

CASTANER NEWSLETTER

BRETHREN SERVICE PROJECT

BRETHREN SERVICE COMMISSION

Castaner, Puerto Rico

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RUSH! ROESCH

We were all expecting a little valentine but due to conditions beyond our control our order did not arrive until George Washington's birthday. On this day we paid C.O.D. charges on a 5 pound and 9 ounce package which measured about 19 inches in length. When we unwrapped it, we found it contained a baby with brown hair and blue eyes. Oh yes, we forgot to say the catalogue name for said package -- Judith Carolyn Roesch. Since she is just what we wanted, we see no need to send her back for replacement. Order was made through the Stork Company, Inc., Birdnest, U.S.A.

Parents--Mr. and Mrs. Dale Roesch

ANOTHER NEW ADDITION

Do you remember the basket man, with all his baskets of every size and shape for every use? Or the lady who made the sponge dolls; or the girls who were always working on the cute maguey pins, buttons, and sandals for the toddlers?

Now all these things are being included in the women's industry. We have changed the name from embroidery industry to handicraft shop.

All the embroidery is still here and just as pretty as ever. Now we also have baskets -- shopping baskets, bread baskets, clothes hampers, sewing and mending baskets, and tiny nick-nack baskets. Among the maguey things are buttons, pins, belts for both men and women, and sandals for tiny feet. Dolls are made in two sizes to liven up your vanity or shelves.

If you are in need of any of these things, just send a letter our way stating your wishes.

Mary Kay Rohrer

MOVING PROGRESS

At long last the hospital proper is painted inside and ready for occupancy. We are waiting for the electricity to be hooked up. The kitchen and dining rooms are still to be painted. The foundation for the living unit is being laid.

M. B.

THIS AND THAT ABOUT THE PROJECT

Puerto Rican study classes started again this past month. There will be two meetings a month to help acquaint our newer members with local problems and conditions.

There are three Spanish classes in progress at present. The first class has Alys Haag as teacher, the second class, Caleb Frantz and the third class, Sr. Otilio Rivera.

The movie, "The African Prince", was enjoyed by the unit last Sunday evening.

M. B.

HEARTS GALORE

The members of the Castaner Brethren unit, were recently fortunate to be participants of a carefully planned, smooth running, valentine party.

Games consisted of some very stimulating brain teasers. A wholesome atmosphere of good cheer persisted throughout the party.

The party ended with cafeteria style refreshments. Such social affairs, though they occur infrequently, are big assets to the pleasure of living and working in Puerto Rico.

Paul Cheeks

VISITORS

Feb. 5 - The Walter Keiser family from San German visited here with her parents Mr. and Mrs. Delbert Buss, and other unit members.

Feb. 8 - The following Mennonite friends visited the project: Miss Marjorie Shantz and Oran Kaufman, both from La Plata; Mr. and Mrs. Howard D. Miller from Sterling, Ohio; and Mr. and Mrs. Harold Thut, Orville, Ohio.

Feb. 10 - Rev. Don Dod and family from the El Gwasio Project were here for a short time on business.

Also Harlan Gibson, a former unit member, now in Bayamon and Ilo Steward, a teacher in the Robinson School in Santruce, spent the night here.

Feb. 20 - Dr. Everett Myer and family from Adjuntas spent the day with the Ebey family.

Feb. 22 - Sr. Armando Cereza, Internal revenue agent from Ponce, visited his daughter, Yolanda, who is the first grade teacher in the Rabanos Public School. He took the opportunity to inspect the new hospital and other buildings about ready for occupancy.

Feb. 23 - Sr. Raphael Gonzales Bauza from Ponce included a tour of the new buildings in his visit with his sister-in-law, Maria Gonzales de Santiago.

PUERTO RICAN COFFEE

Coffee was introduced to the island of Puerto Rico about 225 years ago. According to historians it was brought by emigrants from Haiti.

Most of the coffee shrubs grown here are of the Arabian stock. There are also other varieties - columnaris, excelsa, robusta, erecta, etc.

Arabian coffee grown in Puerto Rico is a small shrub which attains a height of 10 to 15 feet. The leaves are dark green color and are elliptical in form. When the shrub is young it has a single trunk. When it reaches an older age the trunk bends under the weight of the crop.

The blossoming season takes place at any time from December to May and the flowering comes later in the highlands than in the lowlands. There are two or more blossomings of importance and several minor blossomings.

The coffee berries require about seven months to mature and when the berries are ripe, coffee pickers are hired to pick them. Coffee berries are measured by the "almud" or decaliter. Coffee pickers are paid on a piece work basis.

After the coffee is measured the pulp is removed by the pulping machine. The coffee beans are kept in a concrete tank in water until the next day when they are fermented. The beans are then washed and dried in the sunshine or the drier. When dry they are hulled. Then the coffee is ready to be sold.

Otilio Rivera
Head Clerk, PRRA