



# El Castañer Newsletter

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The Green Thumbail

OR

How to Raise Chickens  
Without Really Trying

Keim T. Houser

As many of you will remember, trying to grow a garden in Castañer can be a frustrating, exasperating, discouraging and occasionally rewarding experience. The number of failures continues to mount with many new recruits for the "Ex-gardeners of Castañer Club". Of course, there are notable exceptions, e.g. Mrs. Burke, but they seem to only occur with experience attained over many years - which leaves us short term, transplanted, midwestern, eastern, and western farm boys (and girls) at a loss to cope with a tropical agriculture. (4-H was never like this!)

First, there is the assumption that, since everything looks so green and lush, any seeds put into the ground should grow wonderfully! Most of us start off with visions of big, red, juicy tomatoes the year 'round and end up being happy with small, cherry tomatoes. Beans, lettuce and cabbage do well with a little luck - if you can keep some humus in the soil and the chickens out!

This last requirement weeds out all but the most hardy gardeners. For, as you all know, the chickens in Castañer stay awake all night "talking" about how they are going to scratch out your garden the next day!! They attack early! Which means flying out of bed at 5:30 or 6:00 A.M. and taking a few laps around your yard and garden in your shorty pajamas throwing rocks and yelling shoo!! All the while, ignoring the incredulous stares of any Puerto Ricans who may be around at that hour. Anyway, they have known you were "un poco loco" ever since they hung over the fence and watched you dig in the dirt and work up a sweat. If, on your early morning tour, you happen to find a couple of large, brown animals rooting out the peppers and grunting, they are just some of the neighbor's pigs which will be sure to run back and forth across your garden before you can chase them out of the yard.

But, for the true gardener, nothing wipes out the joy of the quiet contemplation of his growing plot - a fist full of green beans, a few middle-sized carrots, or even a two inch cucumber!! It's really lots of fun!!

The green thumbail? It's what you get from pulling out the creeping grass which sends runners charging into your garden!!

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Back Again

OR

They Can't Keep Me Away  
(No Matter How Hard They Try)  
Carolyn ("Tess") Daley

It is great to be back here once again to see old friends and the changes that have been made. As I entered the beautiful valley of Castañer, I tried to relate to my brother all the things that I could. As we rounded that first sharp curve, it was kind of startling to see that the old gray face of Casa Grande had been lifted with a bright blue. As we moved on down the road, we saw that the first tienda, where the telephone is located, also had a bright, new, yellow paint job. The Baptist Church is still there as bright and cheery as ever. On past the funeral home and that big tienda on the left, we found that the Beauty Shoppe had been changed into a candy store which sells Refrescos del Pais. After rounding that last curve above the second unit school, I began to see people I knew, so the scenery passed by quickly. The customary stares were accompanied by smiles of recognition. I knew I loved Castañer more than ever. We moved on past the doctors homes, and I saw that the beautiful green castle of Castañer had been painted brown - a beautiful, striking color backgrounding the trees that have grown faster than weeds. We turned into that first drive that goes up to the maintenance area and the entrances to the residences and bumped into two "sleeping policemen" lying the full width of the drive to keep the speed down and unnecessary traffic out. Very effective!

Arriving on a Sunday afternoon, many people were at the beach. The Fike's car was in their drive, so I walked over to their house to find that their family of four had grown to a family of six. The Groff's warm welcome and the Slaubaugh's return with their new daughter made it seem so much the same.

The front of the hospital is a little different along with the color. The forever-torn screens have been replaced with modern cement block. Nice from the outside, but it sure blocks a beautiful view! Entering the hospital, I found that Freddie had returned to the office just the week before. I would have missed his shining face and timid smile more than anything else I think. He seems to be a part of the office. Violet Crespo gives the pharmacy that well-scrubbed look, and the O.P.D. has expanded its doctoring services, so that there has been a desk put out in front. The nursing staff seems to be a little larger too.

The O.R. and lab are now primarily staffed with people from the community, and they look so good and dependable. That time clock sure looks different in this setting, almost out of place. Entering the comedor, the lavender walls with the paintings done by Mrs. Kiracofe of the front of the hospital and the old Casa Grande, also the potted plants with cigarette ends, give it that homey touch.

The people have changed too, but very little. Some are a little fatter and some a little slimmer. Some faces are different but, with the warmth of the people here, they are not strangers very long.

The paradise of Puerto Rico is still here in its modern dress to welcome all. It is even better the second time.

C H E F S

Castañer Orientation

OR

We Should Have Known Better  
Rosalee, Warren & Kim Heffron

Before we came to Castañer in August, we were fortunate to visit with some former project members who were at Castañer about eleven years ago.

Mr. and Mrs. Wesley Whitesides and family of Warrensburg, Missouri and Dr. and Mrs. Hal Leppink and family of Twin Harbors, Michigan all helped us by talking with us about Castañer. Mr. Ken Yeazell of Tuscon, Arizona, who had visited Castañer the summer of 1965, showed us his slides of Castañer.

This "informal orientation" we appreciated as it gave us a true picture of what Castañer was like.

*Please do not write  
in the empty spaces.*

Would You Believe

Word has come to us that Nathan and Trudy Leopold will leave in December for two years of B.V.S. work in Poland, where Nate will teach in the University of Warsaw. 2

OR

Hark, Hark - The Heart (beat)  
Lee Smith, Jr., M.D.

Five doctors! Miracles do happen at Castañer. Another first in the history of Castañer in fulfilling the basic requirements, which make it possible to meet the spirit of our constitution for medical practice, has been made possible by a staff composed of the following: Dr. Keim Houser, who began service here July 1, 1965 and returns to Chicago for an O.B.-Gyne residency on July 1, 1967. Dr. Larry Miller, a three month student here until June, 1965 returned July 7, 1966 to complete a term of service which will be terminated by a surgical residency in Chicago July 1, 1968. Dr. Joseph Weddle comes from California and began his service July 18, 1966 to be terminated in a residency in physical medicine in Oregon July 1, 1968. Dr. Warren Heffron spent two years with the Navajo Indians of Arizona as part of a three year service in U. S. Public Health and came to Castañer August 7, 1966 with hopes to terminate to an orthopedic surgery residency in July, 1968. Finally, Dr. Lee Smith, Jr. began with a two month interim medical service at Castañer in 1955 and since has completed over five years with no termination date - but anticipating a three year residency in ophthalmology at the University of Puerto Rico. About July 1, 1967, Dr. Harold Huffman, son of Dr. Jake Huffman of Virginia, will begin a two year service, or more, replacing Dr. Keim Houser.

There is unanimous opinion among the present medical staff that the officially approved staff of four should be increased to five.

Lacking only joint commission inspection and approval, the standards of medical practice at Castañer are second to none on the Island and vie with the American Hospital Standards of the States. The Program of Improved Medical Standards was begun in 1963 by Don and Bob Parker, brothers, who are the sons of the original Dr. Daryl Parker who founded the hospital in 1942. Recognition by the governing board that we now have an institution which can no longer be "turned over" to a local medical group for many years to come - Brethren have become indigenous and anticipate involvement here for many years to come.

This past summer of 1966 has demonstrated that short-term medical help must be of unusual quality to actually fulfill the true meaning of helpfulness, in that the discipline of maintaining standards are as difficult and perhaps more involved than those found in private practice.

Under the Sleeper Clause of Title XIX of the Medicare Act, it is hoped that Castañer will have the potential of income which will be required to maintain her present standards. Present discrepancy in doctors' salaries are \$150 a month at Castañer and \$1,000 a month at public health units nearby. Our registered nurses receive \$200 per month and room and board with the minimum wage in hospitals about us beginning at \$300 per month, as of most recent changes.

We do have an adequate staff of R.N.'s at present with Elsa Groff as Superintendent of Nurses, Bruni Mercado, Public Health Nurse who was aided in her studies by a Bethany Hospital Scholarship, Carmen Ramos de Sanchez and Elvira Martinez completing scholarship requirements for the Puerto Rican Department of Health by working at Castañer, Ofelia Rodriguez, a long time helper who lives in the community, Fern Hudson, a 17-year nursing educator from Minnesota, Pat Moyer, a continental transplanted to Puerto Rico from Pa., Dr. Larry Miller's wife, Sharon, praised by all, but especially by Larry!, Shirley Fike, part-time nurse, mother, and minister's wife, Mrs. Jerry Ruff (former Miss Bernice Martin) and a new two year BVS assignee, Brenda Brandt from Pa.

We are due to lose some of our good Puerto Rican nurses if we don't soon work out contract problems with the Puerto Rican Department of Health with the new Secretary of Health, Garcia Palmieri, and raise the pay of nurses to equal that of the Puerto Rican standards.

Under Title 18 and 19, we should receive full payment for approximately 65% of our patient load in both OPD and hospital due to the high frequency of indigency under the Johnson definition. Implementation of this program has been delayed by the change of personnel in the Department of Health and our own lack of long term hospital administration. We await the coming of a new administrator, Ellis Shenk, and, at the same time, give thanks to Dr. Ed Kiracofe, who is leaving after two months in a most difficult position.

The medical program is a well rounded one, with four remote clinics once a month and a new family planning and pap smear clinic being opened in Adjuntas in cooperation with the Family Planning Association of Puerto Rico and Adjuntas doctors. We now have about 325 women using intrauterine contraceptive devices of plastic. As a result, postpartum sterilizations are infrequent.

TIME  
FOR  
COMMERCIAL 3

In early 1965, we started a routine PAP smear program locally with Arecibo District furnishing the materials and reading our slides at no cost. We have rapidly increased the total number collected since the five-doctor staff arrived, and we now have over 800 slides with only four positive reports.

This summer's flu epidemic was markedly buffered by an intensification of OPD flu vaccine given over the past year, and almost all cases of flu encountered were among non-vaccinated patients. Our experience has demonstrated that in all areas, preventative medicine is the most efficient and cheapest and satisfying to both doctor and patient.

A proposed educational program which awaits details of implementation from BSC aspires to give six to eight weeks experience to Castañer Hospital doctors, and later to nurses, at one of the established mission stations in Haiti. This program should be invaluable in giving perspective to all who serve here and who might aspire to serve in medical missions under severe handicaps. Later, it is hoped this program might be extended to nurses or any of the ancillary help who might profit from such. To all who have ever served at Castañer Brothers Service Project, we bid a big welcome to "come and see us now", giving thanks for all the support you have given for such a challenging work that still remains just that!

#### Inside the Lab

OR

The House of the Boiling Testubes  
James A. Livingston

Representing the laboratory of Hospital Castañer, it certainly is my pleasure to write a few details that have taken place since arriving December 1, 1965.

The medical laboratory is making substantial growth in many areas. At the present time, our concern is to bring the laboratory up to standards of those in the States, first, in the number of tests offered, and, second, in the quality of tests performed. This has involved adding many new testing procedures to our regular routine. As a result, we are now able to do a more complex study on the illnesses of these people, and, where possible, find a faster, permanent cure.

Our second concern for the laboratory, the people, and Hospital Castañer is our teaching program. The laboratory gives one an excellent opportunity to learn specific technical skills in clinical medicine. As a result, we are trying to establish a medical laboratory teaching program, where high school graduates with an interest in medicine, can learn the "scope" of the lab. In this small, but important, way, we can produce future technicians needed in the medical field here in Puerto Rico and throughout the world.

May we extend to all of you an invitation to come and visit Hospital Castañer.

In conclusion, through the tireless efforts of those who have served here in the past: Kidwell, Mason, E. Diaz, Ludwig, Forbes, Leopold, W. Diaz, Studebaker, it is my wish that the lab, under my direction, will continue to grow for all the people of Puerto Rico and their wonderful Island.

#### Nurse's Report

OR

Those Pearly Whites  
Elsa Zapata de Groff,  
Director of Nurses

A year has gone by since we published news about our hospital. A year of hard, interesting and inspiring work for all of us, seasoned with some hours of desolation and some of pride and success.

We pulled our resources together, and during "Hospital Week", we had a very successful open house where the community responded very well. We started an annual event of electing an employee of the year. This year, Jose Alvarez (Pepe), our social worker, won the honor. Also, during the "Nurses Week", we had a banquet in honor of all our nurses, where we shared a lot of fun together.

We have been able to increase and maintain an adequate staff of nurses most of the time. Our wages have improved considerably from what they were a few years back, making it double, and helping to retain some of our nursing personnel who would have floated away otherwise. Still, we have a long way to go to even compare with the wages offered by the Government and some private institutions.

Our staff of graduate nurses consists of: Myself, Director of Nurses, Sharon Miller, Assistant Director, Brunilda Mercado, full time Public Health Nurse, Shirley Pike and Elvira Martinez in O.R., Bernice Martin (who recently became Mrs. Jerry Ruff), Pat Moyer, Ofelia Rodriguez, Fern Hudson, and Carmen Ramos. We are starting a program with our full time public health nurse putting more emphasis on health education. Also, an in-service training program is being prepared and will be carried out by Sharon Miller with the cooperation of the rest of the nursing staff.

Among our practical nursing staff, you can still see some of the familiar faces of Monserrate Torres, Alejandrina Lamboy, Teresa Rivera, Carmen Gonzalez, Lita Soto de Justiniano, Gloria Maldonado, Hilda Quintana, Tefel Vera, Victor Fernandini, Laura Zayas, Angelita Borrero, and some others who have joined our staff in more recent years. They are Amalia Torres, Carmen T. Ramos, Margarita Martinez de Ayala, Ana M. Torres, Domitila Muñiz, Ana M. Mercado, Alberto Gonzalez, Alma Velez, Raquel Fernandini, Ana Lydia Schevarria, Esther Alicia, Margarita Martinez de Justiniano, and Carmen Roman.

Next year, we will be celebrating the 25th anniversary of our hospital, and all our nursing staff invites you to come, greet old friends, and see all the changes that have come about.

Greetings From the Blickenstaff's

OR

Back Home and Broke

Ray & Margaret Blickenstaff

We are at home in Idaho again. It has taken a few days to get acclimated. We will soon be settled and back to normal. This United States is a big country. We found that out by coming all the way from New York City in the bus, which was because of the airplane strike.

We miss Castañer and think often about the good people there. We are sad because there is no dentist there now to take our place. We hope there will be someone soon.

Puerto Rico is a beautiful country. The people are gracious and hospitable. There is much in their culture to be admired. They have close family ties and they are tender hearted.

We enjoyed the work in the dental office. We loved the third graders and liked to have them crowd around the chair. There was only one patient during the year who bit my finger, but that was all right because I am a painless dentist. Carmen and Raquel were both wonderful assistants and interpreters. We could not have worked without them.

As we review our slides, we are impressed with the tremendous dental need. It would be good to have more dental education and more preventive dentistry practiced. Some other helpful things would be a better diet with less sugar, regular dental attention every six months, better tooth brushing, and topical fluoride treatments by the dentist.

We enjoyed being associated with the wonderful people in the hospital. To have had a small part in the work that they are doing is ample payment for the year spent there. We will always remember Castañer and constantly have it in our thoughts and in our prayers.

Schooldays, Schooldays

OR

Termites Row

Miriam Oliver

The school is located in one room of an old barracks building. The building is wooden with doors and windows of wood and no screens. Luckily, there are not so many bugs and insects here.

After sweeping out the termite dust and getting rid of a few of the cobwebs, we started painting the inside walls of the school room and some of the furnishings. This is still not finished, for school started soon after I arrived.

Along with painting and cleaning (my janitorial duties), I planned a schedule after consulting with Mr. Santiago, the Spanish school principal. Next, I sorted out the books we would use (principal duties). There are many books here, but, in some subjects, newer books are needed. Also, in second grade, there are three students and generally not more than one or two books in any subject.

Dr. Kiracofe was very helpful during this rather confusing time of getting organized for school. Norene Keenen, my predecessor, had left many books needed for this year on my desk, which was greatly appreciated.

I have only six students in school. In the mornings, I have the three second graders, Gandhi Forbes, Doug Fike, and Amy Smith, and one sixth grader, David Smith. In the afternoons, I have one fifth grader, Wanda Fike, and David again. Richard Groff, a tenth grader, comes for a couple of hours each day for study in English, literature, and biology. Since there are so few pupils, we have more of an informal atmosphere.

Many times, the Spanish children come to our door and watch or step in if we are not having classes.

One of my major concerns since arriving has been learning Spanish. We have Spanish classes on Monday and Wednesday for project workers. Also, I pick up a few words from other project workers, the comedor, and the Spanish children, but it seems very slow. It is quite confusing not to be able to talk in Spanish.

However, I am very glad to be in Puerto Rico, a part of the project, and living in a Spanish colony.

#### Nuestro Trabajador Social José Alvarez (Pepe)

Hace 24 años la Comunidad de Castañer cuenta con los servicios de un hospital, el cual inició sus labores médicas y sociales para fines del año 1942, gracias a un grupo de profesionales y técnicos Norteamericanos quienes inspirados en el deseo puramente Cristiano de servir a la humanidad, vinieron voluntariamente a prestar sus valiosos servicios, bajo los auspicios de la Iglesia de los Hermanos.

Estos fieles y abnegados servidores, sentaron las bases para lo que es hoy el moderno Hospital Castañer, orgullo de este valle y verdadera luz encendida en las mentes y en los corazones de aquellos a quienes el dolor y la desesperación torturan.

El hospital y la comunidad han crecido juntos, se han desarrollado juntos y juntos también han compartido sus problemas. En 1960 se inauguró el nuevo y moderno hospital, gracias al esfuerzo combinado de todos. Desde entonces hemos progresado mucho. Contamos con más personal, mayores facilidades, mejores servicios y las medicinas de las mas alta calidad.

Al intensificar los servicios hemos aumentado el programa de clínicas fuera del hospital que efrecemos todos los miércoles a comunidades aisladas en areas adyacentes. Estas clínicas siempre han tenido una gran aceptación por parte de los residentes y debido a eso, el índice de enfermedades ha disminuído considerablemente. Ciertamente se hacen notables los efectos de nuestro programa hacia una salud mejor; la dieta en los hogares es ahora más balanceada, los hábitos de higiene mejoran cada día y como es lógico, las familias se notan más felices y contentas.

Como trabajamos estrechamente con la comunidad y el gobierno de Puerto Rico para atacar en su raíz los problemas sociales y económicos en las misma forma que los de salud, hemos tenido bastante éxito hasta ahora. Como nos inquieta mucho entre otras cosas la educación de los niños, hemos visitado repetidas veces los hogares y estimulado a los padres para que los envíen a la escuela y así lo han hecho en la mayoría de los casos. La misión de este hospital es compleja y dura pero nos queda la honda satisfacción de haber servido y el estímulo para continuar sirviendo con la ayuda de Dios.

#### Translation

OR

#### For Those of You Who Don't Indulge

For 24 years, the community of Castañer has depended upon the services of a hospital which began its medical and social labors toward the end of 1942, thanks to a group of Continental professionals and technicians who were inspired with a simple Christian desire to serve humanity. They came voluntarily to give their valuable services under the auspices of the Church of the Brethren.

These faithful, dedicated servants laid the foundations for that which is today our modern Hospital of Castañer, the pride of this valley and truly a burning light in the minds and hearts of those who have felt the torture of pain and despair.

The Hospital and the community have grown together. They have developed together and have shared their problems together. In 1960, the new and modern hospital was inaugurated, thanks to the combined efforts of all.



Since then, we have progressed very much. We now have more personnel, greater facilities, better services, and medicines of the highest quality.

To amplify these services, we have expanded our program of away clinics, which we offer every Wednesday to the isolated communities in surrounding areas. These clinics have always been very well accepted on the part of the residents, and, because of this, the index of sickness has fallen considerably. Certainly, they make notable the effects of our program toward better health. The diet in the homes is now more balanced, and the hygiene habits are becoming better every day, and it is logical that the families are more happy and content.

As we work very closely with the community and the Government of Puerto Rico in an effort to attack social and economic problems at their roots, just the same as we attack the problems of health, we have had very good success. As the problems of our children's education has been of great concern, we have visited many times in individual homes and encourage the parents to send their children to school. The parents have done this in many cases.

The mission of this Hospital is complex and difficult, but we still have the deep satisfaction of having served and feeling the urge to continue serving with God's help.

From the Administrator's Office

OR

¿Ellis, Where Are You?

Edgar S. Kiracofe

Mr. Gene Yeazell, the Administrator, resigned effective July 15 to accept the position of Administrator-Developer of the Bethany Brethren Hospital in Downers Grove, Illinois. Edgar S. Kiracofe served as Acting Administrator from July 15 to September 18. We are expecting the newly appointed Administrator, Mr. Ellis Shenk, to arrive the first of January, 1967. We will be struggling through the interim period without an official administrator.

The hospital continues to grow both in services and in the number of workers. Since August, there are five full-time doctors and eight nurses actively at work. This, together with broadened services for the Department of Health and the Medicare Program, has made it necessary to employ ancillary help in offices and the laboratories. A new "away" clinic has been added and other service possibilities are being explored.

With a more liberal Department of Health contract for indigent care and the addition of the Medicare programs, the time has come when a study in depth needs to be made concerning the future of the hospital. It cannot stand still for long. Either it must expand its facilities or it must reduce some of its services.

A word of appreciation must be given for the excellent administrative job done by Gene Yeazell during his two years of tenure. He worked constantly and effectively with the Department of Health to expand the services of the hospital and to build a firmer financial basis for the ongoing work. He left behind a well-organized corps of workers who are loyal and dedicated to the goals the hospital is trying to achieve for the people of the Castañer community.

Many people, both Continentals and Puerto Ricans, are making notable contributions to the work of this Brethren Service Project.

From the Treasurer's Desk

OR

Foiled Again

D. Ray Slaubaugh

The personnel changes this past summer included a change of treasurers, as Duane Steiner left in June, 1966 to assume the position of Assistant Treasurer of the General Brotherhood Board in Elgin, Illinois and Ray Slaubaugh, with his wife, Carol, and little girl, Kim Renee, returned to Castañer after two years in Toledo, Ohio. It is good to return after an extended stay in the States. We can begin to realize the speed at which changes are taking place in Puerto Rico and in the hospital program.

The dollars and cents outlook does not seem to be too different from last year or the year before - that we are encouraged about the future but have no money to spend right now. This seems to be a broken record and I'm not sure what we would do if we did not have a little struggle with our finances.

One of the areas which is calling for the new dollars we are receiving is our first full compliment of doctors and nurses in many, many years. Also, the 6-8 Youth Corp and Poverty Corp workers will have to be dismissed or taken on as regular hospital paid employees in the near future.

Our dental program has taken a temporary collapse since Dr. Eay Blickenstaff left the first of August. No dentist appears on the horizon until summer of 1967. I'm sure it would be a real surprise to look into the dental waiting room and see the administrator and two secretaries hard at work. The loss of dental services hurts the community health-wise, and the hospital budget-wise.

Wages continue to rise with a 12% increase expected this coming year.

We are making every effort to reduce the General Brotherhood Board commitment for Castañer so that additional funds might be freed for other, perhaps more needy, areas. This church support is being dropped from 21,000 to 16,000 for this coming 1966-67 fiscal year.

Sooooo, who is picking up the tab for all this extra spending? I wish I knew, but here are a few things that will help: Negotiations have been finalized for our new Department of Health contract covering services to indigent patients, and we will receive about 14,000 more this year. Also, the Family Planning Association in Puerto Rico has decided to pay us for what we have been doing in this area, and we will receive 17,000 from them in 1966-67.

Beyond this, our only income source is our continuing effort to increase our local paid-for services. Patient income will be helped with Medicare added to the existing insurance companies located on the Island. Medicare has forced us to review all our patient charges with the result that most of our routine charges have been increased to more closely equal our costs. Since Duane's last report, income from patients has leveled off, and we are now trying to find out why and decide what needs to be done to get it back on the upward trail.

The time has come, and, indeed, maybe past, when we need to look beyond next year in our program. Tefel has five doctors in OPD now and is bursting at the seams. The office has taken over the dental area, but what happens when our dental program starts again next summer? The American Hospital Association has listed numerous changes that need to be made in our physical plant. An Extended Care Facility for Castañer? This much-talked about little-understood aspect of health services needs to be looked at in greater detail.

A look backward shows us we have come a long way. A look ahead shows us that we are no where near the end of the road. If, when, and how do we move ahead???

Farewell Castañer

OR

I Was a BVS Daddy  
and

I Was a BVS Mommy  
Edgar & Helen Kiracofe

Two years in Castañer has helped us to gain a better perspective of the Castañer project, which has grown into a modern 33 bed hospital. The project, which had its beginning as a civilian public service project, is probably one of the most successful of the Brethren Service Programs. In one sense, it may have been too successful. Brethren Service projects are started with the purpose of helping people to help themselves, and, when the community is able to do so, the project is turned over to the community to manage.

The Medical Program has grown faster than the readiness or the ability of the community to manage and support it. The Hospital is a member of the American Hospital Association and is certified to care for Medicare patients under Title 18 and Title 19. It is a beautiful and effective service center in a very needy area.

Over the 24 years of the program development, there have been three hospital sites served by hundreds of dedicated people, both Puerto Ricans and Continentals. Many have worked as volunteers for the sheer joy of service.

During the past year, it has been our privilege to serve as counselors to the 12 to 15 Brethren Volunteer Service workers here at Castañer and at Inter-American University in San German. It has been a very satisfying experience to work so closely with young, capable, and dedicated people. To watch them grow in service and to see their development makes one feel younger than his years.

We are very pleased at the opportunity to continue in this work as we visit the numerous I-W and BVS workers throughout the United States.

A prize will be given to the lucky person who can find the ~~bunny~~ coqui on this year's magazine cover. Please send all entries to the editor.

Thank you

It Was a Very Good Year  
OR  
Everything's Coming Up Co-ops  
John Forbes

Substantial progress has been achieved by the Castañer cooperatives lately. The Consumers Cooperative has achieved new heights, having closed its fiscal year on May 31 with \$228,000 in sales and \$17,000 in earnings. Its plans for the future are to expand greatly and add new departments to form a cooperative shopping center in Castañer.

The Credit Union is struggling valiantly with the problem of unpaid loans. The rate of loans that have not been paid for a year or more has not dropped markedly as yet, but energetic means are being employed to attack the problem, with the aid of the Credit Union Federation. As soon as this problem is solved, the Credit Union hopes to increase its services, with bigger loans and interest on deposits.

The Health Cooperative is still operating with a deficit, but there is hope of some government aid that will better the situation. Meanwhile, it continues emphasizing service and education.

The League of Cooperatives is offering a Cooperative Education Course of 13 weeks in the Community Center for about 30 leaders from Castañer and Adjuntas. The course covers such phases as leadership, education committees, history and philosophy of the cooperative movement, cooperative law, cooperative integration, etc. The response is enthusiastic, and it is hoped that the effects of this course will be felt long after it has finished, through the activities of those now taking part.

Church News  
OR

The Gospel According to Don Fike  
Don Fike

The previous Newsletter indicated that one of the year's major emphases was the extensive visitation program carried out in the States during the summer. This year, the emphasis has been on a more intensive effort here in the community and surrounding area, with little time spent beyond the local scene.

Each of the more traditional celebrations or seasonal activities was carried out with its particular inspirations and values: Although many of the more experienced youth were out of the community, another fine Christmas drama was rehearsed and presented which not only left its impact on those who saw it, but awakened and provided expression for some budding new talent among the younger set. A youth retreat at Methodist Camp Mameyes in Jayuya was changed this year from an experience of the Youth Cabinet only to one of the entire youth group. Community-wide Holy Week services were again held on the cancha near the Centro Comunal. A speaker at one of these services was "Padre Pagan", former Episcopalian priest in Bartolo and Castañer a number of years ago. Our summer activities centered around cooperation with the Presbyterians in a camping program at El Guacio and Vacation Bible School held in our facilities but co-sponsored by the Evangelical churches of the community.

From the summer vacation months, during which several student youth participated again in activities of the home group, we have returned once more to the adjustment period caused by their general exodus to studies and work. The diversity of activities and goals of these young people is very interesting: Two are student nurses - one was "capped" early in the year, the other finishes training this year and hopes to return to work in Castañer Hospital; One is finishing high school in the States; Five others are attending Brethren Colleges pursuing pre-med., Spanish, physics and education majors; Two more are education majors at the University of P.R.'s Rio Piedras campus; An engineering course at Mayagüez is occupying another, while last year's youth president is studying to become a dietician at the Humacao branch of U.P.R.; Recently another of the group went to Michigan to enter the Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) Program: Still others are gainfully employed as policemen, factory workers, etc., both here and in the U.S.

Please keep this magazine out of your children's hands (unless you are prepared with well thought out answers before hand.)

Thank you

Three of the most rewarding areas of involvement this year have been: service in volunteer chaplaincy in the hospital, participation in several small "discovery" groups, and counselling young draftees. Chaplaincy work opens an unbroken chain of opportunities for service to patients with widely varied needs. Small groups drawn together for reading, discussion and prayer, have provided an amazing amount of thought stimulation, exploration and growth-oriented experiences. Contacts with both Lares and Adjuntas draft boards have increased as several youth have needed to state and clarify their convictions before a system which is apparently shifting from a policy of "any worthy alternative to service is welcomed, tell us about it - we have too many men" to one of "any worthy alternative to service is suspect, don't tell us about it - we need too many men"!

Leadership of the community's five congregations has remained constant except for the Episcopalians. A young priest from Texas, Sterling Rayburn, has just arrived to take over duties which for the past two years have been carried by a priest from Spain. Louis Weil, who served the Bartolo-Castañer parish from 1962-'64, has just returned from two years of studies in Europe and will divide his time between duties at the San Juan Cathedral and teaching in the Episcopalian Seminary at Carolina.

Late this summer, five members of this congregation shared in a rich spiritual experience by participating in an Ashram directed by Dr. E. Stanley Jones. The setting for the interdenominational retreat was Inter-American U.'s beautiful San German campus. Another major interdenominational effort already moving toward realization, is the Island-wide Billy Graham Campaign scheduled for early 1967.

Dr. Salomon Cabezas and family returned to Ecuador shortly after his graduation from Evangelical Seminary in Rio Piedras last spring. Many of you will remember mention of them last year as the persons who provided pastoral leadership locally while the pastor and his family carried out a summer conference and visitation program.

Two very pleasant surprises have come this year via renewed friendships with two ministerial colleagues. The first was with E. Hernan Osorio, who, with his Chilean wife, Christine, is serving a new Lutheran congregation in the Levittown urbanization near Cataño. Hernan was active in the Calderón youth group during our service in Ecuador.

After Lutheran sponsored studies in Argentina, he worked briefly in Ecuador and Peru before coming to Puerto Rico. The second surprise came with word that former Brethren Academy teacher and Castañer pastor, Ignacio Rivera and family, had left their Spanish pastorate in N. Y. and returned to P. R. where he has accepted the position of dean and part-time professor in I. A. U.'s Bayamón Center. It was a happy occasion when Ignacio returned to Castañer to deliver his first sermon since their return to the Island.

#### Student Opportunities Service OR

With Soap It's Loaded  
The SOS Kids  
Ron, Pat, Nini & Bill

The Student Opportunities Service is an organization of Western Maryland College which is located in Westminster, Maryland. Western Maryland is a small liberal arts college of about 800 students. SOS has approximately 40 members at school and this year has a field team of 22 students, 16 students in four separate towns in Puerto Rico, and six students in Panther, West Virginia, in the Appalachian Mountain region, setting up a 5,000 volume library. The organization, a voluntary group, works throughout the school year on fund raising projects for their programs in the summer.

The organization was started in 1962 when the student body was challenged by an assembly speaker, accusing the youth of being uninterested and apathetic to the world situation. In their attempt to try to decide how to serve the world in which they lived better, SOS was born. SOS started by sending a 5,000 volume library to the Phillipines, but has now branched into community development as well.

Last year in Castañer, the team worked in the local schools and with the Recreation Association in helping to build a playground. They solicited from house to house for the funds and also helped the Recreation Association to reorganize and to elect new officers.

This year, our team consists of two boys who have returned to Castañer for their second summer, Bill McClary of Rock Hall, Maryland, and Ron Boone of Kilgore, Texas, and two girls, spending their first summer in Castañer, Nini Sloan, and Pat Peregoy, both of Baltimore, Maryland. Bill and Ron both graduated from Western Maryland in June as English-Education majors. Bill will be attending graduate school at the American University in Washington, D.C. studying in Non-Western Studies. Ron will be entering the U.S. Army September 4, as a 2nd lieutenant. Nini, planning a career as an interpreter, will be spending her junior year in France at the University of Marseilles studying for one year in her major field of French and Spanish. Pat will return to Western Maryland for her senior year studying mathematics for a teaching career.

Our first project upon arrival was the writing of the proposal of the community of Castañer for a new community center under the War on Poverty Program. We have concentrated mainly on the Recreation Program of Castañer working with the Recreation Association.

We have obtained such new equipment as balls, bats, nets, trophies, sand, and lights for the Community Center. A town meeting was found to be very necessary for reorganization purposes and was held, with the help of the Parks and Recreation Department of Ponce, on August 20, followed by a dance featuring the Banda de Acero and Combo Casino of Ponce. All of the proceeds from the dance went towards a new projector for the center. Promotion in the form of house to house solicitation, posters, tickets, and speeches to various groups also took place. There was a meeting on August 15 for the organization of teams, dancing classes, art classes, and tournaments. Five team leaders from the community were chosen to head different age groups and different sports, such as volleyball, boxing, baseball, basketball, and dancing.

Our team also helped plan for a sanitation program in the community of Castañer. We have obtained barrels from Ponce Cement Co. (steel drums) which we placed throughout the town for the collection of trash.

## Personnel

OR

### The In-Crowd

Those who came since October, 1965 for two years of service:

Julia Reichard, a nurse from Hagerstown, Maryland.

Jim Livingston, lab technician from Johnstown, Pennsylvania.

Bonnie Cervone from Philadelphia came to work as general secretary.

Kevin Keller is from Greenville, Ohio and works in the Maintenance Department.

Pat Moyer now living in Adjuntas has joined the nursing staff.

Ray Slaubaugh, Carol and Kim came from Toledo, Ohio in June. Ray holds down the Treasurer job.

Late July and the first of August brought three doctors who will be with us for two years.

Dr. Joseph Weddle, his wife Glenna and daughter Susan came from Riverside, California.

Dr. Larry Miller and his wife Sharon, a registered nurse, came from Chicago, Ill.

Dr. Warren Heffron, and his wife Rosalee and daughter Kimberly came from Fort Defiance, Arizona.

Our project teacher for two years is Miriam Oliver who comes from Carpentersville, Illinois.

## Visitor-Workers

OR

### The Adventurers

Dr. Richard Norenberg St. Petersburg, Fla.  
and family Month of June

Dr. & Mrs. Daryl Parker New Madison, Ohio  
Dr. Parker helped start the project in 1942. Month of June

Dr. & Mrs. A. C. Hirshfield  
Oklahoma City, Okla.  
July and August

Jeannie Rhoades New York City Hospital  
Student Nurse July and August

Nini, Pat, Ron, & Bill Western Md. College  
SOS Team Five Weeks

Helen Martin - Nurse South Bend, Ind.  
One Month

Those From Last Year

OR

The Leftovers

Dr. & Mrs. Lee Smith, Janice, David, and Amy.  
(Bryon and Carol are at Manchester College.)  
Rev. and Mrs. Don Fike, Wanda, Doug Josefa,  
and Wendy, a baby daughter who arrived Apr. 1  
Mr. and Mrs. Everett Groff and Richard. (Jan-  
ice is at McPherson, Carmen at Manchester, &  
Joyce at Nappanee, Indiana.)  
Jerry and Bernice Martin Ruff (married Sept.  
17, 1966)  
Dr. and Mrs. Keim Houser  
Fern Hudson

Those Who Left

OR

The Dropouts

Norene Keenen  
Julia Reichard  
Nancy Donaldson  
John Studebaker  
Edgar and Helen Kiracofe  
Duane and Jeannie Steiner  
Dr. Ray and Margaret Blickenstaff  
Gene, Carol, David and Melody Yeazell  
Bernice Martin - returned Bernice Ruff  
Dr. John Taylor, Joan, John and Melinda

Visitors

OR

No, They Never Returned

Many visitors came to the hospital during the year and a complete listing is not possible. Among those who came were:

Dr. and Mrs. Franklin Cassel of Lititz, Pa. They served here in 1943-44.

Mrs. John Barwick, who was on her way to the States following a term of service in Haiti.

Mrs. John Hershey of Lititz, Pa.

Mr. and Mrs. Stan Taylor of Toronto, Canada.

Miss Jeannie Middlecoff of Ohio.

Chester and Virginia Poister of Calif.

Mr. John Swigart of Huntingdon, Pa.

Mr. and Mrs. Henry Dasenback of Mich.  
Jean and Mary Zimmerman.

Dr. Galen Wampler & family and Galen's parents, - Mr. and Mrs. Galen Wampler of Broadway, Virginia.

Dr. Jesse Fifer and wife and daughter Robin of Frederick, Maryland.

Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Bennet of Delaware

Dr. and Mrs. D. Stanley Houser of Ind.  
Dr. and Mrs. Scheer and family of nine children who gave us a delightful evening of music.

Mr. and Mrs. Mack and Mr. and Mrs. Nebelsick - all from El Guacío.

Mrs. Margaret Farrel of Wash. D. C.  
Mary Houser of New York.

Dr. and Mrs. Homer Burke of Africa  
Barbara Custer, Judy Delsasso, Evelyn Saloniker, and Judy Beuchart all of Elgin, Illinois.

Cynthia Laymen of Mt. Joy, Pa.

Mr. and Mrs. Tim Reiman and sons, Tim and Phil of North Manchester, Indiana.

Mr. and Mrs. Harold L. Steiner.

Mr. and Mrs. Don Riegel of Wooster, Ohio.

Dr. Harold Row of Elgin, Illinois.

Mr. and Mrs. Ken Wine and Children.

Tess and Tim Daley of California.

Dr. Dick Havlik of Riverside, Ill.

Judy Chase of Michigan

Ruth Ann Leininger from Indiana.

Miss Bernice Huff of the Robinson school in San Juan.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilhelm Bartenback and family, also Ray and Virginia Bowman all from San German & Interamerican University

Mr. Donald Kauffman and family of McVeytown, Pa.

John and Mildred Fluelsch of Corona, California.

Dr. Wayne and Beverly Blickenstaff of Boise, Idaho.

Sandy Martin and Roma Paul of Ephrata, Pennsylvania.

During the year we had a tour group of 16 people from Ohio, also a number of visitors from the Peace Corp Camp.

You only receive this magazine once a year. Please care for it well so that you may enjoy its contents throughout the year. Keep it free from such things as bottles and glasses that are sweating, cigarette, cigar, and pipe ashes, sticky candy, chewing gum, leaky fountain pens, cookie crumbs, dirty hands or any other destructive measures.

Thank you  
Your Editor

Some Kind of wonderful  
OR  
Memoirs of a Mango  
Jeannie Rhoades

I came to Castañer during a vacation from school  
and I found in Castañer an even greater chance to learn.  
I learned the taste of mango, passion fruit, and guave  
and the smell of garlic with aregano and coffee brewing.  
I learned that there are 602 curves between Castañer and Ponce.  
and that standing up in the Land Rover is easier than  
sitting down.  
I learned the sound of the "publico" horn when I was  
trying to sleep  
and the sound of the ice cream truck during the Sunday sermon.  
I learned that you can't avoid mimi bites or stepping on toads  
at night  
and you can't avoid filling the nursery when the moon is full.  
I learned the beauty of coral in the ocean depths  
and the cheer of periwinkles nodding on Guilarte's slopes.  
I learned to love Castañer...her sights, her smells, her tastes,  
and her sounds  
and, especially, I learned to love her people...people  
I will never forget.  
I learned that you don't say "adios" when you leave Castañer;  
you say "hasta luego!"

If you wish to receive the Newsletter again next year, please  
fill in the blanks and return to Hospital Castañer, Box 23,  
Castañer, Puerto Rico 00631, Attention: Newsletter Editor.  
Thank you for patronizing the

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