

Castañer Newsletter

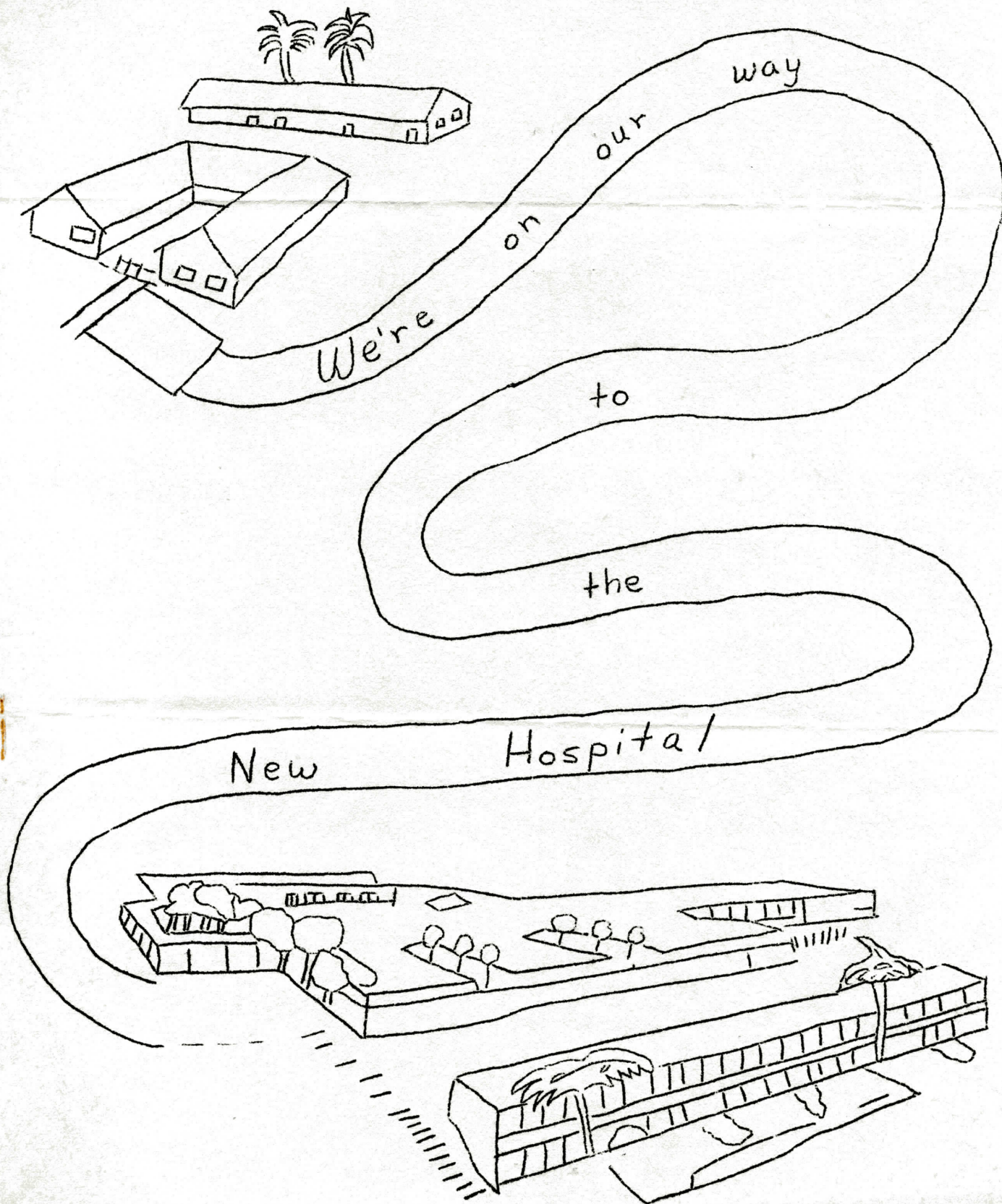
BRETHREN SERVICE PROJECT

Vol. 16 No. 3

Castañer, Puerto Rico

BRETHREN SERVICE COMMISSION

April 1, 1960



PROJECT PERSONNEL

by Ed and June Switzer

These busy days as the hospital nears completion, find Ralph Townsend, the Project Director, very busy with final ordering, plans for dedication, and countless other details. Ralph and his wife Mildred are the parents of three boys and one girl. Rodney, Karen, Phillip, and Melvin are all full of fun, vim, and vigor, so Ralph and Mildred are kept busy with home life also. Mildred, a nurse, helps out in surgery on Thursday mornings at the hospital. She also makes out the diets for hospital patients, as well as the menus to be followed in the dining room each day. The Townsends find fishing out on the lake one of their favorite family pastimes.

If it is thank you notes you need written, perhaps Sharon Neher, Ralph's secretary could help you. Sharon has given official thank you's to the many many people who have given to the new hospital fund. She keeps busy typing and handling correspondence materials in the office. Just now, Sharon says a Newsletter must go out to you, so is busy working at that. Sharon's husband, Doyle, is in charge of the dairy farm at the project. Doyle's knowledge of cows and farm operations has helped him in his work. The dairy has recently given a few of the cows to needy families, so Doyle has had a great opportunity as he works directly with the most needy people of this area.

Money problems or many problems - Esther Petersime can probably give you some helpful advice. Esther is the Project treasurer, and we all look to her concerning money matters. Esther has been here almost two and one half years, so can often give other helpful advice and information.

Which came first - the chicken or the egg? Roy Neher might have the answer by now, as he has spent this year managing the chicken project. Roy's wife Wava, teaches two sections of the Unit School. In the mornings we would find David and Janice Smith, Melvin Townsend, and Richard Groff in her classroom. In the afternoons she teaches Carol Smith, Phillip Townsend, and Carmen and Joyce Groff. The students have been learning many new things this year. As an arts and crafts project, her older students have recently been weaving rugs on a loom. This has been very fascinating and interesting. Roy and Wava are here as visitor workers this year, and have certainly given much help to our work.

Most any time, day or night, you might find the Dr.'s Hall and Dr. Smith in the Out Patient Department or the hospital. Dr. Tom Hall and his wife, Dr. Francoise, are the parents of two boys, Eric 3 years and Tefel, one month. The Halls, having been with us for almost two years, are beginning to know and understand the people and their problems quite well, so are valuable help to the project. They like traveling, and have seen many parts of the island.

Dr. Lee Smith is the medical director and is kept busy doctoring also. Since surgery is his special area, he finds Thursdays to be especially busy. He also works among the hospital and Out Patient staff helping to establish and maintain good working habits and high standards. Dr. Smith and his wife, Glea, are the parents of five, Byron, Carol, Janice, David, and Amy. This keeps Glea busy with homemaking. A visit to their home will find many new projects underway as the family learns to do new things.

Working closely with the doctors and the patients are our nurses Velma Lutz, Lilian Andersson, Christine Ruhl, Winifred Joseph, and Elsa Groff. Velma is finding nursing here to be very challenging and interesting. She most often works from 7:00 to 3:30. Recently she has spent much time in the Out Patient Department, treating the patients as they come to see the doctor.

Lilian Andersson has been here only a few months from Sweden. She has been able to accomplish many things in our surgical and central sterilizing department. She has done some reorganizing work and training of the local aides we have doing this work. Lilian spends much of the little spare time she has studying languages, both English and Spanish.

Christine most often works the night shift at the hospital, so we see very little of her in the daytime. At night, however, she keeps things well under control so that others may get their much needed rest.

Winifred is the newest of our nurses, but she too has already been able to give much help in the nursing area. She also spends spare time studying Spanish so that she may be more fitted to serve.

Elsa Groff is the head nurse at the hospital. She spends some of her time in actual nursing care, and some of her time supervising and making out work schedules, etc. Everett, Elsa's husband, teaches English in the Spanish school system. With their family of four, Janice, Carmen, Joyce, and Rickie, they never have a dull moment.

John Forbes works in the area of Social Service. John always has many projects under way which will help community needs. Just now, he is working very closely with a plan for more psychological care in this area, and is discovering his work to be both interesting and rewarding. Because of John's knowledge of the language we often look to him to teach us Spanish, and also rely on him to help promote good relations between the project and the community because of this ability. John and his wife, Willie, are the parents of one son, Gandhi. Willie, also a nurse, helps out at the hospital when extra help is needed.

Walter Keiser spends long hard days at the new hospital. He is foreman of the construction there, so must continually be checking the work and planning ahead. Walter and Agnes, his wife, have one son and two daughters. Agnes finds keeping things going at home a full time job. Ronald is working in the States, and Norma and Elaine are both in high school here.

"Be real careful with it now, and perhaps it will last a few months more!" These are familiar words from David Bollinger. Dave works hard to keep everything in working condition, and has found that much of our present equipment is nearly worn out and needs much attention. He has discovered that we are all happiest when everything is running smoothly, so does his best to keep the vehicles and appliances in order. Dave also goes on the weekly buying trip to Ponce to bring back the supplies we need each week.

Ed Switzer spends each morning at the Academy teaching the oldest of the project students. Rodney and Karen Townsend, Janice Groff, and Byron Smith are his students. They are finding that preparing themselves for high school involves rather hard work at times. Rodney is a freshman, so is getting a taste of high school work already. In the afternoons recently, Ed has been working with his wife, June, on the ordering of equipment for the new hospital. He has also been doing some work at the community center on some afternoons and evenings. He finds this work to be very interesting. June enjoys the weekly visits she has been making to the homes in the community.

Nathan Leopold has been living in San Juan and attending school this year at the University of Puerto Rico. He returns to the Project for visits on some weekends and on his vacations.

Now you have met us here at Castañer. We will be happy to have you come to visit us and the project work.

NEWS OF THE CASTAÑER COMMUNITY

by John Forbes

The community is continuing its growth and modernization. A housing project is under construction that will add many families to the population here. The method followed in the construction is that the heads of the families that will live there pay \$300 for the house and donate three days labor a week to building houses. Thus there are always sufficient laborers, and the Social Programs Administration provides materials and a carpenter to supervise the work. The houses consist of two bedrooms and a living room. The families add on their own kitchens afterward.

The high school has a new classroom and toilets and, finally, lights. The enrollment is over 200, and about ten of last year's class of 49 are studying in universities at the moment.

The building that used to house the ceramics work has been turned over to a local carpenter, Aníbal Aquino, who is making furniture of all kinds there. He does a very capable job for reasonable prices, and his furniture is much in demand. Three men are employed at present besides Aníbal and his sons and father, and the number is expected to increase to seven.

The cooperatives are making great strides. The consumer's cooperative is about to open, in two or three months, its new store, all concrete and modern, and self-service. To prepare the members for the change, an educational program has been begun with the cooperation of the government Administration of Cooperative Development. Meetings are held in members' houses with other neighbors invited. It is hoped this type of meeting may continue indefinitely. The credit union has moved to a new location, along with Dr. Burke's office, and is now open 6 days a week. Its capital is over \$18,000. We hope to use close cooperation between the two cooperatives to end the habit of buying food on credit, which is one of the sources of economic ills in these parts. Don't be surprised if we have a third, and maybe a fourth cooperative before the year is out.

Castañer now has a newspaper, COMUNIDAD EN MARCHA, edited by Julio Lebrón, that comes out once a month. Two issues have come out, and the third is in preparation. Those of you who read Spanish may receive a copy on request. The first two issues were mimeographed, but it is hoped succeeding ones will be printed.

The church buildings of the Brethren and Baptist congregations have been completed, and the Penecostal group has every intention of building when they find a lot. All three congregations have strong plans and present activities to work in extension of the Gospel in the community and outlying areas.

The community center is very active under the direction of Demetrio Pesante. Lights have been installed in the ball park, and people enjoy many night games as well as weekend games. The present goal is to construct a grandstand and a fence.

The coffee farmers are having a course under the direction of Wilfredo Iglesias of the Social Programs Administration. The aim of the course is to increase production to the point where people can make a good living off their 10 acre plots.

The Community Committee, presided by José Francisco, held its annual assembly and traced its plans to help the progress of Castañer through another year. In all these things, the people of Castañer have shown much interest and support. With their help, and God's, the progress of Castañer, physical and spiritual, will continue as strong as ever.

NEW HOSPITAL NEWS

Construction

by Walter Keiser

The new hospital has taken shape and most of the fixed equipment is in place. The beautiful green and white building blends into the beautiful Castañer valley in a way that contributes greatly to the progress and welfare of a great community in the heart of Puerto Rico.

Many of the floors will be covered with vinyl and some areas will have acoustic ceilings. A modern inter-communication and telephone system has been installed. The grading and landscaping of surrounding areas will be done in April.

It has been my pleasure to help in the construction of this wonderful building that will serve the Castañer area for many years.

Hospital Campaign

by Sharon Neher

The campaign for funds for the new hospital has now gone over the top with a total of \$206,927.72 to date. Some contributions are still arriving.

Over \$28,600 of this can be attributed to a letter campaign. 20,000 letters were sent out to individuals and businesses all over the island. The response was very good as we received an average of over \$1.00 per letter sent. The money which we receive over the set goal of \$180,000 will be used to meet unforeseen expenses with the remainder used to help the new hospital in its first year of operation.

Many thanks go to all those who have helped make the campaign a success.

Dedication

by Ralph Townsend

The new Castañer Hospital is to be dedicated on May 22, beginning at 1:30 P.M. Governor Luis Muñoz Marin and Dr. Andrew W. Cordier, Executive Assistant, Secretary General of the United Nations, have accepted invitations to speak. Dr. Cordier was chairman of the Brethren Service Commission when the Brethren Service Project was begun.

We cordially invite all of you to be with us for this occasion. We really expect many of you to come and spend some time here. Will you therefore let us know what your plans are and your needs for housing and transportation as soon as possible.

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Give plenty of what is given to you,
Listen to pity's call;
Don't think the little you give is great,
And the much you get is small.

PROJECT NEWS

BY Esther Petersime

Project activities and news have been many and varied since the last edition of the Newsletter. One can't begin to mention all of the activities that have taken place. Therefore, I shall try to mention some of the items of main interest as they came about.

Last summer, the hospital had the help of a third-year medical student from Washington University in St. Louis. While he was busy being helpful in the hospital and clinic, his wife did typing and other miscellaneous tasks that needed to be done. Joe and Joella Utley were definitely a big help to our project.

Many individuals and groups have visited our project, including Sunday School classes, students from universities, and work camp groups.

In August, all of the continentals of the project enjoyed themselves immensely in spending a day on the beach east of Arecibo. The ideal spot for Unit Holidays has at last been found. A natural quiet swimming pool for the smaller ones, another pool with lots of surf, rocks to climb, plenty of shells to gather, and activities for all ages in this beautiful secluded spot.

Toward the end of August, Arlene Coy left to return to the States. Arlene came to Castañer in 1957 and spent her two years teaching the continental children "in the little gray schoolhouse".

Doctors Tom and Francoise Hall and Eric took a trip to the States to attend the wedding of Tom's sister. Most recently, Dr. Lee Smith went to Philadelphia for a medical convention. The project members do continue to help keep the airlines in business.

In the fall, the project was host to the island project playday. Most all of the church-related projects on the island were represented. The church was used for the playday and served the purpose very well. The educational wing with its large kitchen and social room converted from classrooms made ideal facilities for the potluck dinner. There was plenty of space for volleyball and other activities outside. Nearby was the new hospital and tours were held during the day. We weren't the only ones responsible for the successful day -- the other projects with their skits and good food helped everyone to enjoy himself.

Thanksgiving was very similar to that in the States. The project got together for dinner and had a grand gathering. No one was delayed in getting there by the snow, however.

Shortly before Christmas, Nurse Bernice Stoner left us. She had kept herself busy in the hospital and O.P.D. Her parents visited her here only a few weeks previous to her leaving.

The annual Christmas party for the Puerto Rican workers and their families was held in the community center. There was lots of talent shown, and the piñata again proved very exciting for the younger ones.

Tefel Alan Hall has come to take away some of the quietness in the household of Tom, Francoise, and Eric Hall. "Tefelito" arrived February 13, 1960, and has his own way of letting people know when he is hungry or wants attention.

All along we have each had new and interesting things happen to us in our work and activities. We here hope that life for each of you continues to be as interesting.

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Listen to pity's call;
Don't think the little you give is great,
And the much you get is small.

DEPUTATION VISIT

A deputation team consisting of: Dr. W. Harold Row, Executive Secretary of the Brethren Service Commission; Dr. Norman J. Baugher, General Secretary of the General Brotherhood Board; Rev. Galen Ogden, Executive Secretary of the Home Missions Commission; and Rev. Myrl Weyant, Representative from the District of Florida, Georgia, and Puerto Rico, Church of the Brethren, were in Puerto Rico from February 8 to 14. These men were sent to study church extension and other church and project matters.

The deputation had numerous meetings with church, community, and island leaders. The project members also enjoyed several interesting meetings with the deputation team.

At the end of their visit, the deputation presented a summary of their recommendations, which the church and project will attempt to carry out.

CASTAÑER CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

In February, the local Church of the Brethren celebrated its 12th anniversary. Rev. Clodomiro Crespo, minister of the Baptist Church, gave the main talk. The service was followed by refreshments served by the young people of the church.

The Women's Work had a bazaar where baked goods and other foods, clothes, and fancy work were sold.

A number of people have been baptized this year.

New Spanish hymnals were purchased and these were dedicated at the annual New Years Eve service at the church.

The kitchen at the church now really looks like a kitchen with the recent additions of a new sink, stove, refrigerator, and dishes.

The World Day of Prayer service was held this year at the Baptist Church with all the protestant churches of the community participating.

MEMORIAM

It is with deep regret that we inform you of the passing of a beloved member of our family, Sam Cat, who left us on March 22, 1960, to join other friends in the heaven of Cats-up. The cause of his death is not definitely known; however, we are told that he was killed by a neighboring dog.

As many of you know, he was a firm believer in pacifism and it may have been in his witnessing that he lost his life.

Our thoughts go with him as he obtains eternal life in Cats-up.

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If white is good -
And black is bad,
Then all my friends
Are gray or plaid!

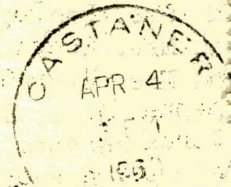
VISITORS TO THE PROJECT

Mr. and Mrs. H.F. Hobein, Dayton, Ohio
Dr. and Mrs. Conrad DeBold, Conrad and Celeste, Dayton, Ohio
Vera Lutz, Trotwood, Ohio
Joan Macy, Vandalia, Ohio
Mr. and Mrs. William Bosse, Waukesha, Wisconsin
Mr. Bob Bosse, Old Hickory, Tennessee
Miss Edna Neher, McPherson College, McPherson, Kansas
Mrs. Armando Cerezo, Antonia and Julia, Ponce, Puerto Rico
Mr. and Mrs. John Hostetler (Janet Royer), Aibonito, Puerto Rico
Mr. and Mrs. Tom Mathews, Mayaguez, Puerto Rico
Sr. Angel Vazquez, San Juan, Puerto Rico
Mrs. Mercedes Marchant, San Juan, Puerto Rico
Mrs. Lena Forbes, Glen Ellyn, Illinois
Ronald Keiser, North Liberty Indiana
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Puvrez, Montreal, Canada
Dr. and Mrs. Dean Clark, Boston, Massachusetts
Three girls from France
Dr. and Mrs. Franklin Cassel, Lititz, Pennsylvania
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Martin, Lititz, Pennsylvania
Mr. and Mrs. Lorenzo Mullet and family, Hormigueros, Puerto Rico
Dr. and Mrs. Paul Kindy and family, Mayaguez, Puerto Rico
Mr. and Mrs. Jack Van Ehr, Aurora, Illinois
Mr. and Mrs. Frank Jaquith and family, Guaraguao, Puerto Rico
Mr. and Mrs. Horacio Franco and family, San Juan, Puerto Rico
Dr. and Mrs. Dennis Rupel and Wesley, Humacao, Puerto Rico
Joyce Rupel, Riverside, California
Carol Mechling, Walkerton, Indiana
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Sargent, McPherson, Kansas
Dr. and Mrs. R.E. Mohler, McPherson, Kansas
Mr. and Mrs. Otto Townsend, Woodland, Michigan
Mr. J.C. Brumbaugh, Minster, Ohio
Mr. and Mrs. Leicaster Brown, Larry and Linda, Converse, Indiana
Miss Carol Ginder, El Guacio Project, San Sebastian, Puerto Rico
Mr. Gene Yeazel, El Guacio Project, San Sebastian, Puerto Rico
Mr. Forest Brown, El Guacio Project, San Sebastian, Puerto Rico
Mr. Kenton Harris, El Guacio Project, San Sebastian, Puerto Rico
Mr. and Mrs. Glen Stanford, El Guacio Project, San Sebastian, Puerto Rico
Dr. W. Harold Row, Elgin, Illinois
Dr. Norman J. Baugher, Elgin, Illinois
Rev. Galen Ogden, Elgin, Illinois
Rev. Mryl Weyant, Sebring, Florida
Dr. Hale H. Cook, Boston, Massachusetts
Mr. and Mrs. Don Dod, El Guacio Project, San Sebastian, Puerto Rico
Mr. and Mrs. Bob Pope and family, San Juan, Puerto Rico
Mr. and Mrs. Russell Latimer and daughter, San Juan, Puerto Rico
Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Gertz, Chicago, Illinois
Mrs. Jeanne Hall, Biloxi, Mississippi
Miss Florence Rose, Los Angeles, California
Mr. and Mrs. Hans Sanders and family, Aguadilla, Puerto Rico
Dr. and Mrs. George Detweiler, Waynesboro, Pennsylvania
Mrs. Orca Burritt, Puerto Nuevo, Puerto Rico
Dr. and Mrs. John Grasse and family, Aibonito, Puerto Rico
Mildred Clemmer, Aibonito, Puerto Rico
June Zimmerman, Aibonito, Puerto Rico
Prof. and Mrs. Burton Jones, Mayaguez, Puerto Rico
Mr. and Mrs. Snelling, Mayaguez, Puerto Rico

Visitors cont.

Mr. and Mrs. Orm Greene and family, Yuquiyyu, Puerto Rico
Miss Helen Williams, Iowa City, Iowa
Mrs. Foreman M. Lebold, Chicago, Illinois
Mr. Ralph Newman, Chicago, Illinois
Rev. Jesse Reber, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania
Miss Hazel Peters, Elgin, Illinois
Mr. Glen Torrence, Toledo, Ohio
Mr. Jim Rolf, Toledo, Ohio
Mr. Charles Gauld, San German, Puerto Rico
Mr. Paul Coombs, San German, Puerto Rico
Miss Ilo Steward, Santurce, Puerto Rico
Dr. and Dra. Ernest Horsely and family, Mayaguez, Puerto Rico
Dr. Samuel Cavert, New York, New York
Mr. LeRoy Robinson, Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico
Dr. Henry S. Johnson, University of Connecticut
Mrs. Josefina Pagan, San Juan, Puerto Rico

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