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Thunderbird Field Phoenix, Arizona

Thursday noon September 2, 1943

Dear Bernice,

Well I am just about settled here now. Even the heat and dust seem less than at first. Last night all of us in class 44-C went out on the lawn and saw movie shorts under the stars with the hanger side serving as a screen.

Here is a typical first week schedule:

5:25 A.M. — rise 5:30 " — reviele [sic] 6:00 " — breakfast cleanup: room, latrine, equipment, you 9:00 " — P.T. 10:00 " — showers 10:30 " — Finance lecture 12:30 "(P.M.) — lunch 1:30 " — lecture (medical) 2:30 " — lecture (parachute) 3:30 " — lecture (") 4:30 " — drill 6:30 " — dinner 7:30 " — retreat 9:30 " — taps

Our lectures cover almost every field of army life — chaplain of the Thunderbirds on religion,

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general information, questions and answers, discipline, honor, leadership, medical (sickness and sex), open post, routine, etc. Starting Monday we will spend half a day on the flight line, every other day in the morning. We will fly about an hour a day for the first two week(s), excuding Sundays and Saturdays. About then we should have soloed and be ready for three hours a day plus voluntary weekend time. We must spend approximately 1/3 of our time in dual instruction however so that we can keep on the ball. We must have 65 hours in the air while at primary and must make 103 landings in the two months time. When not in the air we walk wing tips.

The other half of the day we will get P.T., drill and two hours of ground school. That P.T. is rough with the dust and heat. We run half an hour and do calisthenics half an hour without pause. We run the 1/2 mile, the mile or the five mile courses. We sprint and

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duck waddle besides. Today the P.T. class made a huge circle and charged in toward the center. Then we tried to catch the dozen or so rabbits [sic] that were scared up. We weren't successful though. Another trick is for the instructor to shout out in rapid and mixed succession the numbers 1,2,3,4, and 5. 1 = attention; 2 = front push up position; 3 = back position; 4 = side position; 5 = running in place. At times the class looks like a rioting mob.

From now on, If I can make the grade, I will make \$68.50 clear each month plus \$12.50 in war bonds. I have about \$75.00 on me; I will get about \$30.00 in partial payment very soon; and at the end of the month I will get a full payment. I'll be sending some home shortly.

I don't know how soon this will reach you. Let me know how long it takes for mail to reach you. However I will try to call Wilmington Sunday afternoon.

I would appreciate it very much if you and the rest

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of the family sort of spread my news around and made apologies for my not writing to Mr. Boykin, Mr. Herring, Daisy, Dr. Johns, Mr. Baker, Uncle Marion, Uncle Roger, Aunt Grace, Grandmother Minker, Ben, Mr. Yingst, etc. (also — Howell Wilkins)

What about the Dickinson microcosm? What about football — high school; college; professional? If you are not sending shoe equipment let me know so I can buy some here. How about a pair of size 9 gym shoes? Rush those sunglasses if possible. Did my package reach you? Enclosed you will find two coat patches — one for you; one for Shirley. What are you all doing? How's Ginger? How's the garden? What's new at Ferris?