

The Weekly Newsletter of the
Only Normal Rotary Club in the World
Chartered June 17, 1949



SERVICE ABOVE SELF

The Normal Spoke

RI No. 3282 District No. 6490

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Link to Rotary International <http://www.rotary.org/>

Normal Rotary Website: <http://www.normalrotary.org/>

District 6490 Website: <http://rotarydistrict6490.org/> (The District Newsletter is on the left side of the main page)

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 – No Noon Meeting
Rural Urban Night at Ray & Carol Ropps
6:00 p.m.



Wednesday, June 19, 2019

Greeters: Gene Gudeman & Fred Hahn

Lottery: Elleke Mesdag & Jack Moody

****SPECIAL EDITION ON PUERTO RICO PROJECT****

Editor: Becky Goeckner



Hurricane Maria was a deadly Category 5 hurricane that devastated Dominica, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico in September 2017. It is regarded as the worst natural disaster on record to affect those islands and is also the deadliest Atlantic hurricane since Jeanne in 2004. The tenth-most intense Atlantic hurricane on record and the most intense tropical cyclone worldwide in 2017, Maria was the thirteenth named storm, eighth consecutive hurricane, fourth major hurricane, second Category 5 hurricane, and deadliest storm of the hyperactive 2017 Atlantic hurricane season. At its peak, the hurricane caused catastrophic destruction and numerous fatalities across the northeastern Caribbean, compounding recovery efforts in the areas of the Leeward Islands already struck by Hurricane Irma. Total losses from the hurricane are estimated at upwards of \$91.61 billion, mostly in Puerto Rico, ranking it as the third-costliest tropical cyclone on record. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hurricane_Maria

Quick facts: Hurricane Maria's effect on Puerto Rico

<https://www.mercycorps.org/articles/united-states/hurricane-maria-puerto-rico>

This article was originally published January 19, 2018; it was updated September 13, 2018.

(One year after the Hurricane struck.)

On the morning of Wednesday, September 20, 2017, Hurricane Maria struck Puerto Rico, devastating the island and plunging all of its 3.4 million residents into a desperate humanitarian crisis.

Puerto Rico, officially the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, is an island territory of the United States, located in the northeast Caribbean Sea. It's known for its white sand beaches, the historic city of Old San Juan, and El Yunque National Forest.

The archipelago had already been facing a recession for over a decade before Hurricanes Irma and Maria hit. Almost half of residents lived below the poverty line. The damaging effect of Hurricane Maria — the worst storm to strike the island in over 80 years — will haunt residents for many years to come. More than 200,000 Puerto Ricans, who are U.S. citizens, have left home and arrived in the continental U.S. since the storm.

The damaging effects of the hurricane — the worst storm to strike the island in over 80 years — will haunt residents for many years to come. It's estimated that nearly half a million residents will leave the island by the end 2019, as a direct result of Maria's devastation. But most Puerto Ricans are committed to staying to recover, no matter how long it takes.

A year after Hurricane Maria, thousands of Puerto Rico's residents are still recovering from the storm, even as the peak of the 2018 hurricane season begins. Although power has been restored and access to clean water has greatly improved, Puerto Ricans are still recovering from the destruction and trauma of the hurricane.

Day-long power outages are still common, especially in rural areas. Some homes still have tarps instead of roofs. Collapsed utility poles and uprooted trees are common. The continued challenges have driven hundreds of thousands of Puerto Ricans from the island entirely.

Normal Rotary's Efforts – A Timeline

- On December 12, 2017 contact was made by Becky Goeckner with a member of the El Vigia Rotary Club in Ponce, Puerto Rico asking where help from our club could best be directed.
- On December 13, 2017 information was sent to members of the 2017-2018 Normal Rotary Board plus Drake Zimmerman, Bayo Adanri, Gordon Bidner & Surinder Sethi asking how to develop a project.
- Puerto Rico determined that at this time only 13% of the population has electricity
- December 15, 2017 it was proposed that the Ponce El Vigia Rotary Club seek out a solar project as the Normal Rotary Club Board and the Normal Rotary Club Foundation are ready to move forward with providing assistance to Puerto Rico with "boots on the ground" assistance from the Rotary Club of El Vigia.
- January 17, 2018 - Rotary Club El Vigía confirmed that they would be identifying service project(s) in which we are going to work together. These projects should reach the most persons and meet their basic living needs.
- February 12, 2018 – A project is identified – the placement of a photovoltaic electrical system for the **Centro de Servicios Ferrán**. It was founded in 1968 in one of the poorest neighborhoods of Ponce, Puerto Rico. It is a non-profit, non-denominational entity relying on fundraising and grants for its operation. Its mission is to serve the development of the disadvantaged population through educational, medical, social, and spiritual support.



The center's services include:

- Reading programs for Kindergarten to third grade
- Tutorial programs for children 4-18 years old
- Health clinics for the community & home visits for the sick
- Social work and interventions for the community
- Manual arts teaching to help families develop marketable skills
- Educational talks on self-esteem, personal health, drugs, values
- Program for prevention of juvenile delinquency
- Youth support groups
- Rotary Club El Vigía in Ponce, Puerto Rico, has also been instrumental in developing a computer lab in the center to educate children in computer skills.

- June 12, 2018 - Genmoji LLC had been engaged by Rotary International, District 7000 to design and propose an energy grid coupling and renewable energy storage system. The Normal Rotary Foundation is now accepting tax-deductible donations to be utilized in providing a photovoltaic system for the Centro de Servicios Ferrán in Ponce, Puerto Rico.
- June 2018 The Rotary Club Detroit Lakes, Minnesota joins project to reach projected funding goal of \$28,000

El Vigia Rotary Club.....\$3,000
PR Rotary District7000\$5,000
Normal Rotary Club.....\$5,000
Detroit Lakes Noon Club.....\$15,000
Total \$28,000

- July 2018 - Received **final bid of \$24,492** from Genmoji for the project
- August 8, 2018 Fabiola Acevedo from Ponce, Puerto Rico speaks to the club about the devastation and the continuing needs there
- Funds in the amount of \$5,042 were wired from the Normal Rotary Foundation in September 2018.
- December 7, 2018 initial projected start date for installation not possible because of a lack of available materials, installation postponed now until January 7, 2019
- January 7, 2019 – delays continue, anticipated start date now March 2019
- April 1, 2019 - Because of continued delays in shipments and the availability of materials only 97% of the materials have arrived on site.
- Second week of April 2019 installation begins
- April 18, 2019 Project was at last finished!
- May 12, 2019 - Received notice that the completed project was paid for in full!

Materials Arrive



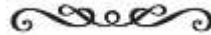


Installation Begins



**Children at the Center's Day Care doing homework.
No more intermittent power outages!**





Thought For the Day:

“The purpose of human life is to serve, and to show compassion and the will to help others.”

Albert Schweitzer



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 Barry Rassin
 Member of the Rotary Club of Nassau, Bahamas

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Cotton, Barb			
PHF – Paul Harris Fellow HH – Hall of Honor PHF* - Paul Harris Fellow/Stone PHS – Paul Harris Society	DHH - District Hall of Honor HM – Honorary Member MD – Major Donors PP – Past President	DNRY- District New Rotarian of the Year PDG – Past District Governor	BS – Bequest Society Member DRY-District Rotarian of the Year GWRY – George Wolf Rotarian of the Year