



Occasional Paper No. 61
Latino Studies Series

**Migrant Workers in Michigan:
1969 Fieldnotes**

by Refugio I. Rochín

*With Editor Notations
by Danny Layne, JSRI*

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July 2006



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Publisher's Notes: *As an addition to this Occasional Paper, updated information is periodically interjected into the text for clarification and emphasis.*

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Refugio I. Rochín is currently the Director of Research and Evaluation at the Educational Partnership Center of the University of California, Santa Cruz. His team conducts research and evaluates projects aimed at increasing the awareness and preparation of students in grades 6-12 for access to college. According to Dr. Rochín, "building college-going communities among low-income, minority students and parents is an important mission for all. Everyone gains in the process of educating others."

He was the first Director of the Smithsonian Institute's Latino Initiative in Washington, D.C. He is the former Director of the Julian Samora Research Institute and Professor of Agricultural Economics and Sociology at Michigan State University and Professor Emeritus of Agricultural Economics and Chicano Studies at the University of California, Davis. His research interests include immigration/migration issues, farmworkers, and rural populations. He received his M.A. in Communication and his Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics from MSU.

Danny Layne

Danny Layne, an award-winning photographer and writer with more than three decades of journalism experience, is JSRI's Publication and Network Administrator. He joined the JSRI team in 1995 and has been instrumental in establishing and solidifying the Institute's web site as well as JSRI's publications program. He holds a degree in photography and a BA in journalism from MSU. Layne, a former Marine Combat Correspondent, lives in Eaton Rapids with his wife and youngest daughter.

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Preface

Almost 40 years ago, from September 1967 through September 1969, I was a doctoral candidate in Agricultural Economics at Michigan State University. As a Chicano from California, I missed my family and relationships with raza. In 1969 I decided to step out of the academic groove and enlisted as a volunteer with Michigan Educational Opportunity Program, a derivative of the federally-funded programs of the Office of Educational Opportunity. My "mentor" and supervisor was Ubaldo Patino.

The "notes" which follow are from my daily log. They record the actual names and places of my job. I leave this information intact, primarily because some of the people — like Mr. Patino — deserve to be remembered for their dedication and service to migrant workers in Michigan.

I was 28 years old at the time. I had no specific vision or plans to become an "expert" on farmworkers. But this "little" experience shaped my destiny. I never discarded these notes. They traveled with me all over the world (literally) and to the University of California, Davis where I began my academic career. And they came with me to my alma mater, MSU. The fact of the matter is that I was cleaning my files at the Julian Samora Research Institute when my student assistant, Matthew Martinez, put these notes aside. He left them for me to see.

What luck! Had I merely discarded all in my files, these notes of history would have joined the piles of the forgotten past. As good fortune would have it, Danny Layne also joined our staff at JSRI. His presence and knowledge of the area introduced an important component for this paper. Danny not only knew the vicinity of the labor camps, he knew the history of the area and some of the local population in the area. In short order, our conversations led to the idea of a co-authored production, specifically, my notes from 1969 with Danny's updates and insights of changes in places and time.

I dedicate these notes to my mentor, Ubaldo Patino, a fine man who served countless farmworkers. I also take pride in recognizing Julian Samora, who taught me to value the legacies of our people — la raza. I honor my father, Refugio Rochín, who was a farmworker from Sinaloa, Mexico, between 1924-1928 and always taught me — by his example — that farmworkers have the pride, intelligence, and determination needed to make a better life for their children.

Refugio I. Rochín

1969

A Look at Events that Influenced Our World That Year

- Sweden (First Western country) recognizes North Vietnam
- Beatles release “Yellow Submarine” album
- US-North Vietnamese peace talks begin in Paris
- The Palestine National Congress appoints Yasser Arafat head of Palestine Liberation Organization
- U.S. population reaches 200 million
- World’s largest airplane, Boeing 747, makes its first commercial flight
- New York Yankees’ Mickey Mantle retires
- James Earl Ray pleads guilty in murder of Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Milwaukee Bucks sign Lew Alcindor (later to become Kareem Abdul-Jabbar) to basketball contract
- Expansion Pro Baseball teams Royals, Expos, Padres, and Pilots each win their first games
- Sirhan Sirhan sentenced to death for killing Bobby Kennedy the previous year
- Monty Python comedy troupe forms
- Abortion and contraception legalized in Canada
- Last Chevrolet Corsair built
- Walt Disney World construction begins
- Last episode of Star Trek airs on NBC
- “Hee Haw,” with Roy Clark and Buck Owens, premieres on CBS TV
- Police raid Stonewall Gay Bar in Greenwich Village, New York; up to 1,000 patrons riot against police for three days; considered to be the start of the active Gay Rights Movement
- U.S. troop withdrawal begins in Vietnam
- Neil Armstrong steps on Moon
- Muhammad Ali is convicted for refusing induction in U.S. Army on appeal
- First performance of Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young
- Manson family commits Tate-LaBianca murders
- Woodstock Music & Art Fair opens in New York State at Max Yasgur’s Dairy Farm
- Tiny Tim and Miss Vicky get engaged
- San Francisco Giant Willie Mays becomes second MLB player to hit home run #600 (Babe Ruth was the other)
- Concorde 001 test flight breaks sound barrier
- Vietnam Moratorium Day; millions nationwide protest the war
- Paul McCartney denies rumors of his death
- Supreme Court orders end to all school desegregation “at once”
- Sesame Street” premieres on PBS TV
- U.S. Army announces investigation of Lt. William Calley for alleged massacre of civilians at Vietnamese hamlet of My Lai
- Wendy’s Hamburgers opens
- Isolation of single gene announced by scientists at Harvard
- KC outfielder Lou Piniella is voted AL Rookie of Year
- Lottery for Selective Service draftees bill signed by President Nixon and, soon afterwards, U.S. government holds its first draft lottery since WW II
- Jackson Five made their first appearance on “Ed Sullivan Show”
- USAF closes Project Blue Book, concluding there is no evidence of extraterrestrial spaceships despite thousands of recorded UFO sightings
- Curt Flood sues Major League Baseball and challenges the reserve clause; free agency, as we know it, was created because of Flood’s efforts.

Migrant Workers in Michigan: 1969 Fieldnotes

6/27 Went to camp for first time with Mr. Ubaldo Patino and co-worker Suzie Holtz. The Heifetz Camps sit a half-mile off highway M-99 and 50, south of Eaton Rapids. The turn-off point is the Red Cedar Cafe.

Ownership of the Red Cedar Cafe has, since Rochín first visited there in 1969, changed several times. It is now known as the “Robin’s Nest,” and remains a favorite eatery among many area residents. The restaurant turning point is the only visible reminder of the Heifetz Camps. There is currently only one state-licensed, migrant housing camp in Eaton County, where the Heifetz Camps were located.

The camp has 15, 20’x15” (or so) cabanas situated in a circular fashion. Each cabana has lighting with refrigerator, gas stove with two burners, and beds. The mattresses are all well-used and apparently dirty. None of the houses were well-cleaned before occupancy. Grease was on most panelings behind the stoves. A kitchen table and two benches provide the rest of the furnishings.

The camp grounds have some grass. There are clotheslines for family use and the water facilities are nearby. There are hoses, which serve as fire extinguishers, on both ends of camp. There is plenty of yard for recreation, which we will attempt to introduce.

Since 1978, Michigan has required the annual licensing and inspection of sites occupied by or housing migrant workers engaged in agricultural activities and food processing. The primary areas that are emphasized in this list of requirements include safe and adequate water supplies, structurally sound and equipped camp and shelter sites, fire safety, bathing and laundering facilities, and proper waste disposal. The State of Michigan has also provided grants in recent years to farmowners so they can construct and upgrade migrant housing.

After (the) informal introductions, we drove into Charlotte, 10 miles west of Eaton Rapids on M-50 to get some food stamps for the families in the camp.

Those going with us were the following:

1. Ramona Sanchez, with three dependents
2. Flora Martinez, with four dependents
3. Reyna Zeferino, with four dependents
4. Juan Guerrero, with 10 dependents
5. Arturo Aguilar, with six dependents
6. Ramon Guerrero, with six dependents
7. Antonio Aguilar, with four dependents
8. Jesus Gonzalez, with three dependents
9. Luis Torres, with six dependents

We were attended to by Mrs. Kade. She was very cooperative and took every family we presented with little questioning regarding last work and sources of income. She accepted the number of dependents without asking for birth certificates. Susie and I invited her to visit the camp with us and she was very willing to accompany us later.

Upon returning to camp we met a new arrival, Rafael Mendoza, with (his) wife and son. Since the banks were closed, we promised to take them in on Monday to purchase food stamps.

We should note that — out of the group we took for food stamps — only three could speak passable English. Two people had to sign with an “X.”

We will try to teach them to spell their names.

6/29 Suzie and I drove to the camp Sunday noon to see if there were any more arrivals to take for food stamps; we soon found out there were none, except Mr. Mendoza.

The crew leader, organizer, and instructor, Frank Gonzalez, was at the camp with his wife and three or four children. Not knowing exactly who he was, I asked if he was Mr. Gonzalez and quickly explained that we were working with Mr. Patino. I’ll have to admit that our first encounter was uncertain for both of us. Mr. Gonzalez immediately stated that he knew our function and told us that we would have to be out of the camp by 8:00 every night.

Next, he asked if I was with Ruben Alfaro, a local unionizer. I assured him that I did not know the man and had no intentions of unionizing the workers. Mr. Gonzalez eventually calmed down and we sat around talking about agriculture with the workers there.

One very interesting thing discussed was “mechanization.” Gonzalez felt that in a year or so, cucumbers (pickles) would be nearly 100% mechanized. Today, about one family (four people) can handle 10 acres of cucumbers at prime picking-time; machines could replace 250 pickers. Heifetz has something like 2,000 acres to pick and only needs farmworkers for 600 acres. The advent of mechanization in cucumbers is really something which promises to leave only a few jobs for those that can handle the machinery and their maintenance.

Training will be needed.

While Michigan cucumber production keeps the state ranked fourth nationally (state crop production values are estimated to be more than \$2.1 billion annually), the Eaton Rapids area has witnessed a tremendous downturn since 1969. The local “pickle factory” closed its doors in the early 1990’s — displacing about 200 workers — and a nearby turn-of-the-century warehouse is now used to store cucumbers harvested by area farmers.

6/30 I drove out alone to the camp to take Mr. Mendoza and his wife to get food stamps in Charlotte. I took a “frisbee” — or flying saucer — and left the men playing with the thing (Frank Gonzalez mentioned that he would buy a swing set for the children if we could find someone to install a heavy-duty one). The people want recreation. Their only main source of fun is driving around Eaton Rapids.

Eaton Rapids, the “Island City,” is a small, “bedroom” community situated about 15 miles southwest of Lansing — the state capital. The estimated population of Eaton Rapids in 1969 was about 4,500. Today — according to the 2000 Census — the city has a total population of about 5,330. Within a 10-mile radius of the city, however, there are an estimated 15,000 more people living there.

Michigan farmland has been sacrificed at a rapid pace to accommodate swelling suburban populations. With this trend, there are fewer family farms and even fewer migrant workers now than in 1969. State figures show nearly a 30% decline in family-owned farms from 1990 to 2000.

While state officials estimated nearly 47,000 migrant farmworkers in 1970, that number now ranges from 40,000 to 150,000 — depending on the state agency providing the data. However, Michigan has embarked upon its first migrant and seasonal farmworker “enumeration,” or census, project. The Migrant Services Division, part of Michigan’s Family Independence Agency, expects initial results by 2007 with similar enumerations occurring annual or semi-annually from that point.

Again, we were met in Charlotte by Mrs. Kade, who continued to treat us very well. The Mendozas got their stamps and I took them back camp.

Charlotte is the County Seat of Eaton County. It is there that the county-level administrative offices of the state’s social services programs are located.

In my discussion with the Mendozas, I found out that they joined the migrant stream three years ago. They learned of the pickle harvesting from a friend, who previously worked in Michigan fields. The situation in “the valley” of Texas seemed to force them to Michigan. A hurricane of a couple years back — Beulah — left them and others worse-off than ever.

Hurricane Beulah was one of the seven most severe hurricanes to affect the Texas middle coast during this century. Nearly 100 tornadoes were spurred by the 1967 hurricane with most of the storm damage resulting from the floods caused by the storm’s extremely heavy rains. Rainfall totaled 10-20 inches over a widespread area of southern Texas and — in some areas — amounts reached nearly 30 inches.

In a way, the Mendozas looked forward to working in Michigan. They like the countryside and find the people who visit the camps to provide social services very friendly and helpful. Mrs. Mendoza said that there was no social welfare service of this kind in her part of Texas. Both were a bit apprehensive about the weather, but didn’t show any reluctance to express a willingness to find work here and settle. They will wait, though, at least a couple years until their son graduates from high school. Their aspirations for their children’s education is very great.

7/1 Suzie and I drove directly to the Eaton Rapids Community Hospital to inform them of our work, the presence of migrants in the area, and to ask them of their services. We met with Mrs. Steven who was very attentive and interested in our work. She is the Director of the business office and in charge of the paperwork we would have to deal with for emergency cases. She worked in the hospital the previous year and handled some medical cases of migrants. She made it clear that the hospital handled “emergency” cases, not stomach-aches, headaches, minor aches, and pains.

She said that the year before many of the migrant workers came into the hospital with their minor problems when they should have gone to the medical clinic. All in all, the hospital is primarily ready to handle emergency cases. Suzie and I left our names and telephone numbers, and Mr. Patino's as well, with Mrs. Stevens so she could contact us if needed.

The Eaton Rapids Hospital, now known as the Eaton Rapids Medical Center, currently offers its patients complete laboratory, rehabilitation, and surgical facilities as well as "Urgent Care" or "Express Care" service to handle non-emergency, after-hours cases.

We met with Mrs. Fuller of the medical clinic and found her as receptive as Mrs. Stevens. The clinic is across the street from the hospital and has five doctors, each of whom shares the work in the hospital. We left the same type information with Mrs. Fuller as we did in the hospital.

Both the hospital and clinic require a form to be filled out for any treatment extended to a migrant. The forms are in the Social Services office in Charlotte and are a must for settling the problem of who pays. Last year, Frank Gonzalez, the contractor from Heifetz, was left with some bills because the forms were not filled out and signed by the migrant. Suzie and I told Steven and Fuller that we would handle the forms.

After these visits we went back to the camp.

Nearly all migrants were hoeing weeds in the field except for the Guerreros. Mrs. Gonzalez was also in the camp registering children, ages 1-13, for a summer school program to be held at the Union Street School under the guidance of Mrs. Dickinson. The program will bus children to school, feed them a light meal and provide a late snack, and give some schooling. Mrs. Gonzalez is visiting migrant camps in the vicinity including some run by her husband. She is, by the way, a Mexican from Guanajuato, Mexico, attractive, and polished.

Everything was fine in the camp as far as health went. We searched for the camp license, but couldn't find it any place. This leads us to suspect the camp isn't licensed — we'll have to find this out later.

Suzie and I left a horseshoe game, primarily for entertainment, in camp for the males. We drove into Eaton Rapids and visited with the city clerk, Mr. Rule. He directed us to the Chamber of Commerce where we received a list of service organizations and members of the commerce. The Chamber is only open on Tuesday and Thursday from 9-noon. The Chamber President is a dentist — Dr. Zeller. His office is conveniently located next to the Chamber.

The Eaton Rapids Chamber of Commerce now has more than 50 local businesses, individuals, and organizations listed among its members. The Chamber's stated goals include: providing leadership in local business development; enhancing relationships with statewide organizations and the encouragement of strong partnerships between schools and businesses, promoting cooperation between organizations supporting community events; and establishing a citywide Volunteer Network (Ambassador's Club). Its mission is to "promote and advance the general welfare and prosperity of the Eaton Rapids area" so that its "citizens and... business, civic, cultural, educational, and farming community shall prosper." While the Chamber is more organized and structured than it was in 1969, it still only maintains office hours part-time.

Back to Lansing.

7/2 Suzie Holtz and I met with Mr. Patino in Cristo Rey Community Center. At noon we drove out to a small camp just north of Potterville on Davis Highway, just off of M-100. The camp is owned by Mr. Macleod who lives just up the dirt road. There are five houses, but only two are occupied. There is the Salas family with eight people living in the house. Next door lives Domingo Salas' daughter and her husband, with another three or four inside.

The camp is licensed, apparently clean, and fairly-well furnished. But it's difficult at this time to make any judgements. Mr. Salas and his son-in-law were working in the fields, so we spoke with the ladies. We arranged to pick them up on Monday, July 7, to purchase food stamps in Charlotte.

This evening we met with several doctors and nurses of the Lansing community in Dr. Hewitts' home. The meeting was the first of a project to engage doctors in servicing migrants in their camps. Basically the set-up is still informal and runs as follows: the social workers — including me — will have two major functions to perform.

One is to find out the health records of families in the camps. We will make little index cards recording sicknesses, injections, operations, visits to the doctor, complaints, etc. We will, secondly, relay this information to doctors, who will team up with the social workers and nurses and visit the camps when able. At present, it appears that the doctors have not committed themselves whole-heartedly, and it will take some effort on our part to recruit them into visiting the camps.

The few nurses that attended the meetings appeared very enthusiastic. I think that as a first step, we will try to introduce the nurses to the camps, take them around so that their expert eyes can sense what's wrong. Next we will influence them to encourage the doctors' participation.

In the future, it would be highly advisable to engage as many people of the medical profession to make camp visits. To paraphrase Mr. Patino — "it's not so much that the people need actual medical attention, but they need some attention." The people are greatly honored and humbled by the appearance of doctors and just their presence cures the mental ailments of many migrants. These migrants need to feel welcome in the community and a good place to start is with the well respected medical profession.

7/5 This Saturday was sure a wonderful experience. I went to the camp to visit and to primarily teach the men how to play horseshoes. I also took with me some clothing that neighbors had given me. I found that a good tactic is to tell the men that there are some things in the car for the ladies and themselves — to go see if they could use any of the clothing. The people — about 10 of them — went to the car and, without quarreling, went through the clothing and divided it all up. This used clothing can at least serve as work clothes. But I noticed that the women have few dresses. A recommended project for large camps would be sewing lessons on simple tent-type dresses. I'm sure the ladies would participate and benefit from the dresses made.

The men threw horseshoes for a few hours and loved the game. One guy even asked me to pick him up another game for his kids. During the game, I spoke mostly with Luis Torres and a couple new arrivals — Mr. Reyes and Mr. Tafolla.

They explained to me that people were working in the Brownsville area for \$2 a day, that work conditions were very poor, and any work was hard to come by. They would work occasionally, but they gave me the impression that since there were few jobs, it seemed fruitless to seek work in Texas. Thus, they anxiously awaited their trip to Michigan.

7/7 The Mexican-American migrant has one peculiar attitude — he acts and thinks in terms of two types — for himself; he assumes a dual personality. At times, the migrant takes on the character of being a pure American or U.S. citizen. This is legally correct because most migrants were born in the U.S.

In this U.S.-type character, he mixes conversation with English and talks about this country. This I noted, in particular, when we discussed discrimination. At other times, especially when an Anglo is present, the migrant tends to put on a pure Mexican front. The language reverts to his best Spanish with little use of "pocho" or "Spanglish," as Anglos refer to the language. He may pretend not to understand English.

But oftentimes there is imbalance and dissonance, or conflict, in the role the migrant has to take on. To solve such conflict he relies on silence. Mannerisms are shy and humble. The "outsider" — whether Anglo or Mexican — has to clarify by his actions which attitude the migrant will presume. Once the "outsiders" appearance or image is understood, then the migrant assumes his particular role and acts accordingly. This observation leads me to suspect that, in general, relations with the Spanish-speaking migrants, the "outsider" must make it clear what his function is and whether he will be part of the Mexican character or part of the Anglo character. Whichever front predominates, will influence the "outsider-migrant" relationship.

This Monday was full of events.

In the morning I took the Tafollas to Charlotte to purchase food stamps. Mr. Tafolla is 32 and his wife is 30. They met in a migrant camp in the state of Washington and now have seven children, all under 11 years of age. Both Tafollas have been migrants all their lives; they have little education, but want their children to complete at least high school.

In 1965 they started coming to Michigan at the invitation of Frank Gonzalez. This year, they purchased a 1969 Dodge pick-up and are concerned about fulfilling the payments on the truck.

At noon I drove to Lansing and picked up Suzie. We went on to Potterville to pick up Mrs. Salas and her step-daughter, Mrs. Longoria. They went with us to Charlotte to get food stamps. This extended family is very alert and the children are especially sharp.

One of the Salas daughters — Francis — is an honor student and was passed on to the seventh grade in Potterville. The other kids do pretty well, too. One notable feature is that they like to speak English and have the best vocabulary so-far encountered. Ana Longoria and her husband — both 20 with four children — would like to stay here and get a good job. This is one family with excellent potential.

After we purchased the food stamps, I noticed that one of the little Salas girls — Rosi — who went with us was limping. I found out that she stepped on a nail a week ago, but had received a tetanus shot. We immediately went to the clinic in Charlotte.

We soon learned that the only time shots could be authorized were on Thursdays. So we went across the street to the emergency service of the hospital. We were treated nicely, but asked to drive 10 miles south to Bellevue to get the tetanus shot from — get this — Dr. Frankenstein. He was very cooperative and accepted our word that he would get the social welfare to take care of the \$8 bill (something we did the next day).

The Charlotte Hospital, now called Haynes Green Beach, is about 14 miles west of Eaton Rapids. The cost of a typical office visit in the Charlotte-Eaton Rapids area is currently \$65-\$85 for new patients. The cost of a tetanus shot from a private physician is \$50; the Eaton County Health Department offers Tetanus shots to underage residents for \$10. There are still no specific provisions for the inoculation of migrant or seasonal workers, according to an Eaton Health Department spokesperson.

The Salas and Longoria families seemed pleased and especially happy about the stamps. We promised a visit the next day to do the small paper-work for the emergency treatment. We also got some information on free vaccinations from the clinic and will make an effort to have the kids immunized.

One interesting story was told to us by Ana. She related that her step-mother came from a very poor family that still lives in a hut, with a camp fire for a stove, near the Mexican border on the U.S. side. Get this, Ana said that these relatives were so poor that even their father sent money to help. This is a remarkable case of charity coming from people who themselves live on as little as \$2,800 per year. If everyone expressed such willingness to contribute to the feeding and care of others, just think of how much better-off we would all be. But, such is life and rare is the moment when the spirit of thanksgiving hits us with such generosity as witnessed among the poor themselves.

Virtually all of a record \$16.6 billion dollars sent back to Mexico in 2004 was from workers within the U.S. This is a 24% increase over the previous year, according to the Bank of Mexico. Remittances today are considered the second largest (money-generating) industry in Mexico, surpassing tourism but lagging behind petroleum. About 20% of Mexicans report receiving money this way.

7/8 I am more and more convinced that the cause of poverty amongst Mexican-American migrants is basically a lack of opportunity from the time of birth. Theirs is not a problem of “culture boundaries.” Nor is the problem essentially or fundamentally one of poor health.

There are too many cases that prove that Mexican-American migrants are not “culturally bound.” Take, for example, the Reyna family.

As Domingo Reyna tells it, his father died leaving five little ones in the care of Domingo’s mother. Domingo and his sister, Guadalupe Tafolla, — being the oldest — worked with their mother in fields since there were no other jobs available to raise the other children. Domingo and his sister proudly show the pictures of a brother in the Navy with a high school education, a sister who completed college and now teaches, and a younger brother who is in high school and was recently voted most popular student among his peers. Theirs is just one case, but there are others.

If just a little more opportunity — in the way of work with good pay — had been available, I’m sure Domingo Reyna and his sister would not be working the fields.

As it is, they have assumed a responsibility to care, in any way possible, for the others of the family and feel honored by the performance of their family.

Suzie and I spent the morning talking with this wonderful family of the Tafollas and Domingo. We learned that Mr. Tafolla is very concerned about making payments of a new Dodge pick-up. The reason they bought a new truck was for the warranty that came with the truck. This concern has made Mr. Tafolla consider staying in Michigan. He is interested in steady employment that pays well. However, he gives the impression of feeling that there is no other job for him.

His biggest fright seems to be his illiteracy. He can barely write his name. But, he's been all over the states and wouldn't be afraid to try a winter in Michigan if the opportunity is perceived by him to be readily available.

In 1999, 85% of non-Hispanic adults — but less than 57% of Hispanic adults — graduated from high school, according to the National Institute for Literacy.

In 2000, median earnings of workers age 25 with:

- *master's degree were \$55,300;*
- *bachelor's degree were \$46,300;*
- *associate degree were \$35,400;*
- *some college, no degree were \$32,400;*
- *high school diploma were \$28,800; and*
- *some high school, but no diploma were \$21,400.*

The 1992 National Adult Literacy Survey reported that, with the exception of persons without a high school diploma or GED, annual earnings rose continuously across the literacy levels. The mean annual earnings of the employed population with 9-12 years of education were \$12,420 (at prose literacy Level 1) and \$8,580 (at Level 4).

For migrant farmworkers, however, things still look dismal. When combined with low educational attainment and limited employment opportunities, the average Agricultural worker's earnings decreased between 1989 and 1998 as their hourly earnings fell (in real terms and in 1998 dollars) from \$6.89 to \$6.18. Today that rate is about \$5.94. Some are paid hourly, others earn a piece rate where a set amount is paid for each filled container.

According to the USDA's 1998 National Agricultural Statistics Survey (NASS) the piece-rate wage increased by 5.7%, but in real terms the average annual hourly piece-rate wage lost nearly 14% of its value. Half of all farmworkers still earn less than \$7,500 annually and half of all farmworker families earn less than \$10,000 annually, far below the 2002 U.S. poverty level of \$18,100 for a family of four.

I can't believe that these people are not in poor health; nearly every migrant I have talked to has mentioned passing a few days without food. In one case, Mr. Tafolla told me of begging for food amongst Blacks in the state of Washington. He said they were very generous and gave them a great boost of attention since they were working. Tafolla isn't afraid to work and will seek out jobs first before asking for alms to feed his family.

7/9 The Mexican-American migrant is very proud and humble in his actions. Some of this pride even works against him to an extent. I know that Mr. Salas would not go for food stamps without the minimal payment involved. Little could be given to him and others for free.

But, the Mexican-American migrant also seeks self-respect that needs to be recognized and honored. They make it clear that they work for their earnings. The simple and used clothing that is given to them is taken as "work clothes" — at least they say it is. And when something is received by them, the donor receives, in turn, a warm thank you and welcome.

An aspect of this respect that they deserve was indicated to us today when Suzie and I visited with Mrs. Guerrero and her daughter-in-law.

The day before, we noticed that their children didn't board the bus for the first day of summer school with the rest of the kids. The reason... the lady who registered the kids said she would tell the parents a day in advance of the bus' arrival. Well, the lady didn't carry out her advance notice and when the bus came, the Guerreros refused to send their children. Last night the registrar came out to see what was wrong and her visit provided the fulfillment of her original promise. Today, Mrs. Guerrero's kids were on the bus and in school for the day. Mrs. Guerrero explained that, without the advance warning, she had no time to clean her kids and give them an adequate meal before they left.

State and National Literacy Coalitions continue to improve the nation's adult literacy rates ("Adult Literacy Rate" is the percentage of the population over age 15 who can read and write, with understanding of a short, simple statement) through an assortment of efforts. Primary education is often supplemented by national and state-run Head Start and Migrant Head Start Programs, and by "English as a Second Language" classes. Adult education programs are often available, but barriers to attending these include time, transportation, and perceived value.

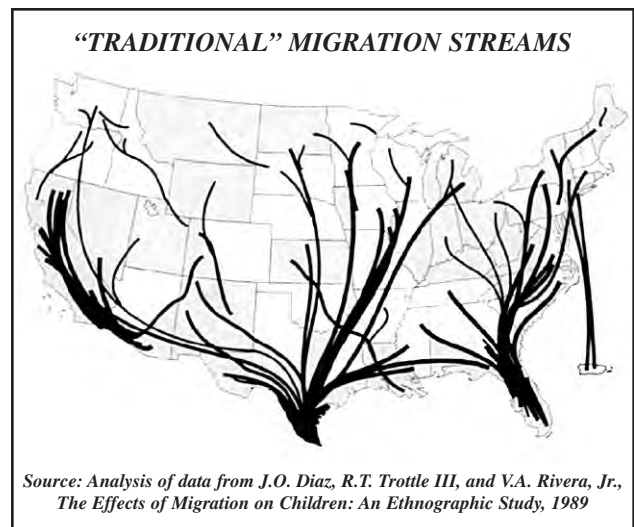


7/10 Why do they migrate? For money. It's the simplest and best reason.

Every Mexican-American migrant (we) interviewed comes from the Valley of South Texas, around the Brownsville area. There just isn't any work there; barely enough to employ the many people of the locale. The place must be a seed-bed of poverty, yet is the home of many migrants. What little work exists, but pays little. I've been quoted many times a figure of \$4 per day for as many as 10 hours of work.

And this is field work.

The reason for such low pay is an abundance of labor. The forces of supply and demand interact here with apparently little attention given to the minimum wage standards. What's worse, though, is that even with this low wage there are still unemployed. The unemployed seem to be of various kinds. There are those too old or in poor health, or in poor physical shape. There are also those who admittedly refuse to work for such low wages and search for income elsewhere. This later category provides much of the U.S./Mexican-American workforce.



The Mexican-American migrant is a person alert and willing to seek work elsewhere. He is informed of the outside job opportunities via various channels. One way is through family and friends, who have already made similar trips. Another channel of information is the crew leader from the fields of employment. Men like Frank (Pancho) Gonzalez travel to South Texas around March to tell people of the opportunities for working in the Michigan fields.

From the 1970's to the early 21st Century, the "official" Mexican population of the U.S. ballooned from about 800,000 to more than 8 million. Undocumented workers, now estimated around 6-7 million, are partially included in this latest count.

Most Mexicans regard job opportunities north of the border as a legitimate part of their geographical heritage, according to author Hank Heifetz. Attempts since the early 1990's to control popular entrance sites have driven the undocumented to much less populated — and much more dangerous — crossings points. There, someone with expert knowledge of the area is needed as a guide. These are often coyotes (or polleros), who lead groups across the terrain, ideally avoiding the mounting dangers of la migra, strategically situated military personnel, Mexican or American predators, self-appointed vigilantes, and the lack of water and humanitarian assistance. These guides quickly abandon their "clients" in unfamiliar territory if there are any problems.

Since new border policies were implemented and strongly enforced in the 1990's, more than 3,000 migrants have reportedly lost their lives along the U.S./México border. Records of the Coalición de Derechos Humanos/Alianza Indígena Sin Fronteras indicate 233 undocumented workers died trying to reach the U.S. in 2003-2004, and 282 perished in 2004-2005. So far this year, in Arizona alone, there have been 121 confirmed border deaths. That figure is based on information from Mexico's secretary of foreign relations and Arizona county medical examiners.

Gonzalez works for the Heifetz Company, a pickle firm subsidiary of Allied Products, Inc. in Wisconsin. Frank is also in a position to lend money to families wishing to work the fields. Over the last five years Frank has managed to become familiar with several families of the Brownsville area. These families come to the Eaton Rapid camp and he finds them work on small farms that sell cucumbers to Heifetz. If a family has borrowed money, then their immediate obligation is to repay Frank with their first wages.

The people tell me that Frank does not charge interest and watches their needs with a family-type interest. They know where Frank lives, have his address, and generally call (him) when in need.

There is another source of job information that is not clear to me in its operation. This information comes from a man who lives in Brownsville area named B. Garcia; there may be others with the same function for all I know. Garcia passes out cards with “guaranteed” information on jobs. He works as a liaison between the farmers, who need labor, and the labor market participants, who need work. The Reyes and Paredes families have worked in Nebraska using Garcia’s service.

The following families came in last night and were taken to buy food stamps today:

1. Carmen C. Reyes (40)
widow with seven dependents
2. Guadalupe Reyes (21)
son of Carmen – with two dependents
3. Pedro Alavarez Paredes (61)
friend of Reyes with nine dependents
4. Andres Tafolla (26) – with eight dependents

It is an understatement to say that the Mexican-American migrants are generally “extended family working groups.” They really extend their groupings. For example, Andres Tafolla — who is the head of the household — has with him his wife, three children, his wife’s father, his wife’s sister, a step-sister, and a second cousin — or his wife’s father’s niece. Perhaps more accurate terminology is “overextended family working unit.” Not only that, in the same camp is Tafolla’s brother with his family unit of eight or more.

Almost 80% of all migrant farmworkers were born in Mexico. They continue a long tradition of people from Mexico harvesting crops in the southwestern United States, including those who came here through the historic “Braceros” program in the early 1940’s to bolster the nation’s labor force as “soldiers of the fields and railroads” during World War II.

The average farmworker today is about 31 years old — since it is difficult for older workers to perform such physically-demanding labor — and about 80% of those farmworkers are men who often leave their families behind while they work or seek work in American states.

Much farm work is seasonal and workers do not earn money in inclement weather, while waiting for crops to ripen, when they are sick, or when traveling between jobs. There is only a 50.7% high school graduation rate among migrant teenagers.

Migrant workers and their families experience poorer physical health than the general population, and are less likely to seek and receive adequate healthcare. While little nationwide data exists, available information shows elevated infant mortality rates and shorter life expectancies for them than the national average. In Michigan, studies have also noted increased rates of diabetes, mental and dental health problems, and obesity. Some of these problems, JSRI researchers note, are directly attributable to dietary changes, lifestyle choices, and assimilation.

How do these people get around? Surprisingly to first and last visitors, some of these families have relatively new cars — station wagons and pick-ups. There seems to be a practical-pride in buying such autos. I say “practical” because the family needs a good car — a car they know first-hand — to travel with. They also seek the warranty with the cars they purchase. The families also get pride from such cars. The first thing a young member wants to do is buy a car. He exhibits the proud ability to be on his own with such a purchase. It is a mistake to consider such purchases for “status seeking.” Everyone knows they’re not fooling the other by purchasing a new car. As a matter of fact, conversation centers on what the car payments are and how they’ll be made. No “status seeker would discuss such problems openly.

An occasional family owns a 1-ton truck. Pedro Paredes owns a 1961 truck and the Guerros just started payments on one. The trucks are found with the large families and carry household equipment. These big trucks are also hired out to farmers for carrying cargo when the opportunity permits. The Guerros carried citrus on their last stay in Florida.

Last night, one of the Tafolla girls cut her foot and received about 20 stitches from the emergency unit of the Eaton Rapids Community Hospital. Frank Gonzalez and his wife were in the camp at the time and took the girl and her family to the hospital. I checked with the welfare office in Charlotte and found out that Mrs. Gonzalez had already been there to see about paying the doctor bills.

7/11 “Exploitation” frequently occurs among the migrants. Understandably, of course, exploitation is a matter of perspective since at least two parties are involved. But, by exploitation of the migrant, I mean the unethical hiring and use of migrants by farm owners for the purposes of profiteering.

It’s not a difficult thing to do under the circumstances. You take somebody desperately in need of money and food and you tell them “take whatever I give you or get nothing at all.” Mrs. Rafael Mendoza related the account of such exploitation in Minnesota.

There they were told they would be paid \$1.75 an hour to clear a field. At the end of the day the owner put on a burst of anger and shouted at the migrants saying they did a lousy job. He even threatened not to pay at all. After a pause for reconsideration he “generously” paid the workers \$1.50 an hour. Not only is exploitation exhibited, but deceit as well. The Mexican-American migrant, however, is basically passive. He is not one to lose his temper to outsiders. Any flare-ups occur within the extended family. They are not a rebellious lot and certainly would not be the type to make waves in a sea of “tranquility.”

This day started out uneventful, but ended up with some interesting developments.

I took some donated clothing — mostly men’s stuff — to the Eaton Rapid’s camp and invited the people to share it. A little later, Mr. Patino stopped in for a visit and we talked with some of the housewives. We learned that the men who are working have been commuting as far as 50 miles to hoe weeds. Their jobs are arranged by Frank Gonzalez. Locally there is little work since the cucumbers still have another week or so to mature. This being the case, it was not surprising to me that the Tafolla’s — both extended families — left the camp. My guess is that they went to Indiana to pick tomatoes as they had mentioned to me earlier.

Mrs. Carmen Reyes also left the camp with an elder son, but for a different reason. She was worried about her youngest kids left at home in Texas with a grown daughter. I understood from the Paredes — the Padrinos of the Reyes family — that Mrs. Reyes called and got no answer. She also didn’t receive an expected letter. So she took off and drove home to Texas to see if everything was alright. Her oldest son, Junior, said she would come back in time to pick cucumbers. I think that the food stamps we got them helped in this sudden move since they were low on cash. This decision on Mrs. Reyes’ part show a great concern for family and a willingness to leave things behind for the sake of family. Money is a secondary thing in this case.

I drove to the McCleod camp near Potterville to visit with the Salas and Longoria families — primarily to check on the Longoria baby to see about some open sores on her back and legs. The baby’s sores were full of puss and gave no signs of drying up. I volunteered to take the mother and baby to Charlotte to get medical treatment. The offer was accepted and the trip also turned out to be one for groceries. The family wanted to use their food stamps for the first time. Joining us on the trip was Maria Cervantes (Salas), the sister of Anna Longoria. Maria married five years earlier to a former Texas Mexican-American, who had settled on his own in Michigan.

The Cervantes live in Lansing near the St. Lawrence Hospital and have two children ages four and three. Two more recent children died of pneumonia.

The Cervantes have a load of problems. Mr. Cervantes has been unable to hold jobs and accumulated debts galore. Mrs. Cervantes worked for General Motors, bought a new car, and within a few hours Mr. Cervantes destroyed it. To make things worse, he was not insured (she was insured and told her husband not to drive the car, but...!). They claimed bankruptcy and started from scratch again.

Not long ago, Mr. Cervantes was found with marijuana and faces a court decision on Monday, July 14. At present, the family is on welfare. Mrs. Cervantes is young and intelligent even though she did not finish high school. She thinks her husband is nuts, but doesn’t want to leave Michigan. What a way to live. Certainly not a prime example for Mexican-American migrants to follow.

As it turned out, little Gloria Longoria had infected mosquito bites. The visit to Dr. Joseph of Charlotte, who was on Emergency Duty for the local hospital, cost \$6. This coming Monday I'll take Anna Longoria with me to the welfare office to see if they will pay the bill. Anna has another problem of a \$300 bill with St. Lawrence Hospital in Lansing from the year before that she and her husband can't pay. I'm not sure what can be done in this case.

The cost for Emergency Room care at the Eaton Rapids Medical Center is now about \$175. However, an "Urgent Care" service drops that cost considerably (to less than \$85), but access to medical care is determined by arrival time and need for care (emergency cases are handled first; Urgent Care patients are triaged and seen according to severity of their cases).

7/13 Nancy Bolt, a volunteer nurse, accompanied me and my wife to Eaton Rapids camp. It was a nice Sunday and the camp was active with talk and sports. Some of the younger kids went swimming at a public lake 10 miles south of the camp.

I joined the men in a few games of horseshoes while Nancy and my wife made a visit to each household. Their objective was to compile an index card of ailments for each person interviewed. The people were very open with their problems. Major problems appeared, such as Mr. Aguilar's hernia and his wife's diabetes. Other problems needing medical attention were poor teeth, pulled muscles, and skin rashes. It was also found that some women had taken birth control pills and wanted more.

Nancy and I made a list of priorities to follow through on: 1) find out when the Charlotte Health Department does immunizations (August 5, 6; 9-11 a.m. at the health clinic); 2) Try to get cancer smear tests — primarily cervical — that can be given at the camp; 3) Contact the family planning service in Lansing, since Charlotte has none, and 4) recruit a Doctor to visit the camp with us and service the people's needs.

All in all, the day was very rewarding. The people appeared very pleased with our visit and willing to cooperate on things that ail them.

7/14 Anna Longoria of the McCleod camp and I went to the Social Services in Charlotte to have them pay for Gloria's doctor visit. We were treated nicely by Beverly Cuthbert, who interviewed Anna.

Welfare health care will be extended to the Longorias for at least on month. All we have to do from now on is ask permission to receive treatment from the doctor or fill out medical prescriptions. While with Beverly, I got permission to take Rosa Salas to the doctor to check on her infected heel. The poor little girl has not walked well in 10 days.

This night Ubaldo Patino and I met with two members of the St. Vincent de Paul Society: LeRoy A. Gehrholz and Dorr L. Paquette.

We explained to them the nature of our work and interested them in helping us. Twelve dollars was donated to use in any way necessary for the migrant workers. There is also a used clothing store open for the people whenever in need. The two men were generous and helpful.

7/16 I teamed up once again with Suzie Hotlz and we drove to the Eaton Rapids camp. Present were the Guerrero women and 15-year-old Mrs. Reyes and her madrina, Mrs. Paredes. It's amazing how young most Mexican-American migrant women are when they marry. I think the average age for all women is 15. Many have had a child by their sixteenth birthday. An interesting case is that of the Longoria's near the Potterville camp; they have four children. Anna Longoria is barely 20 and her husband will be 20 in August.

We found out that things were running smoothly as could be in the camp. There was a new family that arrived the night before, but they were out at the time.

Nancy Bolt called and informed me that Dr. Wiegenstein of St. Lawrence Hospital agreed to visit during the coming Sunday. Nancy and I will prepare one of the cottages as a clinic. Nancy is a real go-getter and a pleasure to work with. With just one visit to the camp she has stimulated an interest in helping the migrants and has even recruited some of her nursing friends to help. Sunday will be a long remembered day in the camp.

7/18 I visited the Eaton Rapids camp in the morning and found that most men were working. Two new families arrived, but were also working and so I didn't catch their names.

After short discussion with some of the ladies, I took off for Charlotte to visit the Public Health Office. The objective was to solicit medical supplies for the doctor's visit on Sunday. I met with Dr. Brown, who is the director there, and a nurse in charge of the Eaton Rapids vicinity. The doctor said he couldn't help, even with a donation of a packet of band-aides. He kept looking at my list of things, which nurse Nancy Bolt prepared for me, and said he was sorry, but they had no such things. The only offer was for vaccination shots at the clinic two days a month with the next clinic was set for Aug. 5 and 6.

The nurse was of even less help. She is getting along in years and apparently very sedentary. "Too much paper work" keeps her tied to her desk. She noted, however, that she did visit the camp once last year, but has not made any effort to return. The way things looked, I doubt whether she'll visit the Heifetz Camp again. The whole set-up in the Charlotte Health Department is as shaggy as their 1910 building. They definitely need an overhaul of fresh blood in their mix.

7/19 On my way to the Eaton Rapids camp, I stopped at the Hospital to ask the price of a Pap test for cancer. The hospital sends their tests out and each costs \$9.

At camp I joined in a game of horseshoes. The sport has caught on so fast that all the men are now qualified experts save one – me. I'm on the losing end all the time. But, at least a lot of conversation takes place while we have a good time.

The new families were the Sepulvedas with six and the Osuna's with eight all together. Both families worked in sugar beets in Minnesota.

My intention was to have a short visit and to get back to Lansing to take my wife to a movie. It's a good thing the plans were set because I stayed in the camp until 9:30 p.m. I shared some interesting conversation with Guerrero, Gonzalez, Torres, and Sepulveda.

I found out that Mr. Guerrero has been working as an agricultural laborer since the 1940's, mostly around Texas. He still sends his mother checks now and then. Mr. Gonzalez was a true Mexican cowboy. He drove cattle, roped, branded, etc. for a few farmers near the border. He is a very pleasant and shy guy who believes in hard work. As a matter of fact, all the men present felt strongly about continuing work, but admittedly were concerned about the future and the onslaught of mechanization. If the situation arises where no farmwork is available, I'm sure they will move into other lines of work.

7/20 After a few advance notices, the people were all set to receive Dr. Wiegenstein. Nurse Nancy Bolt and a nurse friend assisted the doctor in treating the patients. We had a good turnout with nearly everyone showing up with one ailment or another. Most cases were minor, but a couple things did turn up. One boy had a bad case of bronchitis from working in the rain. Some mosquito bites were infected. A lady had high blood pressure and was given a prescription. Two ladies accepted Pap cancer tests and were given prescriptions for birth control pills.

The doctor was there for two hours and left just a little after 9 p.m. My wife and I left shortly after him. On the way home, we listened to the news of Armstrong's descent to and walk on the moon. Quite a world of contrasts — from a marvelous space achievement to a poverty stricken area.

7/21 I made a quick trip to the camp to deliver some medicine the doctor provided for the case of bronchitis. What I took was penicillin in tablet form and some cough syrup. Apparently, if not taken care of properly, bronchitis can lead to pneumonia.

7/22 I took two families with me to get food stamps. They were the Pedro Ozunas with six in all and the Juan Sepulvedas with eight. Jose Sepulveda, the oldest boy, will be a sophomore at Pan American College in Texas. Mr. Patino later said he was interested in getting him a job visiting camps instead of working the fields.

7/23 In 10 days a few families will qualify again for food stamps. But, since they worked very little and paid bills on the cars and other items, they were running short of food. Mr. Patino advised me to use the vouchers for the purchase of enough food to last the week. On this day, I took Mrs. Juan Guerrero and her son's wife, Ramon Guerrero, to purchase food at the Kroger store in Eaton Rapids.

Despite the passage of nearly 40 years, there remains only one chain grocery store (Felpausch) in Eaton Rapids. There are a couple of smaller grocers, including those at the four local gas stations, that cater to travelers or small-purchase shoppers. Few, other than the grocery store, accept Food Stamps as payment.

7/24 Today the few other families went with me to purchase emergency food. Included were Mrs. Gonzalez, Miss Ramona Sanchez, and Mr. and Mrs. Luis Torres. While at the store I filled out an application form for Luis to work with Oldsmobile. A few more men are interested in the applications, but I'll have to handle them later.

In the afternoon I took two more new families to purchase food stamps. Included were Rodolfo Garcia who has eight dependents and Manuel Serrano, who had 11.

7/25 Mrs. Mott and Mrs. Kade, both of the Charlotte social services offices, accompanied me on a visit to the Eaton Rapids camp. Both ladies have worked in welfare for around 10 years each, yet neither had ever visited a migrant camp. So the reason for taking them was primarily to show them the conditions migrants lived in. Additionally, it was my desire to develop rapport with the ladies and to let them know some of the families better.

To justify the ladies' presence, I had them state that their intent was to remind families to purchase food stamps. The trip was worthwhile. Each family we visited qualified with little effort. They have hardly worked at all and they were very short on funds. We visited nearly 10 houses and reminded five families they could return in the following week.

It's readily apparent that the integrity of the migrants should not be questioned. They exhibit extreme honesty and even simplicity. I have in mind a particular example. If they wanted to, they could easily falsify their monthly earnings in order to receive a larger bonus from the food stamps. The people at Social Services were willing to take their word for it about how much was actually earned. In every case, the families honestly reported how much they earned. I'm sure of this. I've developed enough confidence in them to get a straightforward answer. All families have, without hesitation, showed me their receipts. And believe me, they earned very little for a week's work.

7/28 Ubaldo Patino took me on his rounds to the nearby Ingham camps. First we stopped by the Oldsmobile employment office to turn in some applications. Four of the applications came from my camp. We set an appointment for personal interviews on the following Monday.

Today there are only four licensed migrant housing sites in Ingham County; Eaton County only has one. Ingham County camps can hold a capacity of 133 residents while Eaton's sole registered and licensed camp can accommodate 25.

Next we drove west to visit the girls of the UMOI Program who are setting up a Day Care Center in an abandoned church. We found them on a break after they'd cleaned the once-dirty hallway. The church facility includes a large room, where services used to be held, and a basement. Also provided was clothing. They had enough things to clothe a couple hundred people. Toys were all over the place, too. These things were left over from a daycare-type program.

UMOI stands for United Migrant Opportunity Program. The acronym was commonly used during President Lyndon Johnson's "War on Poverty" during the 1960's.

A few small camps are located near to the church. Patino and I drove over to talk with Ramon Fuentes and his gang. Several families worked with Ramon and most are from Weslaco, Texas. Ramon in turn works under contract with Frank Gonzalez and has done so for a few years now. One of the girls is taking some of the family heads (of the household) to get food stamps.

We visited another camp. The people are housed in a large metal shed or barn where the room is divided into six or eight living units. One thing I noticed is that it is very noisy. You can hear everything the guy in the next unit is doing. The rooms were partitioned by half-inch plywood sheets.

Two other girls were visiting this second camp and had already gotten all the families food stamps. We drove across Ingham County to see two more camps in the Stockbridge area. Norberta Arguellas moved into this area a week ago and would help people here.

8/1 Most of the people who qualified for a second round of food stamps had already gone to get a new supply. Mrs. Paredes needed a ride to Charlotte for her stamps, so I took her with me. For her families' earnings of the month before she only had to pay \$16 for \$94 worth of food stamps. Their earnings were a little better — probably the best in the camp — but even then, they didn't earn very much.

I used \$12 of the St. Vincent de Paul money to pay Mrs. Paredes for her medication and dentist bill. The medicine cost \$8 and Dr. Zeller of Eaton Rapids pulled a tooth for \$5. I think he gave her a bargain. Dr. Zeller is also the President of the Junior Chamber of Commerce in Eaton Rapids.

Dr. Larry Zeller was a longstanding community leader in Eaton Rapids. He was recognized for his community contributions throughout the years and eventually retired before moving out west. Few dentists, or doctors for that matter, now treat uninsured or underinsured patients without some personal promise of payment. A tooth extraction today costs about \$85.

I reminded the families of the job interviews in Lansing for work with Oldsmobile. A new family moved in and I'll be taking them for food stamps. Mrs. Paredes' sister is in the family. All in all, it seems that everyone in the camp is related one way or another.

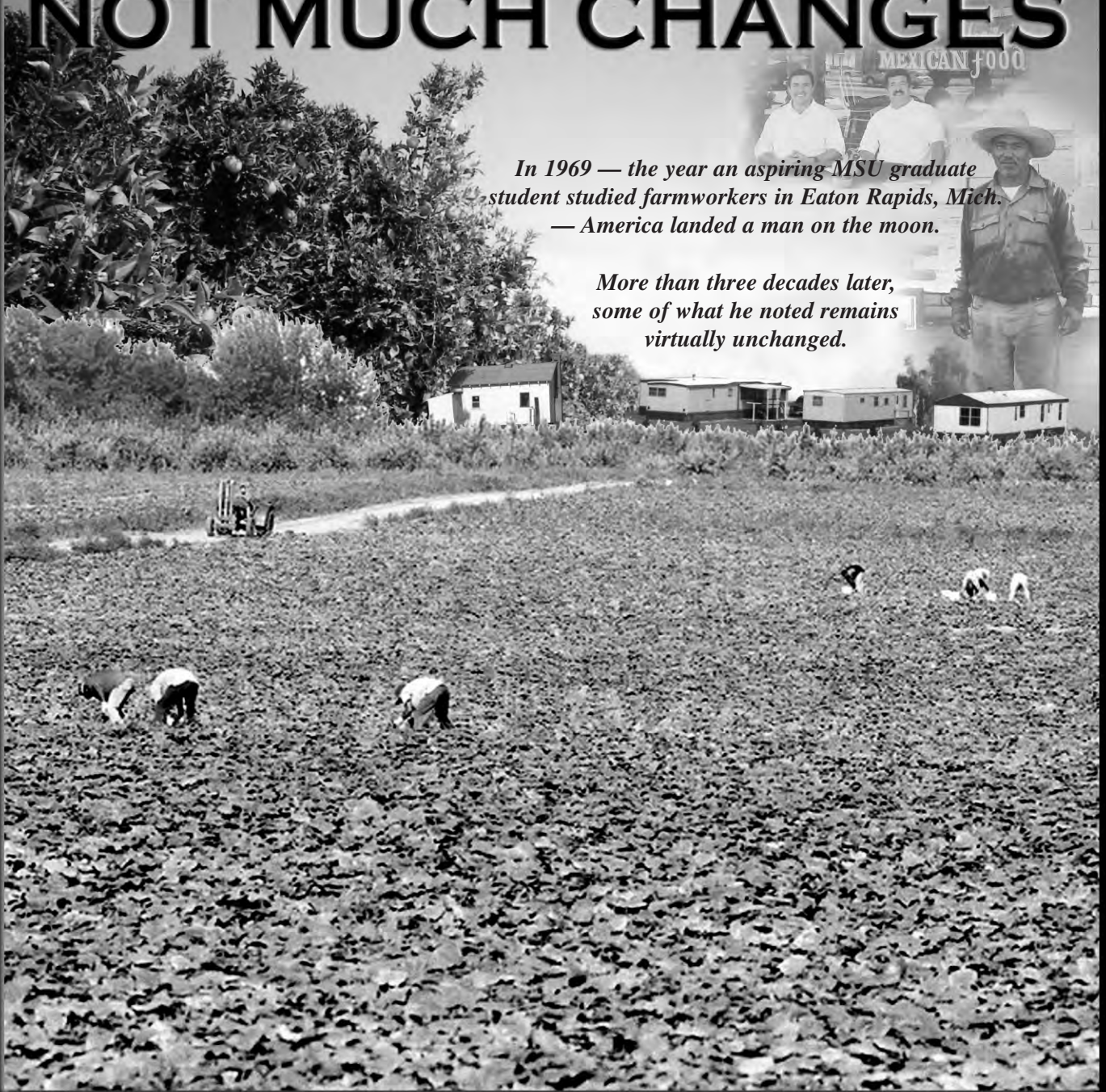
*List of Families Attended and Information
on Some Families, Summer 1969*

1. Antonio Aguilar
2. Arturo Aguilar
3. Juan Guerrero
4. Jesus Gonzalez
5. Ramon Guerrero
6. Flora Mata Martinez
7. Zeferino Reyna
8. Ramona Sanchez
9. Luis Torres
10. Rafael Mendoza
11. Guadalupe T. Tafolla (age 32)
12. Domingo Reyna (28) (bachelor)
13. Ramiro Longoria (20) and Ana (20); four children (4, 2, 1, and 5 months)
14. Espiridion Salas and Polonia
15. Carmen C. Reyes (40) — widow; Federico (20), Mike (18), Jaime (16), Mary (15), Santos (13), Ricky (4), Debbie Garcia (3)
16. Pedro Alvarez Paredes (61); Celia S. Paredes (59), Maria (18), Narcisa (17), Guadalirio (16), Nico (15), Inez (14), Juan (13), Adela (12), Marylu (11)
17. Guadalupe Reyes (21) son of Carmen, Elizabeth (15), Guadalupe (6 months)
18. Andres Tafolla (26); Maria Isabel (23), Rodrigo (4 1/2), Ricardo (2 1/2), Andrea (1 and 4 months), Mario Hernandez (58) – Maria's father, Maria de Jesus Hernandez (19) Maria's sister, Carmela Rodriguez (31) – step sister, and Santos Rosalez (18) – second cousin
19. Pedro (47) and Prudencia (27) Ozuna; Pedro Jr. (17), Francis (15), Delicia (14), Dalia (9)
20. Juan Sepulveda (59); Maria (40), Jose (19), Alicia (18), Eleazar (17), Carlos (12), Juan Jr. (10), and Carmen (4)
21. Rodolfo Garcia (33); Soccoro (32), Guadalupe (13), Rodolfo (11), Jorge (9), Socorro (6), Sylvia (4), Sonia (3), and Rene Ramirez (20)
22. Manuel Serrano (36); Emelia (35), Maria Laura (17), Irma (14), Yolanda (13), Manuel Jr. (10), Ricardo (8), Elivera (6), Hector (4), Raquel (3), Elia (18mo.), and Enrique (1 month)
23. Urrano (42) and Hermila (42) Benavidez — Rio Grande, Texas; Juliana (20), Adriana (16), Juan de Dios (15), Renaldo (13), Graciela (11), Ricardo (8), Adolfo (7), Hermela (5), and Martina (3)
24. Urrano Jr. (18) and Oralia (21) — no children; Mike Sanchez and wife, Eliazar Martinez and wife — 10 children.

NOT MUCH CHANGES

In 1969 — the year an aspiring MSU graduate student studied farmworkers in Eaton Rapids, Mich. — America landed a man on the moon.

More than three decades later, some of what he noted remains virtually unchanged.



MIGRANTS STILL STRUGGLE -- *Despite the passage of time — more than three decades after graduate student Refugio I. Rochín collected fieldnotes on his experiences with farmworkers in Michigan — migrant and seasonal farmworkers across the nation continue to face the social, economical, and personal challenges long associated with the type of agricultural work. In this photo rendering, laborers toil in the fields while two types of Michigan migrant housing — trailers and a home with an outhouse — are depicted above them. In the skyline, photographs show a typical fieldworker and a pair of restaurant owners, who capitalize on the emerging business created by the presence of migrant farmworkers and their families.*

Photo rendering by Danny Layne; pictures provided to JSRI by Ken Crane and Refugio I. Rochín