

Brazilian

[Continued from Page 69]

in Brazil, and she gratefully accepted an invitation to join the Americans at dinner. Happily, Ruth said, he was able to contact her parents when he returned and let them know that he had met Maritta.


During the course of the trip, Ruth covered approximately 25,000 miles and visited many more places than mentioned here. He visited Parana, once the greatest coffee state in Brazil, but which is now producing mostly soybeans since it was hit by the much publicized freeze last year. A cotton co-op in Itapaje, about 130 miles outside of Fortelaza, turned out to be one of the best he visited, Ruth said. "Not the largest, but the best. I mean that they served the people well. It was so clean you could eat off the floor... they were doing preventive maintenance on the machinery... the atmosphere was just different." The area was also supposed to be the best county in Brazil for producing bananas, but Ruth added that "it was so steep you wondered how they ever got the bananas down." It turned out that donkeys are still used to haul down the fruit.

In reflection, Ruth commented that "you think of Brazil as being a very backward country." It is true, he pointed out, that 80 percent of the people in northeastern Brazil are illiterate, but in traveling through the country he found that Brazil "has some of the most skillful people and they are so enthusiastic. They just do not have enough of them."

A very important aspect of Ruth's mission involved filing a report with Partners when he returned to the States which would include any recommendations he might have as to how the United States might help improve the Brazilian cooperative efforts. As he saw it, one of the biggest problems rests in the fact that rich farmers who "draw a salary and are well dressed and drive new cars" are really running the co-ops without the know-how to do the job. Even when they do hire someone with

management ability, they don't really trust him and interfere with his work, he said. Ruth has suggested that the universities in Brazil be contacted and then "they could reach out and locate people to come to the United States to take part in a working seminar in our cooperatives — maybe Lehigh for three weeks, then Agway for three weeks, and then Interstate and so on to other Pennsylvania co-ops." He observed that he felt bringing the Brazilians over here to learn would be more effective than sending more people to Brazil to instruct them there. He pointed out that "they send their people here to learn business administration and they are very adaptable. They are smart enough that they know what they can use and what they can't use." The language barrier makes it very difficult for us to go over and teach them there, he said, and although he would recommend a basic course in English for anyone coming over to learn, he pointed out that we have the facilities right here to demonstrate procedure. "We couldn't tell them how it would work but we could show them."

After receiving his recommendations, Partners contacted Ruth and asked if he would contact cooperative leaders for a discussion meeting to determine whether or not they would support such a program, and a preliminary meeting was scheduled for 12 cooperative leaders to meet with Dick Fletcher, director for Agriculture and Rural Development with Partners of the Americas at the Hunt Valley Inn in Cockeysville on May 7.

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4-H leaders attend meeting

Two Schuylkill County 4-H Leaders attended the Northeast Regional Leaders Forum on April 24 and 25 at the Pocono Environmental Education Center, Dingman's Ferry, Pennsylvania. The Forum is an annual event designed to provide ideas on leadership, techniques, new 4-H projects and events, and also to stimulate discussion and creative thinking about 4-H leadership.

The two day event began with a workshop on effective communication presented by Jane Said of the Schuylkill County Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse. Ms. Said explained various listening skills and their place in effective human relationships. The participants had the opportunity to practice the skills presented.

Bicentennial ideas for 4-H clubs were the next

discussed. Mrs. Harry Drum, Luzerne County 4-H Leader, explained how her 4-H club achieved the status of a "bicentennial club." Ideas from other counties bicentennial projects were shared.

To acquaint leaders with new projects, the following workshops were conducted: woodworking - given by John Zettle, Luzerne County 4-H Leader; Design with Color, Line, and Texture - given by Mrs. Edna Sanquilly and Mrs. Jan Coutts, Pike County; Photography - given by Ron Merisko, Luzerne County; and Horse Project by Renny Shoop, Veterinarian in Carbon County.

Ron Drum, Luzerne County 4-H Teen Leader, conducted a bicentennial sing-a-long as part of the recreational activities.

Attending the Leaders Forum from Schuylkill

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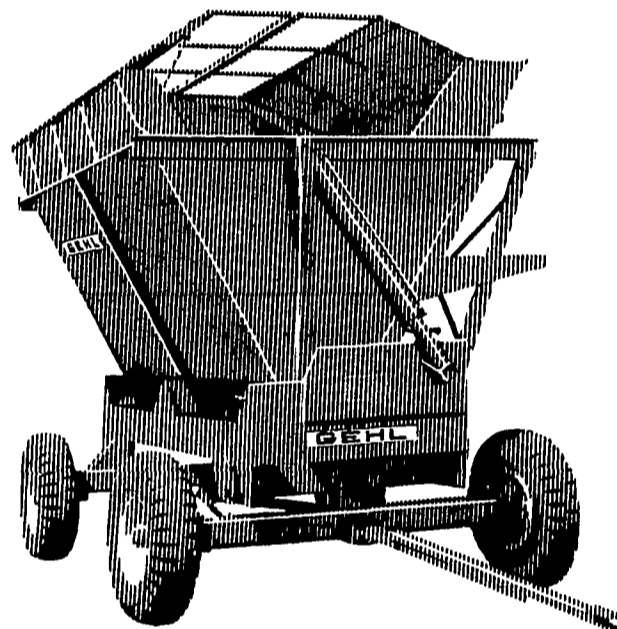
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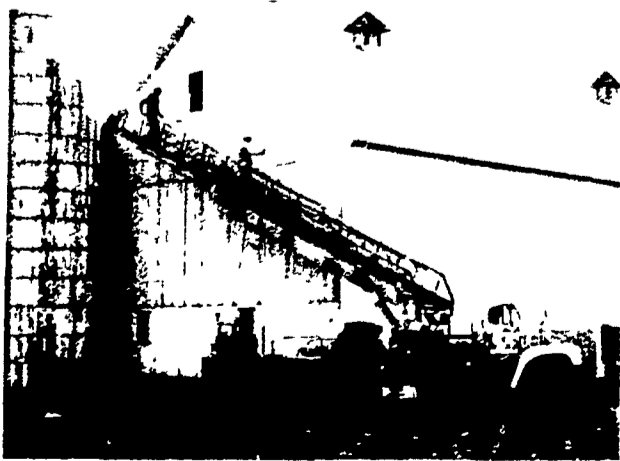
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