

Date: August 12, 2003
Location: Santiago, Chile
Subject: Dan's Update from Chile #2 =)

Dear Friends and Family,

I'm well into my second week of school here in Chile and decided to take this break to write this update before more stuff happens and I end up with extremely long, unreadable updates. =P

I guess to continue from my last update, I've received my camera back and have been taking lots of random pictures every day. =) Considering that there's so much to see and do while I'm here, I think I've decided to write my updates around some of the pictures that I take because I'd love to share all these pictures but lack of bandwidth prohibits it. =)



Continuing in the spirit of my first update, I'll start with a seemingly meaningless picture... =)

<left> This past Monday, August 11th, 2003, I was back on United States soil when I entered the Embassy of the United States of America in Santiago, Chile. =) I went to the Embassy to register myself as an American citizen residing on foreign soil for the next 4 months. I would've taken so many more photos but the security at the U.S. Embassy takes away cameras

and cellphones before allowing entry into the compound. I guess this is only the second U.S. Embassy that I've been to (the other being the one in Mexico City) but it made me think about all the hundreds (thousands?) of U.S. Embassies all over the world where Americans can go to seek refuge or whatever... but you have to be a U.S. citizen or have business with the United States to enter... like in the movie *The Saint* where the scientist lady ran away from bad people screaming "I'm an American" to safely enter the Embassy and have the Marines to protect her. (wow, that was a really bad run-on sentence... haha) =P

Being American is kind of like being a Christian, isn't it? =) As a U.S. citizen, I can find fellow Americans in U.S. Embassies around the world... As a citizen of the Kingdom of God, I can find fellow believers in churches all over the world. =P Wherever I go, I can find fellow believers with who to worship and meet God... but the key difference I guess is that the Kingdom of Heaven welcomes ALL who would seek after God while America turns away many who would seek to enter its borders.

I've been attending a church called "Cristo Mi Pastor" the past few weeks and as I mentioned in my past update, it's been a bit of a challenge meeting God in a foreign country and a foreign language. It's been especially challenging with a guest Pastor who gave his message in Portuguese and the pastors who are translating are speaking with Brazilian accents. =) But even though I miss my church back in the States, I know that wherever I go, God is with me and I can worship him in English or Spanish or Korean, or whatever language God may call me to learn in the next 98 years (or less, if Jesus returns sooner! =D) more or less of my life. =)

Going to school in a Catholic country and even a Catholic University has been both uplifting and discouraging. On the one hand, everywhere I look, I'll



see crosses and other figures that remind me that this country is influenced by Catholic and Christian beliefs and every time I see them, I'm reminded that God is watching over me and that He'll faithfully guide me and protect me according to His



awesome plan for my life. On the other hand though, it's sad to know that just like the United States which

supposedly is a "nation under God", Chile is Catholic mostly in name... <The above two pictures were both taken at the San Joaquin campus of the university "La Catolica.">

Anyway, the past week and a half of classes have been a hectic mess of trying out one class after another and trying to decide which ones to take and which ones Penn would give me credit for. My schedule has pretty much been figured out and it's going to take me a while to get adjusted to the different scholastic lifestyle that exists here in Chile.

Like my past two semesters at Penn, I think I've decided to take 6 classes this semester. However, unlike my past two semesters at Penn, I only have classes on Tuesdays through Thursdays... I think I can get used to that. =P What I don't think that I'll get used to though is the fact that it takes me 30-45 minutes to commute to class and that my classes are on different campuses that could potentially take another 30-45 minutes to commute between classes. While I used to wake up at 9:55AM to go to a 10:00AM class at Penn, I now need to wake up at 9:55AM to get to a 11:30AM class here in Chile just because I don't know how long it'll take before the "micro" (bus) I need to take to a certain campus will show up.

<left> Campus Oriente de La Católica: I managed to arrive 30 minutes late to class after I



left my house with 45 minutes to get to class once... waited forever for the right micro (there are two) of which both flew by without stopping at my stop... got on another one I thought would take me there... and ended up riding around the residential area around but not near the campus... after getting back to a major road, I waved down a cab to take me to class. All in all, it cost me \$1.50 to get to class 30 minutes late. =P

<right> Anyway, after my first Monday of bad classes at La Chile, I ended up deciding not to go to classes on Monday and ended up with the following classes:

At La Chile:

Políticas Económicas y Sociales en Chile
Músicas Populares en la Globalización

At La Católica:

Sociedad y Arte Chile Hispano
Relato Chileno: Nomadismos
Estética y Ciudad Latinoamericana

At Council:

Realidades Chilenas

Kind of interesting not to have any Wharton (business) classes this semester and in the first week and a half, the work seems a lot less than what it typically has been for me the past two years at Penn. In any case, I'm sure I'll learn a lot this semester about art, history, culture, music, etc. =P



As for work, after a week and a half of classes, I think I have reading assignments for one class... and a paper to write for the Contemporary Chilean Culture class that all the Council kids had to take as part of orientation... =>

Now... moving on to fun stuff... there's a lot to see and do in Chile apparently... It's a long, narrow country so there's not much to do east to west but moving north and south, I'm told that there'll be lots to see and pictures to take. I'm still working on hitting up all the sights in and around Santiago so this update will pretty much focus on Santiago and the area around it.



<left> I guess I should have mentioned in my first update that Santiago is surrounded by mountains on pretty much all sides... it's got the Mexico City effect of bottling up all the smog inside so the air here is pretty

bad... but on a clear day, you can look up from pretty much anywhere in the city and see the second highest (I think I've been told) mountain range just sitting there in the background! Isn't that pretty crazy?

So, since I'm here in the middle of winter, it was only appropriate to head on out of the city last Friday to ski on the Andes! =P

<right> I went up to the *El Colorado* Ski Center to hit up the slopes with Lucas, a friend from Council. It was an awesome day with not a cloud in the sky and the weather was fantastically warm. =)



Anyway, I couldn't help but take a gazillion pictures of mountains and more mountains...



<above> Here's one panoramic view from the slopes...



<left> You can pretty much look down at Santiago from the slopes... while it was nice and clear in the morning, by 1700 when I took this next picture, the entire valley was pretty much buried under a layer of smog...

It makes for a pretty cool misty, mythical picture though. =D

<below> Back in Santiago, the largest

cellphone in the world... I don't know why you'd want a gi-normous cellphone because when it comes to technology... smaller is better, not bigger! =P

Yeah, there're lots of cool things to see in Santiago... more historically significant buildings than the gi-normous cellphone...

<below> Known as *La Moneda*, this building was the residence of the President of Chile before the *Golpe de Estado* and the military dictatorship under General Pinochet. Back in 1973, this place



was surrounded by tanks and bombed and stuff when the coup took place and removed President Salvador Allende from power... but I'm sure you already knew that. =P



It's no longer the presidential residence and I think it's just used for government functions of some sort

nowadays... =)

Other than the scenery... I noticed another pretty cool difference about being in Chile...



<left> Dan^3...
Dan, Dan and Dan
went bowling
(well, with other
people too. =P)
sometime last
week...

We paired up with
one Dan on each
team... guess who
won?

Did you guess?

Yep! Dan's team
won the bowling
tournament! =P

<right> (from left
to right) Katie,
Allison, Cecily,
Lise-Anne,
Danielle, and me
during our 2 hour
breaks between
classes last
Thursday at
campus San
Joaquin...



It's really strange
having 2 hour
breaks instead of
going to class
back-to-back-to-
back like I'm used
to doing...

Anyway, did you notice what's different in these pics compared to all the pics I've been taking these past few years? I'm the only Asian! =D I think it's good for me to be in Chile not only because I'm being submerged into the Chilean culture living with a

Chilean family and being practically a Chilean most of the day... but also because I'm not stuck in my Asian bubble like I usually am when I'm back at school in the States. =)

Anyway, to wrap up... I think the *Carabineros* of Chile are really cool. =) Not only do they get to ride around on horses (refer to Update #1)...

<below> But check out these nice BMW bikes these two guys are riding around on... =P There are more types of *Carabinero* duties and I think I'm going to try to take pics of all of them. =D



Well, time to head out for a classical music concert I'm told. Hope everything is well with you and write back soon! It's always nice to hear what you've been up to wherever you may be! (And to those who have responded, I will get back to you soon!)

- Dan