

## Memories of Bay, Laguna: The UPCM Rural Medicine Clinic

Class 1967 was the initial class involved in UPCM's Community Outreach Program. Sister Vicky Segura's trove of pictures included photos of her group while stationed at UPCM's Rural Clinic in Bay (pronounced Ba--Eh!), Laguna. Her "S" group consisted of Alex Sayoc, Lito Sebollena, Sister Vicky, Rolly Sineneng and Johnny Singson who are shown in the accompanying photos, *doing everything but meaningful work!* When separately contacted, some offered bits and pieces of the class' unique experience there.



Firstly, this program started late. The point person for the program was the GI specialist Dr. Andres Macalinao, perhaps because of his familiarity with the area and the people. It was going to be a two-week rotation. Dr. Macalinao explained that the patients would be asked to "pay" whatever they could afford for the services since they were likely to look down on the quality of medical care (especially upon seeing how young we looked), if the services were totally free. We had first year medical residents to supervise us. Sister Vicky's group had Dr. Romy Baltazar while others had Dr. Serge Gasmen.



We had to provide our own transportation coming and going from Manila, and were housed in a Department of Forestry faculty house. It was a decent house that had as its main asset, running hot water for showering! Breakfast at the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) cafeteria was different from those we were accustomed to, with fresh cow's milk and yogurt among the unique attractions. We were provided box lunches by the cafeteria.



Alex Sayoc's relative drove them daily in a jeep over the dusty, unpaved roads from Los Baños to Bay. There weren't many patients. Payment varied as Dr. Macalinao predicted. Lito Sebollena got a broom and a bag of sugar from two different patients. In contrast, Lito remembers that Jun Pimentel during his rotation there got a total of ₱0.45 for seeing two siblings for abdominal discomfort: ₱0.30 for the older brother and ₱0.15 for the younger one. Butch Rodriguez got freshly harvested *buko*. Lecti Rabor says that she and Lani Vicencio (who took Fred Quevedo's place in her group), thoroughly enjoyed the sweet boiled *saging na saba* that were given to them as payment. There was a lot of free time in the late afternoons to enjoy the impressive scenery, including of course, Laguna de Bay.



The Bay Rural Medicine Clinic was UPCM's attempt to broaden the medical students' outpatient experience. It developed into a bigger undertaking in the years that followed. But much as it has been with Class 1967, e.g. *breaking the restrictive female UPCM admissions, fighting the FMG prejudice in the USA*, our class had always cleared the path and made life better for those who followed in our footsteps.