

I should add that I had the prep dorm from the time I arrived in 1961. Since the Turkish teachers stayed there Monday through Thursday night and I had agabeys from the upper classes who also stayed there, it was not too hard a job, but there were a lot of tears for the first month or so. I was also "school nurse", that is I did sick call and called the doctor if anyone was seriously ill and put anyone to bed in the infirmary who needed to be out of the dorm. I cannot remember how long I did that (I think two years) and which years. Sometime early on I coached basketball and volleyball. I know one year we won championship trophies in both sports.

At one point when we knew the school was closing, I was asked to stay from 1966-67 to close the school, but I could not do that... That was not the way I wanted to end our stay in Turkey so we went home at the end of our five-year tour of duty.

As long as stories are being told, this past January when we were in Turkey, one of my former students asked me why we would ever go to Talas. He told me that the boys figured out that we must be making a lot of money to be tempted to come to Talas and stay. They could not figure out any other rational reason!!! I told him that we actually received a salary not much different from a Turkish teacher. Married couples got an apartment, but it was expected that both husband and wife would either teach or would contribute in some other major way to the school and we lived off the economy.

Garabet Usta did our grocery shopping. Milk came in a can from a local Talas source (we had to pasteurize it). Whatever fruits and vegetables were on the local market that is what we would eat so sometimes the only fruit was yeni dunya or dried apricots.

We came as a part of a teaching and medical mission. Maybe it was our sense of adventure, our sense of dedication and commitment that carried us for five years. I never thought about how long the five years were until I said good-bye to students on the last day of school at the end of our five years. From that day forward I only thought about going back home.

Allan