. We will eat dinner tonight at the Salt and Pepper and see the hanging coffins and cave burials here in Sagada after seeing the Mountain Province capital Buntoc before going further down the High Sema Highway to Abatan at Bauko to Luis Hora Mountain regional Hospital where we will be working for a week.

I played with Jason’s new I Phone to open the maps and data of the Lonely Planet which is how we read up on what sights to see here. I walked the streets of Buntoc while the others made their compulsory shopping trips, and watched what appear to be trout jumping in the cold runoff from the mountain stream. There was a woman selling fish near the bridge and those fish were cat fish. There was a “public health poster” designed to give health advice—if not give bad dreams to all little kids who might be passing by. I had once seen posters in China advising not to cross the train tracks, a discouragement re-enforced by showing dismembered and hemisected kids who had tried and failed to make it. This sign shows people who ignore motor bikes and get themselves impaled or worse—a “graphic art form!”

SAGADA=17° 05.02 N and 120° 53.80 E at elevation 1,467 meters

It is Saturday market night at Sagada and it is a festival weekend besides. People are festive and crowding the streets and booths of vendors. It is yet another orgy of photographic observations as I filled up my 8 gig photo card and will need all evening to upload and sort the pictures from a good day of visual and interesting sights. The one Nikon I had carried on the run through humid Mindanao did not survive that run since it no longer portrays on the view screen, but still takes photos, so I relegated it to back up status and opened up the brand-new Nikon for the start of this and the African missions to follow. I was shooting photos of overloaded

jeepneys and other backgrounds when a woman walked by with twenty sacks strapped all over her body as she struggled her way up the hill to go to the market. Such little visual vignettes are well worth being prepared for and I regretted a few which were missed, but there are more than enough to make up the difference!

We could see in the limestone rocky prominences that there were hanging coffins suspended in the clefts of the rocks. We went further to see a series of caves, with one cave being a special one, in which burial was limited to those women who had died in child birth.

We hiked down into one of the caves and saw the carved wooden ‘sarcophagi’ (I like these Greek terms which means “to eat” =phagus “meat”=sarco). They were stacked in a bit of a jumble inside the caves and constituted a burial site that had changed from the earlier marauding by a valley head hunting tribe which pushed the Ifagao peoples up onto this limestone ridge. It was the ANGLICAN church that protected them up on this ridge so that in Spanish Catholic Philippines, this area has remained Anglican with a Church Seminary and School up along the high ridge where all the features of the town festival are being set up for the big affair tomorrow which we will visit after going to the Echo Valley to see further hanging coffins.

Stay tuned! It has been a good day of the kind of anthropologic tourism that I like, and may get better still as I hope to get still closer to these people. I had dinner in the Salt and Pepper across the street from our dorm like Traveler’s Inn and then tried to sort and upload photos. There will be more than enough for a show and tell upon return!

11-JAN-D-4

**THE TOUR OF SAGADO, WITH CHILDREN'S PROGRAM FOR
FESTIVAL WEEK, THEN WALK THROUGH THE GRAVEYARDS OF
ECHO VALLEY AND COMMENCE LONG DRIVE THROUGH HIGH
MOUNTAINS OF CORDILLERA TO BAUKO FOR THE START UP AT
HOSPITAL LUIS HORA, SITE OF OUR NEXT WEEK'S WORK IN N
LUZON**

January 30, 2011

We awoke in our traveler's Inn at Sagado and ate a bit of the French bread that John and Jason had brought back from their excursions out last night in search of a French Retardant they had seen in the Lonely Planet. It is require to have reservations and they did not but the proprietors had pity on them and invited them to eat and also gave them a couple of loaves of French bread which we ate in the cool misty cloud cover as we awaited the "herd of cats" to mobilize on the streets of Sagada. We started off in the Salt and Pepper where we ate the breakfast I had ordered for John and Jason in their absence last night. I had seen the compulsory group think and simplistic notions of many of our participant which made it easy for me to understand why John and Jason wanted to take off for a little R & R of their own last night and covered for them in their absence.

They had not found the really interesting restaurant advertised in the Lonely Planet in Bontoc which serves only dog. It seems there are a lot of that livestock around in good supply. If there were a danger of a rabies epidemic I would recommend that the Bontoc restaurant get a lot more popular to clear the streets.

We left to go to a children school program where they were marshaled out to show us their skills in singing the songs of the Mountain Province and the small boys were bravely dressed in G-Strings in the chilled air to dance to the accompaniment of the gongs and drums. We listened to the well-rehearsed choir hanging on the rapt attention of the director. We saw that the kids then batted back and forth a neutral colored inflated item that looked like an inflated surgical glove of the kind we had often used in making the kids a plaything—recall the final photos of he Rwanda DVD. It was only later that I was told by Alfred that this inflated object was a pig's gall bladder. I would have thought it would get dried and burst. It is like the Taiwanese fetish for bear gall bladders that has made such havoc among the brown bear population of Kamchatka in Russia.

The performance moved Allan to tears since he said as Philippine he was happy to see the culture not being lost. Alison had a different reaction characteristic of the group think since she immediately collected 100 pesos from each to replace the volleyball net which she saw was in tatters and she often makes decisions for the whole group which compels generosity from each participant on the basis of an idea of one of them.

We then went to the Anglican Church ridge overlooking the limestone burial areas where the coffins are suspended in the limestone crags of the rocks. It was a big day. The annual town festival was being held. Formerly a religious rite it was a gathering of the clan before that and then changed to a Catholic and more recently Anglican and now is a neutral Town Festival and like any other County Fair is a great time for all.

We walked through the vendors and the baseball game—left fielders were at risk since a fly ball sent in that direction would have the fielder taking a header off a five hundred meter drop. There was a spirited basketball game. And all around the streets were milling with people and vendors with colorful inflated balloons. In the middle of this we could walk over to the cemetery on the hillside.

The graves were discolored with recent wood fires and the ash was on each tombstone. The “Day of the Dead” had just been held and the night is celebrated by bonfires on the graves to “keep the bodies warm.” We walked from the more recent tombs to the limestone of Echo valley. I wish it were called the “Valley of Silence” since then we would not have to hear repeated shouts of “Dayo” from Dillon to test to see if there was a non-existent echo. There was a memorial there to a late tour guide who had led a group here and then had slipped and fallen to his death in the valley below on the dried pine needles.

We could see the hanging coffins at a distance, and Allan suggested we go down to them, but Alison intervened saying that it takes too long to mobilize this group and to retrieve them after anything has been undertaken. We walked back then through the festival and saw the items being sold by the vendors. Tilapia is called eh “Fish of St Peter.” I do not know why.

We then got back into our more usual mode, the long drives through winding roads to get to our next destination, which was along the highway, on the mountain ridge highway being cleared of avalanches, much as I had done in the Andes only recently in Ecuador. We came to a pass at 1,919 meters at a site called Baisa:

BAISA= 16° 52.62' N and 120° 53.45' E and elevation 1,919 meters

We kept on until we made it to Abatan which is the village name overlooking a spectacular valley under the extinct volcano looming overhead that gives its name to the district Bauko. In front of us is a cinder cone named Mowung and the mountain behind is the Mount Data through which pass we had come, formerly a Japanese installation. We can see a long way amid rice terraces and a spectacular extinct volcanic valley as the narrow road comes to the

seven hectare (fourteen acre) site of the Luis Hora Mountain Regional Hospital, a governess's installation named after the former legislator and donor, who was half Jewish. This is a hospital run by Doctora Bernardez whom Jun met at a conference in Cebu and he had suggested to here that we might be willing to come to do a Mission I the N of Luzon under MMI. She agreed and was remarkably forthcoming in her welcoming an evangelical team into a public hospital for which they made makeshift accommodations by turning a Rehab room into dormitory style housing with a mens' room on one side with stretcher for beds. There was no water in the single "CR" Comfort Room, and there is a draft from open and broken windows, but it is otherwise as good as we could hope for.

BAUKO=Luis Hora Mountain Regional Hospital= 16* 58.67 N and 120* 51.56 E at 1,389 meters

There is no surgeon here, although one day a week an orthopedist comes from Baguio City, a long rough ride, as we will learn soon enough. We made rounds on the patients bright in for free operations, at least two goiters, over a dozen cholecystectomies (Doctora Bernardez does the ultrasounds) and a half dozen hysterectomies and hernias and other miscellany for minor procedures for which the Delivery room is being modified as an OR and two tables are begin set up in the OR. There is an amazing amount of god equipment since it is supplied by governess's. It seems that as a governmental hospital it is a non-sectarian institution but as Ragan noted, it is the only public hospital in which he was not greeted by a plaster statue of the Santo Nino in the Lobby!

We had the mandatory group photos in front of the hospital and its sign. The adjacent sign said "no spitting of Moma"--the betel nut juice. We had dinner of the obligatory rice and pork—probably the reason we have to excise all those gall bladders! Before we went to bed on the stretchers in the cold dorm-like room, the fellows watched my laptop for the Rwanda DVD and several of the other videos and set to work in getting warm with stocking caps and warm woolies, especially since the windows were drafty until one blew out altogether.

We will start up a full OR schedule in the morning after a flag raising ceremony if it is not too cold to be standing outside, and I will begin the new work week in the start up of the FEB-A-Series to conclude our N Luzon tour with this note on the JAN-D-Series.

11-FEB-A-1

THE SURGICAL SECOND PHILIPPINE WEEK IN BAUKO, CORDILLERA MOUNTAIN PROVINCE, N LUZON

11-FEB-A-1 Index to 11-FEB-A-series in the Cordillera Mountain Province a Bauko, N Luzon

2 First FULL operating day in Hospital Luis Hora and a schedule of goiters, gall bladders and excision of a quadriceps muscle sarcoma as we start with the flag raising ceremony and introductions all around and continue in the cold mountain air, bunked out in a room with surplus stretchers and no running water but a very cheerful group of companions from the Mountain Province amid stunning backdrop scenery

3 The second full operating day in Luis Hora Regional Hospital of Bauko Cordillera Mountain Province N. Luzon: cholecystectomies by the half dozen, and a score of hemorrhoidectomies (gratefully) deferred to make for our early “culmination program” put on by the hospital for the benefit of our services as we make further plans for departure to Baguio

4 Third full operating day with three cholecystectomies, two TAHBSO's, a hernia and partial tumor and another half dozen minor cases, followed by a brief excursion to a lookout over the extinct volcano re early turn in packed up for early departure to get to Baguio earlier.

5 The flurry of email messages with elevated expectations and high hopes for an all tribes participation in our peace initiative which now everyone wishes to claim as their ownership and a transition from the conclusion of this week's surgical successes concluding the med/surg missions of the two Philippine venues and prep for the highly anticipated South Sudan missions among now Dinka/Murle/Nuer and other participants being added as we collect other affirmative responses in the peaceful development of the new nation of South Sudan across the health care bridge as Mission To Heal

6 John Sutter's blog as he looks back over the Philippine Missions

7 Mike Vandenberg's article about the Calvin visit, January Series and forthcoming book for the Calvin Spark

8 An early start for a long road trip over the Philippine Pali and the highest point in the Philippine roadway, with a sunrise celebrated near an overheated van, as we make our way to Doane Rest house in Baguio and a tour of the town all the features of the Burnham Park and a bumper car drive, the Philippine Military Academy, Teacher's Camp, and a visit to the SM Mall

9 A full day in transit by road precedes a full day in transit by air, beginning at dawn in the Doane Guest House at Baguio before a luxury brunch at John Hay Manor House all decorated for the Chinese New Year of the Rabbit; then leave on a seven hour transit through Central Luzon rice fields after

descending two thousand meters along Kemmon Highway switchbacks to cross under the blown out Mount Pinatubo to enter Manila for a farewell dinner with Jun and Chona Garcia, final staging area at te Shaolom Guest House and a transfer to Nino Aquino International Airport Terminal One for early deluxe check in at Emirates 777 for the long flights via Dubai to Nairobi

11-FEB-A-2

FIRST FULL OPERATING DAY IN HOSPITAL LUIS HORA AND A SCHEDULE OF GOITERS, GALL BLADDERS AND EXCISION OF A QUADRICEPS MUSCLE SARCOMA AS WE START WITH THE FLAG RAISING CEREMONY AND INTRODUCTIONS ALL AROUND AND CONTINUE IN THE COLD MOUNTAIN AIR, BUNKED OUT IN A ROOM WITH SURPLUS STRETCHERS AND NO RUNNING WATER BUT A VERY CHEERFUL GROUP OF COMPANIONS FROM THE MOUNTAIN PROVINCE AMID STUNNING BACKDROP SCENERY

January 31, 2011

We have started into a week of operating here at the Luis Hora Mountain Regional Hospital and have had an amazing reception on the part of the group of staff here. They have not just accepted us but welcomed us and made us a very warm (if the high altitude accommodations are rather chilly) operating environment. Doctora Bernandes is the supervisor who had made the original contact with Jun Garcia as he was searching out a good venue for the N Luzon mission this year. The hospital is a public hospital but you would never know it from the evangelical fervor of the group, which seems to be more “tent revival meeting” than medical undertaking. As Ragan Espina stated “This is the first public hospital he has ever been in which does not have a statute of Santo Nino in the front of the lobby!”

We began with a ceremony, one of many we have had, in which the flag was raised, but the cold wind whipping through made it more prudent for us to stand in the lobby than out in front of the hospital. Everyone present was introduced, or re-introduced. And prayers were repeated many times in a venue which is public and not parochial but all seem to concur in the practice. I doubt that an Islamic patients might feel comforted, but the society here is VERY homogeneous, and though the Philippines is nominally Catholic, as Ragan’s comments seem to show, the protestant ethos is rather anti-Catholic in the symbolism of the non-existent separation of this Church and this State.

I began with a woman who had a goiter of the multinodular type and I helped Dr. Deo Rosario do a rather standard subtotal thyroidectomy. As she was moved over to the stretcher still intubated, there was a bloody dressing at the site of her drain and we simply put on gloves and re-opened the neck, finding nothing of note, (as Alison was calling out questions from the other table where she was taking care of another patient but Jason was the one in charge of ours) and recognized it as probably just a skin bleeder activated by her coughing on her tube.

Next was a man who had a right sided mass in his thyroid and we removed this gland said to be a very large goiter, but not too significant by my African standards. We did this thyroidectomy swiftly and well and then I assisted as Jun was doing some outpatient minor procedures. The first one was not so minor, and turned out to show a mass inside the quadriceps, which appeared to be a soft parts sarcoma, a gelatinous gel of an invasive disease. This is remarkable since I had once seen one of these in Malaybalay at BBH.

Jun has been eager to set up minimally invasive laparoscopic techniques, and I suggested he accompany us to Otovalo in April to operate with Edgar Rodas and CinterAndes and carry home some of the laparoscopic equipment I had sequestered for the “Lap Chole.” He is trying to work that out for his schedule. I had mentioned this to Ragan, and he had said most of the Philippine surgeons are going to Vietnam to do Lap Chole since there are abundant patients there who need the operation and the patients and the procedures are far cheaper than trying to learn the operation on pigs or other techniques!

There is no meal here that does not seem to include pork and rice. It is not hard to see why patients might have cholecystitis. It is the largest number of pre-op patients we have for his week, with a dozen needing cholecystectomy. All of these are going to be done the “old fashioned way” by open laparotomy and excision of the gall bladder—a technique that was my standard “intern operation” at the Brigham and the one I knew well. But in almost any developed world operating room, no one graduating as a chief resident would ever have seen an open cholecystectomy!

We have been going through a large number of patients on three tables since we set up two side by side in their OR and another in their Delivery Room, where the anesthesiologist who joined us from Manila, a young woman named Dang Salazar is doing the general anesthesia. The other large number of operations is TAHBSO—the phrase I have only heard in the Philippines but which stands for Total Abdominal Hysterectomy and Bilateral Salpingo Oophorectomy.

We operated as a team, even though a number of our nurses had never ever been in an OR before. The group seems to be functioning except that we are all a bit off base, since we never met each other before a few days before and each is doing something they have never done before, but somehow it is getting done.

A few of the participants, as seems always to be the case in the typical MMI, are rather bizarre. We have, for example, a fourteen year old gangling awkward teenager who is hyperactive and a bit of an Apterberger’s whose mother Grace is a Taiwanese living in California and who is taking him back to visit the relative on Taiwan. I presume that this stopover in an MMI makes the trip a deductible one. It is also the case that she says her principle role here is to pray with each patient which is what she came to do more than nursing to which she had come as a latecomer in adult education. The pair is a bit of a naïve and attention absorbing couple with

the boy mostly just bored and a constant bug about checking his Facebook page and checking his email every few minutes to see which of his friends from third grade have been able to find him. He does not have a role here since he was said to be commissioned to push patients around on stretchers at TECH, but that is done by staff here so he is jumping around pacing constantly and asking questions which pop up as bizarre. Another non-prating nurse was a Philippina born in Manila, married to a Mexican, and wanted to come to visit her mother and at the last minute asked if there were an MMI in the Philippines, making this trip a deductible one for which she will be speeding several more weeks visiting family. She is the shop-til-you drop member.

The Philippine group from Leyte (Ragan Espina) and Hope Hospital (Jun Garcia and Deo Rosario and Dang Salazar) are functioning here as the four Philippine surgeons were in TECH—taking over a sustainable project for future work. I had been proud to point out that the photo with five of us surgeons included only one non-Pinoy—me. That was when we were in TECH and now here again in LHMRH and in this instance I am operating to help each of the local Philippino surgeons who are doing a mission within their own country but are coming from a different region with a different language or dialect.

We all retire to a dormitory kind of setting in which we sleep on stretchers side by side in a Rehabilitation Room, where the first night the window blew out and the cold breeze comes through. We have only a “Tabu Shower” that is a bucket of cold water with a plastic dipper that one pours over one’s head as a way to get the day started with a shiver. The meals are over generous in the number of calories and the frequency of snacks, often sticky rice cakes wrapped in banana leaves. It is a lot like the similar circumstances in the Far North Luzon General Hospital and Training Center we had worked in at Luna two years ago with which the stories of Gifts from the Poor begins. Docotra Bernandes had duplicated the article on hypothyroidism so each one of the doctors got a copy and Allan had used my disc to copy the Surgery and Healing in the Developing World on discs for each physician. He was unable to copy the Calvin January Series lecture. There was a delay in the copying of the hypothyroidism article when they ran out of toner cartridges but they made a run to a local supplier and got the article copied with many asking me to autograph it as author.

We are on track toward doing about fifty major operations here with as many minor ones, and we may try to get all that done on three long days in order to leave early on Thursday morning in order to be sure to get to Baguio the summer palace of the Philippines to a Guess House run by the American Baptists as the staging area and training center for their Southeast Asia missionaries.

11-FEB-A-3

THE SECOND FULL OPERATING DAY IN LUIS HORA REGIONAL HOSPITAL OF BAUKO CORDILLERA MOUNTAIN PROVINCE N. LUZON: CHOLECYSTECTOMIES BY THE HALF DOZEN, AND A SCORE OF HEMORRHOIDECTOMIES (GRATEFULLY) DEFERRD TO MAKE FOR OUR EARLY “CULMINATION PROGRAM” PUT ON BY THE HOSPITAL FOR THE BENEFIT OF OUR SERVICES AS WE MAKE FURTHER PLAS FOR DEPARTURE TO BAGUIO

FEBRUARY 1, 2011

Day two operating in LHMRH has me doing gall bladder removals. I had awakened in the cold morning air in our “dormitory” conditions and had to put over me the only warming blanket I could find, a couple of folded towels. The window that blew out is still letting a chill wind blow through our boy’s bunks. The elevation is 1375 meters, and I have marked the GPS of each location as we have transited through it in our exploration of this new territory and unknowns of the North Luzon. I am seeing it for the first time but then so are the Philipinos I am traveling with who have not come up this far either. It is not easy to get to as you can guess from our arrival at 4:00 AM in the Ifagao tribal areas in the Banaue region.

There is no water of any kind, cold or warm in the “CR” which is a toilet seat-less commode for all the “boys room” so I carried a bucket and dumped some cold water in a tabu shower of my head as about all I could stand at the early wake up.. After our breakfast and the devotions that start the day with someone’s interpretation of what it is that should be heard, I have gone to the OR where a total of Six choecysystectomies is done. In addition there are a couple of gynecologic procedures, doe by Jun including the staple TAHBSO’s.

We found out that the wiring of an old computer in the Rehab Center gave us transient access to emailing, whenever we can get on since the fourteen year old is living on it “checking scores” or answering his face book pals. I had emailed Pastor Orzu at PiBor where they are expecting us for several days in fulfillment of our promise. It is likely others will be joining us too since I got a message from someone named Bill Andres, who it turns out was sent to my attention by Marguerite Schondebare. He is form PCC USA and wants to get some credit for the health bridge toward peace among the conflicting tribes, but says he thought it would be better for theological education to form that bridge—not a request I had heard from the people o PiBor when I had visited. But it is encouraging to hear that “everybody wants in on the act” especially since they understand that ta container full of stuff is accompanying us and all would like to control the flow of such goodies.

The PCC USA fellow Bill Andress wanted to introduce me to Michal Put who is at Akobo and would like to come over the 75 miles to PiBor, but is too busy to do so, saying I should come instead to Akobo. That is what we had tried to arrange last year when I had both emailed him and spoken by phone when he had taken leave to go back to Canada at Edmonton. Now it also appears that Juma is given leave to come over from Duk Payuel to join us and wants to carry a young person with an open fracture and osteomyelitis. As others hear about or coming there will be further participants who want to get in on the largesse.

Meanwhile, I did one easy and one difficult gall bladder excision, which I had done with Deo Rosario and another pair with Ragan—all done the old fashioned way I recall so well from long OR days in the PBBH. We had a chance to break out briefly to take a walk to the local “town” of vegetable stands and see the valley with the three mountain peaks in a spectacular scene. To the left is Mount Data, a former Japanese stronghold; in the middle of the valley is a cinder cone from the caldera of this extinct volcano, that is Mount Magwo; then the tall cinder cone of the caldera volcano itself which is Mount Bauko which gives the name to this province region.

I went back to the OPD and saw the local staff with a patient they had put down on the OR table to do a “local excisions.” I said “Hold on here!” It was an older man with a lump under his ear at the angle of the jaw—a classic parotid tumor. I said that this was not a “minor operation” and could be done in the OPD under local, but admitted him so he would not wind up with a facial paralysis... Because of our plan to leave early, we thought we would gather for our “Culmination Program” on Tuesday evening. I had selected a video that Julie Whitis had once made of the mission of 2006 that included the trip to Old Fangak in which John Sutter had participated. I had shown the videos of the Rwanda program and then the Calvin lecture for the January Series the night before and I would pull this brief video into the program as I had in our Culmination Program in TECH at our farewell from Tiboli region.

The program was over-long with full participations and “testimonials” from each of the people in the program and even a homily by Allan which was enthusiastically received by several of the staff members, none of whom had ever considered that this is a public government hospital and that there may be something coercive about a sermon in which all part take in an environment in which separation of church and state has not even occurred to anyone, no matter that it is of a minority view and not even the official state religion of the Philippines. But since all the participants viewed this as a church service and the medical ministry is a gospel outreach method, the program continued with many of the participants asking that first they start with a prayer and then go on to illustrate their message with scriptures.

The highlight came with a dance troop of small children in costume and in full voice as the dancers of the Ifagao hill tribes here. They were good. I videotaped the whole of their performance and transferred all of that tape as I had all other tapes and picture to Allan’s thumb drive, so he had the whole of the images and records of the mission’s trips in Tiboli and

Mountain province. The young man who is anesthesiologist also had taken photos and had made a power point which took a long time to load, but he showed it after a history of the Luis Hora Regional Hospital which was founded by and named after a physician legislator who was half Jewish. So we have had an evangelical tent revival in a public hospital founded by a Jewish legislator led by the Doctora Bernardes and with testimonials by charismatic and rather simplistic MMI participants echoed by the local staff members—all of this an ideal representation of what the perfect MMI project should be. It is easier to recognize that this is legitimate when the name of the institution doing it is the Tiboli evangelical Clinic and hospital and less easily understood as legitimate to take over a functioning institution which has its own rules and those are of the state as a public institution. It will be interesting to see what cast this might take if next year as anticipated they go to Palawan, where I had been on the inaugural scouting mission to check on the feasibility of a mission there among a Moslem population who might not find the homogeneous character of the MMI team as appealing as the LHMRH did.

11-FEB-A-4

**THIRD FULL OPERATING DAY WITH THREE
CHOLECYSTECTOMIES, TWO TAHBSO'S, A HERNIA AND PAROTID
TUMOR AND ANOTHER HALF DOZEN MINOR CASES, FOLLOWED
BY A BRIEF EXCURSION TO A LOOKOUT OVER THE EXTINCT
VOLCANO FOR EARLY TURN IN PACKED UP FOR EARLY
DEPARTURE TO GET TO BAGUIO EARLIER**

February 2, 2011

Our last operating day included many minor cases a couple of very difficult cholecystectomies, and the parotid gland resection I had rescued from an outpatient local excision yesterday. We tried to finish I time to go up to the pass in the mountains over the valley overlooked by the hospital. We came to a pine forest and there it seems that camping parties had been held. We saw the place where the youngest General in Philippine history 24 year old Gregorio Del Pilar was guarding the first president of the republic in 1900 when the US/Philippine war was being waged. He was killed by a sniper so that he is commemorated all over the Philippines with his name on everything from the Philippine Military Academy which we will see in Baguio City to names of boulevards and buildings.

I got up early to see if I could identify any messages on email before the machine was commandeered by our fourteen year old for the rest of the day since he is bored otherwise and has nothing to do but check his Facebook friends. I learned that I had to put in the final count for the eight of us going to Werkok and the six of us going on to Zemio and that needed confirmation at Mayfield as well. This cancels the separate flight for the now canceled David cushion and Bill McNulty so that we save one aircraft in expenses. The container estimated time of arrival in Werkok will be a few days after we arrive there so the timing should be ideal provided it makes it.

I assisted a couple of very difficult cholecystectomies with Ragan Espina in which he did a good job of not panicking when the hepatic duct and the cystic duct were applied to each other inside the liver as it was contracted. We also watched the process of the parotid gland resection and I saw the goiter patients and hernia repair patients go home.

We went to the viewpoint of Tadian and could see the volcano in profile coming out from the clouds as well as streaming sunlight at sundown for good photos. One of the patients from whom Ragan had excised a lipoma was very grateful. Lucky for us she makes a wild berry wine of which each of us got a bottle. Since I am going round the globe I cannot carry it so Karen will bring it back for me. I later got a new bottle of Bangay wine which I for sure cannot carry so I brought that to Jun and Chona's for a present.

As we went to the markets along the town below the hospital we saw the vegetables and the locals bought a bunch of broccoli and carried it home with them. I also saw the "Soyote" a fruit to

meditate the chicken in with papase in it like papaya –a meat tenderizer, which is necessary for some of these “free range chickens!”

WHAT ELSE I LEARNED

I have climbed the highest peak in the Philippines! I had climbed Mount Kitanglad with John Sutter five years ago on one of the last visits to Malaybalay, at BBH and we arranged a weekend excursion in a muddy rainstorm to climb nearby Kitanglad to its peak. At that time it was widely acknowledged that Mount Apo was the highest peak in the Philippines, but since then it has been re-measured and Mount Kitanglad is two meters taller than Mount Apo, so I have actually conquered the heights of Philippine mountaineering! IT is only ten thousand feet but John remembers it as one of the hardest things he has ever done because of the slippery muddy and heavily vegetated slopes.

I may actually have a touch of bronchopneumonia from the lack of my fleece which i had left in tech and the open window at 1385 meters and the cold chill of mornings and nights at this elevation. I am such an antibiotic purist that i do not take antibiotics for the whim of it, but everyone else is passing around Zithromax, the azithromycin and it might be a good idea to cut down on the time I am coughing especially since I have an even bigger set of mission coming up. I shall also be on Mallarone for malaria as I move up from Kenya to Sudan which will require prophylaxis.

I have learned a bit more Philippine history especially about this remote Cordillera mountain province and its indigenous tribes of which there were principally three. In the Ifagao and the other subgroups they have left their cultural heritage in the drumming and gonging dance we saw the loin cloth wearing boys do at our culmination ceremony on Tuesday night. It was similar to the children’s program we had seen at Sagrado but these younger boys and girls were better, and I will keep their videos. Like the Manobo of the Mindanao, there is a good deal of heritage there. A book has been written about the Tasaday hoax and the Manobo and their Stone Age culture, which is far more complex than the simple story that it was made up. It is a book entitled “Invented Paradises” and I will try to get that book form the library or on tape.

At the same time I was looking iota this I got an email from Greenleaf stating that the ebook market is rapidly growing and I sound consider licensing the Gifts form the Poor for ebook reading, which I wrote back I would as soon as I am back in mid-March.

The hanging coffins and the cave burial were earlier practices but not as ancient as the prehistoric rice terraces of Banaue. I had seen a whole village along a ridge line at Sagrado which was a property of the Anglican church since the Anglicans came in apart from the Catholics and had protected the peoples of his area form a head hunting tribe lower down in the valley and the whole ridge was then dedicated to the Anglican church and school in Sagrado in the heart of North Luzon Catholic country.

I had learned earlier about the area of the down mountain communities in Luna and Apayao Provinces, with which the Gifts from the Poor book, begins in the first chapter. But I was puzzled that the altimeter I have been carrying and recording with each mark of the GPS were never above 300 meters. That is because Apayao is the coastal province ringing around the Cordillera Mountain Province and all we have done in the past week is about a mile high since 1385 seems to be a standard reading in meters. This is volcanic, and the volcanoes here seem to be dormant whereas down further south in Luzon the volcanoes like Pinatubo have been disastrously active, and Mayown Volcano blows lava each year. The Philippines is part of the Pacific Ring of Fire, and is still restless along the Mariana Trench which marks the plate edge at the Philippine Sea distinct from the Pacific, and the South China Sea which can be seen from the Tadian lookout here and which we had seen at the Boredas Lighthouse and the town of Borgas two years ago from the area where Jun Garcia was born.

**NOW THE PRE-PLANNING IN SOUTH SUDAN GOES INTO OVERDRIVE
WITH ALL THE WANNABE PARTICIPANTS**

From: Glenn Geelhoed Tuesday - February 1, 2011 10:26 PM

To: Msdgwg

Subject: Fwd: Re: Re: Visit To Pibor, Southern Sudan

Attachments: [Envelope](#)

We are completing our long list of goiters and gall bladders removed in the fascinating hill tribe patients of N. Luzon Cordillera Province near the world heritage sites of the rice terraces of Banaue, all of which I will report back to you when I have the many hours of airborne transit time on the Far Side westward transit from our return through Bagio to Manila and Dubai to Nairobi to start up the S. Sudan efforts with the other part of our team arriving eastward at our Nairobi staging area.

There is excitement about the Peace initiative which seems to be holding among the competing cattle cultures, and is now being extended to the other participants in what I had hoped to be a network of mission health care facilities, including Akobo which I had hoped to visit last trip. Many participants from both Murle (see attached) and Dinka and now Nuer and other tribal

groups and subclans are attracted to our mission perhaps because of the quite visible support of our forty foot container of med/surg supplies, but likely also from the longer lasting prospect of continuing health care education to elevate capacity and hope for future development. I hope they can all "own" this effort and support it in the intervals between outsiders' visits under strictly indigenous and non-partisan leadership.

After a very successful series of missions in three venues at the furthest South and Northern extremes of remote Philippines, I hope we may be able to do more than just duplicate this kind of mission and get to a more self-sustainable long-term effort running with and by the people of the "new nation" of South Sudan, which has so far been able to make a post-election mostly peaceful transition, and now we can hope for collaborative cooperation between the tribal hostilities which had caused so many casualties during our past visits from competing for scarce resources rather than sharing and developing them in a synergy for which the health care training might serve as a model in other efforts.

We will move on from S Sudan to the refugee victims of the LRA marauding in Congo to see if we can also try to extend help and hope to my friends formerly from "Out of Assa" as they are squeezed out into the difficult circumstances of CAR which is hardly a "nation-state" whose economy can support much hosting of others in nearly equal desperation.

We are on our way!

GWG

From: Glenn Geelhoed Tuesday - February 1, 2011 6:13 PM

To: billandress@ureach.com

Subject: Re: Re: Visit To Pibor, Southern Sudan

Could he be brought in to PiBor while we are there?

We will try to broaden the "net" of both our "network" of missions and the peace initiative!

I have corresponded with him previously in trying to visit Akobo as we were hoping that Akobo might be a participant. I was the one who had arranged the photographer Steven Katz who had accompanied me to Eritrea and Rwanda and Philippines to go for the photodocumentary of Akobo which was published in the humanitarian aid magazine with such compelling force.

I am looking forward to meeting Michael whom I have also talked with by phone a year or more ago.

GWG

>>> "Bill Andress" <billandress@ureach.com> 02/01/11 9:53 AM >>>

Dear Dr. G.,

In Akobo (about 75 miles North East of Pibor) there is a Nuer Physician whose name is Dr. Michael Tut. He heads the hospital and county health system there. He might be a good medical person to bring to the Murle in Pibor at some point. Murle and Nuer women have exchanged visits to good effect on peacemaking. That peace bridge is just as vital as is the Murle-Dinka peace bridge.

At this point the Murle are afraid to go to either the hospital in Bor or that in Akobo because of conflict. While both hospital staffs seem willing to treat, neither is willing to protect the Murle.

My own schedule is as follows: Arrive Nairobi on Thursday, February 16; travel to Juba on Feb 21. Then to Akobo, Pibor, Malakal and back to Pibor on February 26 where I will remain for a week with our medical team before returning to Nairobi and onward to the U.S. on March 8th. I hope that there will be an opportunity for us to meet at some point.

What will be the total size of your team? Have you considered where you wish to locate your clinic? Our team normally uses the church compound because of its central location. Please let us know what advance preparations the church can assist with and we will try to accommodate.

In His Service,

Bill

---- On Mon, 31 Jan 2011, Glenn Geelhoed (msdgwg@gwumc.edu) wrote:

Thank you so very much for the relay!

It is Rev Orzu's efforts that got us to our visit last January at which 78 subprefecture chiefs, two paramount chiefs, and the District Commissioner in Jonglei pledged to make an effort at peace through the "health care bridge" we had promised--and they have fulfilled their end of the bargain in the suspension of raids in each direction between Murle and Dinka.

Once previously, I had taken Hutu health care workers to Tutsi predominant areas in Rwanda and vice versa, and the beneficence of the health care developments seemed to overcome some of the residual of their understandable prejudices. If we can use this model to repeat a cooperative development among all health care mission efforts in South Sudan, then the efforts on the part of many involved in our transfer of health care supplies as well as expertise in development training will be well worth the effort and more recognition than we seek from just the reward of having been part of the peaceful transition to the new nation's development whatever the past history of local cattle culture competitions and fears of extinction given both hostility and untreated infertility.

We hope to help in further educational contributions as soon as we arrive, with part of our team coming eastward from the US and I coming from Westward from remote N Luzon and South Cotabato Mindano, Philippines to join in Nairobi 7 Feb to be meeting you after our rendezvous with the container on its way now to Bor/Werkok.

GWG

www.MissionToHeal.org

(From Bauko, Cordillera Mountain Province, N Luzon, Philippines
at Luis Hora Regional Hospital on an
MMI Mission)

>>> "Bill Andress" 01/31/11 8:41 PM >>>

Dr. G,

Thanks very much for your prompt response; I have passed this to
Rev. Orozu for the the church in Pibor. I am sure that they
will welcome your visit.

Grace and peace,

Bill

---- On Mon, 31 Jan 2011, Glenn Geelhoed (msdggw@gwumc.edu)
wrote:

Thanks!

Yes, it is we who are planning a return visit to PiBor and this
time we are carrying the promised
equipment, expertise and training promised on the last visit a
year ago as a promise fulfilled on
their part in the Peace initiative between the maruding on
each side of Murle Dinka and using this
health care bridge as an avenue for further cooperation in the
development of health care facilities
in the new South Sudan. Our team will be headed by De. Ajak
from Werkok and others who had
accompanied us last time including Jacob gai who has been
managing the shipment of our large
CONTAINER OF SUPPLIES TO BE DISTRIBUTED BETWEEN wERKOK AND pIbOR

AS an earnest of future further development at PiBor as well in a peace reward. I will copy this to both as a cover note and we are looking forward to joining soon--it is good we have a followup team right along behind us!

Thanks agaIN!

gwg

>>> "Bill Andress" 01/31/11 2:14 PM >>>

Dear Dr. Geelhoed,

The church in Pibor, Southern Sudan contacted me. Their representative has been told that a surgeon will be visiting in early February; they desire to make appropriate preparations.

From various correspondence that I have received, I believe it may be you who is coming. If that is the case, please let Rev. Orozu Lokine Daky know so that he can assure that proper preparations are made.

A short term medical team from Trinity Sudan Ministry will be visiting Pibor for a week beginning Feb 26. If you need them to follow up, please let Robert Cely know the details.

In His Service,

Bill

Bill Andress

Trinity Sudan Ministry

11-FEB-A-5

THE FLURRY OF EMAIL MESSAGES WITH ELEVATED EXPECTATIONS AND HIGH HOPES FOR AN ALL TRIBES PARTICIPATION IN OUR PEACE INITIATIVE WHICH NOW EVERYONE WISHES TO CLAIM AS THEIR OWNERSHIP AND A TRANSITION FROM THE CONCLUSION OF THIS WEEK'S SURGICAL SUCCESSES CONCLUDING THE MED/SURG MISSIONS OF THE TWO PHILIPPINE VENUES AND PREP FOR THE HIGHLY ANTICIPATED SOUTH SUDAN MISSIONS AMONG NOW DINKA/MURLE/NUER AND OTHER PARTICIPANTS BEING ADDED AS WE COLLECT OTHER AFFIRMATIVE RESPONSES IN THE PEACEFUL DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW NATION OF SOUTH SUDAN ACROSS THE HEALTH CARE BRIDGE AS MISSION TO HEAL

February 2, 2011

11-FEB-A-6

**JOHN SUTTER'S BLOG AS HE LOOKS BACK OVER THE PHILIPPINE
MISSIONS**

February 2, 2011

Hello blog from Dr. Sutter

by William on

Well, Dr. Geelhoed and I have been in the Philippines working in collaboration with Medical Ministry International (MMI) for 12 days now. We started in Tiboli, Mindanao where we operated with the MMI team for 3 days, performing various major surgeries including thyroidectomies/goiter removals, hernia repairs, cleft palate repairs, and hysterectomies. We were treated on our last day with a trip to Tibolii village, a hillside tribal community that this mission serves. In Tiboli village, we witnessed, and I participated in, a native cultural presentation of music and dance. I will say that the locals were not impressed with my over-bite stiff dance moves.

With the successful completion of this part of the trip, and thankfully without conflictual run-ins with Abu Sayef, we flew to Manila and took a 12 hour minivan/bus ride through the night to the mountain province town of Sagada. The cool mountain air was a nice contrast to the heat of Tiboli and Manila. Understand now, that about 3-4 hours of that trip was just dodging the jeepneys, scooters, buses, trucks, and pedestrians that make up the streets of Manila!

Sagada is a beautiful mountain town nestled in the top of a mountain range in Northern Luzon. A day of R&R was just what I needed, and I was able to sneak away for a bit with one of the anesthesiologists to a restaurant called the Log Cabin where a French ex-pat has set up a restaurant serving the best French food you can make with local Sagada home grown ingredients.

After Sagada we took another long, winding and somewhat precarious minivan ride to a town called Abatan in Mountain Province in northern Luzon. The van I rode in had to stop a few times as it did not have the power to ascend some of the passes with its full load of medical equipment and personnel. Along this route, I couldn't help but think of the sacrifices US troops alongside Filipino troops and civilians made in fighting the Japanese in this region during World War II. The terrain is harsh, rugged, mountainous, and unforgiving. I can only imagine what the words "take that hill" meant then, and I have the utmost respect and appreciation for the sacrifices that were made here.

In Abatan, we set up at The Louis Hora Government Hospital, where Dr. Geelhoed and I have been operating with the MMI team for the past three days. Here we performed several

cholecystectomies, thyroidectomies, hernia repairs, hysterectomies and multiple minor surgical procedures for the people of Abatan and the outlying native villages the hospital serves. The team has been staying in dorm conditions within the hospital, and in spite of sparse conditions, the cold nights, and even colder bucket baths, the warm people here have kept us inspired and moving along. Last night, as a culmination of our service here, the local population put on a cultural show for us which included singing, prayer, and a group of children 5-10 years of age who skillfully and competently and with the utmost confidence performed traditional tribal songs with use of two drums and four gongs. The kids then shared a traditional Filipino feast of rice, fried pork, soup, and papayas in the hospital cafeteria with us afterward.

We just finished up our last surgery today in Abatan. Our plans are to hit the hay early tonight for a 4 am wake up call, and another long minivan ride to a town called Baguio. We will spend the day/night there, and then Dr. Geelhoed and I drive back to Manila where we then fly to Nairobi where the Team Rubicon service project in Africa begins.

Dr. John Sutter
Chief Medical Officer
Team Rubicon

{ 2 comments... read them below or [add one](#) }

. Rana Walker [February 2, 2011 at 4:59 AM](#)

John,

Wow, what an insightful and exciting read! Keep up the great work and thanks for filling us in on what a day in the life is like. It's life-changing work you are doing and it's inspirational to know you've found a way to fulfill your calling. Blessing others in this way must give you a whole new sense of purpose – and respect – for others. I look forward reading more...keep bringing blessings to all you meet!

My best,
Rana

Read-

Jim Sutter [February 2, 2011 at 8:07 AM](#)

John,

While you humble me by comparison to the life you lead, you make me be so proud just to be your uncle. Best of luck in Sudan.

Jim

11-FEB-A-7

**MIKE VANDENEND'S ARTICLE ABOUT THE CALVIN VISIT,
JANUARY SERIES AND FORTHCOMING BOOK FOR THE CALVIN
SPARK**

February 2, 2011

Marathon man encourages healing

Coming home to his alma mater as a featured speaker in Calvin's January Series, **Glenn Geelhoed '64** challenged his audience to join him in a new career.

“Join me on a mission,” he said. “Consider a career in healing, and by that I mean moving the lowercase ‘h’ to an uppercase ‘H.’”

Since 1966, Geelhoed, a professor of surgery at George Washington University Medical Center in Washington, D.C., has spent three to six months every year treating patients and training caregivers all over the world, often taking other doctors and medical students with him to inspire them to continue the work. To date, he has led more than 200 health care missions to serve the underserved on virtually every continent, including international hot spots such as Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Geelhoed has been honored by many organizations for his work, including the 2009 Volunteerism Award for International Outreach from the American College of Surgeons. And he has managed to complete over 100 marathons, running the terrain of every continent—even Antarctica.

He asserts that more important than any particular skill is the willingness to be a healer, to show interest and compassion for “the world's bottom billion.” His personal crusade to tell stories about how holistic healing changes lives, communities and countries and to recruit others to this cause is chronicled on the web at www.missiontoheal.org.

“The healing art is the ideal transportable skill that can cross all artificial borders,” he said. He notes that the five top reasons for mortality in the world—diarrhea, acute respiratory infections, malnutrition, malaria and measles—are all preventable and do not require large sums of money or intricate technical skill, just a willingness to become involved and persistent engagement.

Geelhoed gave examples of his work in many corners of the world. A stirring example is in southern Sudan, where warring tribes did more physical and emotional damage to one another than disease and outside military incursions.

“We promised the establishment of a sustainable health clinic and trained staff for the region, but only if the leaders of the tribes would pledge to end the violence against one another,” he said.

Geelhoed’s team members handed out white “Mission to Heal” bracelets and put them on the wrists of the tribal leaders. If the bracelets remained and were not “stained with the blood of their brothers and sisters,” long-term health care could be a reality for the region. The plan, thus far, has worked wonders in this war-torn region.

After 40 years of medical mission journeys, Geelhoed says he has learned far more from those he has met than he could ever teach as an American doctor. His reflections are contained in a new book, *Gifts from the Poor: What the World’s Poor Taught One Doctor about Healing* (Greenleaf Book Group). All proceeds from the book will go to the Medical Mission Hall of Fame.

“I’m an American,” he said. “I’ve been on the receiving end of a whole lot of advantages and have not even paid back the interestWhat is essential is the willingness to take on some responsibility and see what can be done with fingers, eyes, ears—and a heart big enough to direct them.”

Immediately after his January Series engagement, Geelhoed was off again, this time for the Philippines, which was to be followed by a return trip to Sudan, or rather the new country of South Sudan. Not only will there be healing interventions, but his Sudanese friends have done something they know will bring Geelhoed joy: They’ve organized the first-ever Jonglei Marathon.

11-FEB-A-8

AN EARLY START FOR A LONG ROAD TRIP OVER THE PHILIPPINE PALI AND THE HIGHEST POINT IN THE PHILIPPINE ROADWAY, WITH A SUNRISE CELEBRATED NEAR AN OVERHEATED VAN, AS WE MAKE OUR WAY TO DOANE REST HOUSE IN BAGIO AND A TOUR OF THE TOWN ALL THE FEATURES OF THE BURNHAM PARK AND A BUMPER CAR DRIVE, THE PHILIPPINE MILITARY ACADEMY, TEACHER'S CAMP, AND A VISIT TO THE SM MALL

February 3, 2011

I am unsure if the groundhog saw his shadow, but I hear reports of nasty weather of the Midwest USA and a storm across Australia as well as Middle East unrest with the Tunisians and Egyptians about to overthrow their governments and the Arab North Sudan starting to percolate as well. So of storms and rumors of wars there is no end and I can even get these remotely. But not so well as a few friends have suggested that I should get a Skype schedule and speak to them regularly. It is still possible to find places on earth that are totally disconnected, such as the one I am sitting in right now. Only by luck have I managed to log in to email address availability in the old computer inside the Rehab Room and it is only because the fourteen year old is constantly checking scores and his friends on face book. He also has a habit of a lot of random pacing as well as a periodic run over to the exercise bike in the Rehab Room, but there is no resistance to the wheel so he just pumps it periodically until it spins to a stop. I am thinking that I have a grandson the same age, and my grandson Andrew William has a pilot's license compared to this hyperactive and unproductive fellow who seems to be an odd duck out, since his oriental features set him apart from his classmates.

I got up pre-dawn to try to have me packed out in time for everyone to be ready and we were after Grace ran back to retrieve her son since he had been awakened and thought it would be a good time to check his Facebook page. We went off in a van which got to a steep mountain slope where it overheated and the bubbling boiling fluids in the radiator were about to blow spontaneously it would not be as good as to try to get it to a service station.

Meanwhile, behind us, was a spectacular valley filled with fog. It was about to have the sun burn off the cloud and then the rest of us would go about our business when we got to see the sun rising in the valley and we could also take pictures of the peasant labor getting out at dawn to harvest the sheaves. The term for ripened rice on the stalk is Palyan and there are jobbers in each village that will try to arrange that for the growers.

As we got under way again after the hour of enforced contemplation of the sunrise over the cloud filled valley made necessary by the overheated van, which Irwin our driver had brought to a service station for us to await, I looked down on the terraced fields and thought of the generations of hundreds of thousands of peasant labor stooped over hard work that is continuously necessary to keep these terraces intact and still going food for the hungry Filipinos. It is archaeology of labor that is spread out as we look over this area.

We drove through 2,000 meters in successive switchbacks of careful tended roads which were also subject of some labor since they were also victims of the landslides that covered the terraces. We chuckled at the signs that periodically announced an “S-Curve Coming ahead”—compared to what? It would be like posting a deer crossing sign in Derwood—anywhere.

We finally approached the “Philippine Pali”—the highest road way in all the Philippines. It is marked at a curve which is an overlook—and at any scenic site we must have a compulsory group photo with each of the cameras being carried by the group. The Pali is 7,400 feet or 2,280 meters at PALI= 16° 30.9 N and 120° 46.78 E

A large case held eggs with a sign over them marking “Balut”. Irene, our returning native Filipina had to eat a few. I photographed here cracking and peeling open the duck egg with its embryo and beak inside and including its little feathers, it is all eaten—Yum!

We started down a long and twisting roadway to get to about a thousand meters lower which would still put it at over a mile high. We did so as we got close to Baguio City, the seat of the government during the hot Manila summers, a lesson learned from the USA Commissioner when the Philippines was a US Commonwealth. Lots of other things followed, including a huge US presence during the Vietnam War era when the R & R facilities of a huge base called the Jon Hay Management Corporation. There is a large compound here for the Teachers’ Camp of all Philippine school teachers. There is also a well-designed city plan laid out by Burnham the architect of the capital of Australia in Canberra. A large Central Park is named after Burnham. It has lakes and swan boats and dragon boats looking just like the Boston Common.

There is a market around it and a sign advertising the festival of the Baguio Town sponsored by Convergys—the company that was the one the Michael and Sue from my last year’s Kilimanjaro Marathon and safari through Serengeti and Ngorongoro Crater and our Labor Day with Michael and Judy and the twins in Texas.

We had lunch at Jack’s Restaurant and then went to the Burnham Park as the women went shopping. We four fellows, inclined Jon Sutter Jason and Deo and I and we went to the flower show in the middle of the market and walked through it. We then found the central amusement area with a bumper car place and we could not resist. No one else was active so we got in and rammed into each other while I took photos and then gave it to the fellow in

attendance as he took a movie of our buzzing around and jarring each other in a rubber bumper slamfest. We laughed hard.

We then walked around to several of the parks and sat at the side of one as the salesmen trying hard to sell us wallets, giant Bolo knives for the jungle and sunglasses despite my obviously not needing them peering at the salesmen through mine.

We then went to the hilltop retreat of the ABW Baptist missions called the Done Guest House, where missionary training sessions are held by two fellows, one was named John who seemed to know me and the other was Ben Horton. It is Ben's father who was the long term supervisor of the Palawan Baptist Hospital I had visited in 2005 in Roxas Palawan. He is retiring this May after doing little except keeping the place from closing. While doing no operating or anything but giving a place for a few folk to grow old. It is conceivable that we may try to hold a mission there next year.

Doan= 16° 24.17 N and 120° 35. 41 E at Elevation 1,381 meters. It is the Baptist center for the Far East and is almost exactly analogous to the Mayfield Guest House to which we are going next.

We passed Wright Park where little kids come to ride a horse in tight control of elders and family. We saw the Mine View overlook which is full of tourist type glitz. We posed as always for the mandatory group photo in the mandatory group think at the Baguio Palace built in 1908 for the Americans and since then has been the summer palace like Malacagang in Manila. We went out to the Philippine Military Academy where the young women could pose with a plebe in uniform and we could see the parade grounds which had formerly also doubled for the parade grounds of the PNP Philippine National Police, which just moved in to its own academy nearer Manila. At the point of the green grass of the parade grounds Dillon could not resist the desecration so he went to pee on it—as I said it is more than just teenage gawkiness that afflicts him.

The Igarot are one of the mountain province tribes and the name is attributed to the costumes and the other cultural festivals put on here. But we went to the Shoe mart Mall of Baguio to eat at a sizzler dinner like the Mongolian steak house as the Chinese new year was being celebrated and I put on tape the celebration of the dragon dances that usher in the New Year of the Rabbit—possibly the same day as Punxatawney Phil may or may not have seen his shadow in the snow fall of the East Coast.

In addition to the government and NGO's I saw new light industry with lots of employment and minimal pollution—Timex has moved here and so had Texas instrument. So this is a going concern. With the Mile High Center showing tony shopping adjacent to the John Hay Manor House the R * R spot that will be our morning brunch and wrap up session before starting the long way back to Manila on a killer road trip down the twisty road cut into the

mountains by a fellow from the US 10thInfantry from Rhode island. We will drop down twelve hundred meters and arrive in the sticky heat and humidity and crowded traffic of Manila just before john and I have to get packed out to go to the Airport for our midnight departure around the world via Dubai

11-FEB-A-9

A FULL DAY IN TRANSIT BY ROAD PRECEDES A FULL DAY IN TRANSIT BY AIR, BEGINNING AT DAWN IN THE DOANE GUEST HOUSE AT BAGUIO BEFORE A LUXURY BRUNCH AT JOHN HAY MANOR HOUSE ALL DECORATED FOR THE CHINESE NEW YEAR OF THE RABBIT; THEN LEAVE ON A SEVEN HOUR TRANSIT THROUGH CENTRAL LUZON RICE FIELDS AFTER DESCENDING TWO THOUSAND METERS ALONG KEMMON HIGHWAY SWITCHBACKS TO CROSS UNDER THE BLOWN OUT MOUNT PINATUBO TO ENTER MANILA FOR A FAREWELL DINNER WITH JUN AND CHONA GARCIA, FINAL STAGING AREA AT TE SHAOLOM GUEST HOUSE AND A TRANSFER TO NINO AQUINO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT TERMINAL ONE FOR EARLY DELUXE CHECK IN AT EMIRATES 777 FOR THE LONG FLIGHTS VIA DUBAI TO NAIROBI

February 4, 2011

It was long, and it was not as pleasant as even cross Pacific flights and seemed as endless. I had seen the Pinatubo over the rice basket of the central Luzon which had been covered with ash and I saw a few other items--- during the course of the day which I will leave to the flight to describe, so tune in on Feb-B-2 to read all about it, besides the complete description in the title