

"...y la familia?"

Volume 9, Issue 6

June/July '05

Needed for
Future Issues:

"Stuff" about you
and yours...

Announcements

- New Baby
- Engagement
- Graduations
- Promotion
- New address

Upcoming
Events

- Family parties
- Reunions
- Weddings

Articles, Photos
and Fillers

- Nostalgic stories
- Photos and artwork
- Original poetry
- Vignettes on your immediate family
- Favorite family recipes
- Cute things your kids have said
- Funny stories

Doctor Quiñones!

From the time she was a young girl, Lisa Wilson knew that she wanted to be a doctor.

On May 16, 2005, that dream became a reality. One of 180 students graduating from the University of California San Francisco School of Medicine, Lisa was hooded in a ceremony held at the Nob Hill Masonic Center.

In the hooding ceremony, the hood is placed over the graduate's head and hangs over the back of the gown. It represents both the field of study and the university that conferred the degree. The kelly green velvet on the Medicine hood is symbolic of healing herbs. Lisa was hooded by her husband, Ruben Quiñones, and accompanied on stage also by her parents, Carter Wilson and Elaine Glimme.

Lisa's postgraduate training will be in Family Medicine, and she has been accepted to do her residency at Contra Costa County Health Services in Martinez, California (which was her first choice!) She will begin her training on June 20th. Until then, Lisa is presumably enjoying a well-deserved rest from her intensive studies of the past four years.

Many, many congratulations to you, Lisa, for your perseverance in pursuing a dream. May God bless you and enable you to make a difference in our world.



Dr. Lisa Quiñones

(daughter-in-law of
Randy and Norma Pettit)

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I Remember...

The Dad I Knew...by Delia Finch

This morning, as I was laying down with my head upon my pillow, I started thinking about my dad, and how I knew him in a way hardly anyone else did, except my siblings, and my mom. Many stories have been written about him, but no one really knew him the way we did at home.

Dad was hardly ever called by his real name outside our home, and most everyone else addressed him as "El Catalán". He was a true Catalonian descendant in every aspect of his life: the way he carried himself, the way he cared for others, very tall, slender, and not one curve on his back. He never slept on a bed, only a cot, no pillows of any kind, and no covers. It was his nature. That explains the no curvature of his spine. Blond hair and the most beautiful blue eyes I can remember.

To us girls, Tita, Carmen Lydia, Aurea Esther, and me, he was a very caring and wonderful dad. He spoiled us tremendously, and we were like his shadow, following him everywhere! He loved our brothers very much, too, although at times he could be very stern with them. I think that he just wanted to teach them to be tough.

He was very quiet and kept pretty much to himself. He adored Mami, and she loved him very much, too. He took care of us the best way he knew. We went through some rough times and occasionally food was scarce at our table, but somehow we were fed with whatever was available.

The annex to our house, his little *negocito* (produce shop), was his escape from his daily job at the *Plaza de Mercado* in the center of our home town of Ponce, where he owned space for selling fresh produce on a daily basis. All the produce was delivered to our house by mules, about 3:00 a.m. weekly. Tita and I would get up along with Dad to receive it, and after putting it away, we went back to bed, and Dad would get up about 4:00 a.m. again to take the fresh produce to sell at the market. Whatever he could not sell, he sold on the way home.

In those days, people did not have the money to pay, but Dad, softhearted as he was, gave the stuff to them on credit, but people took advantage of him and never paid back the debt. Dad never kept books of any kind; everything was in his head. We needed the money, too, but nobody could argue with him.

At home, Tita and I minded the shop while Dad took a nap in his rocking chair by the counter every afternoon. He was always worn out and would not even wake up to eat his meal. Our old lady neighbor who lived across the street from us ate his dinner every single day. Later, he would wake up and call, "Otilia, you forgot to feed me." Mami would argue with him about giving his food away. There was never any leftovers in our house for seconds. Many times there was nothing left for my mom.

Dad loved raising fighting cocks. He owned the best champions in the city of Ponce, and was envied by many of his opponents. He sat in our backyard to groom and care for them, getting them ready for the fights, while Tita and I watched and helped. They were beautiful healthy roosters.

One night the roosters were stolen from our yard, along with a big wash tub that Mami had, full of baby clothing and diapers soaking overnight. Mom and Dad were heartbroken because of the roosters, but also the clothes were about all our little sisters had. We were very poor in those days. Later on some man came over to tell Dad he had seen a bunch of feathers matching the color of our roosters, up by the "Caobas", the oak forest up on the hill from where we lived. We never found out who did it. Dad was furious!

Dad was a champion at domino games, too. They had no money to play for, but they bet drinks by the shot glass. He always took us with him, to give Mami a break. We sat there watching until they were finished. At the end of the game, Dad was so drunk that he could not hardly walk back to the house. He always carried me, because I was so small my legs could not keep up with his long steps. He fell down often but we never got hurt.

He was quite a guitar maker and player. He hand made two types of guitars called *el tres y el cuatro*, a bit smaller than the regular guitar and with less strings. He did an amazing job on them, and after the finished product was ready, he and his friends would test them by playing and watching the ladies dance to the beat of the music. We all had a good time.

He was never a churchgoer, but Mom was very religious, and we had to go to church with her, sometimes three times a week, depending on which events were going on. When it was time for us to leave, Dad would say to Mom, "*Traeme un pedacito del cura.*" ("Bring me a little piece of the priest.") Mami would do the sign of the cross, and say, "*Muchacho, que Dios te perdone.*" ("God forgive you.") He watched the babies while we were gone. That was Dad, all right. Never a dull moment in our lives!



The Dad I Knew, continued.

One day I acted naughty and stuck my tongue out through the crack of our living room door, and he caught me in the act. He was charging toward me like a bat out of Hell. I saw him and took off running so fast that I ended up almost all the way to *El Vigía*, but he never could catch up with me and went home. I was so afraid to come back home that I waited until dark, and Mami picked me up over the backyard fence and put me under the bed where she fed me, and then got me into bed and told me to be very quiet and close my eyes. Later, I heard him say to my mom, "I'm very worried about my little girl. It's dark out there and she is not home yet." Mami said for him not to worry, that I was safe in bed already asleep. He never punished me for what I did, and never again did I pull another stunt like that one.

We missed him tremendously after he passed away. We were too young to be without a dad, and it was hard on Mami to have to raise us alone. It was hard on all of us, especially me, because he used to rock me to sleep every night, and all of a sudden he was not there for me anymore.

I wanted to share this part of our lives with the rest of the family, as I know that many of you never had the privilege of knowing him personally. He was a very kindhearted man, and always ready to help those who were in need. He was one of a kind. I hope you all enjoyed getting to know him through this narrative.

Many stories have been written and told about him but none have ever portrayed him as he really was.



"Look what I still have!" by Norma Pettit

This pendulum clock was on the wall of our breakfast room in our house on 22nd Avenue in San Francisco all the years I was growing up. I believe my father bought it in Korea. It would chime on the hour and the half-hour. Overnight guests would complain that the chiming kept them awake at night, but we were used to it. Although it no longer works, it graces the wall of my breakfast room in my Placerville, California home.

The Way We Were

These are my nieces and nephews, some of the children of my half-brother, Oscalito. The photo is from about 1969. Sadly, I have lost track of all of them since they have moved and have not sent me their new addresses.

From left to right:

Leslie & Miguel (twins), Hector, Juan, and Oscar González Jr.



Guess Who This Child Is?

The answer is found on page 7.



At this time in our family history.....

- 110 years ago, on June 7th, Petronila Pacheco was born. She was the sister of Mamá Otilia. Their other sister, Francisca, was born on June 11, 1887.
- Auntie Anita Merritt passed away on 6/25/98 in Nebraska.
- On July 3, 1861, my great-grandparents, Manuel Alejo Rivera and Maria Apolinaria Maldonado were married.
- Auntie Adele was born on July 22, 1909 in Peñuelas, P.R.
- Papa Flor, my grandfather, died on July 22, 1941.
- My mother, Ana Maria López Maldonado, was born in Adjuntas, Puerto Rico, on July 26, 1911. She was the daughter of Juan López and Maria de los Santos Maldonado.

Meet Your Relatives...

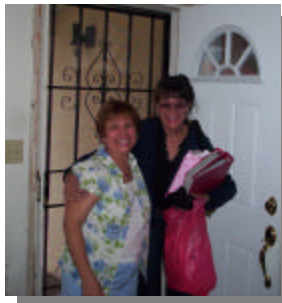
Annie Meléndez and family

...and we did! On Wednesday, June 8th, Olga and I went to Pittsburgh, California to meet Annie Meléndez and her family who had just arrived from Puerto Rico the day before. We visited them at the home of Annie's husband's aunt, Miriam Pérez (did you get that?). Annie's husband's name is Wilson García, and he is from Peñuelas. Hmmmm. I'm going to have to trace his lineage back up and see if it connects with mine. He just may be another lost cousin!

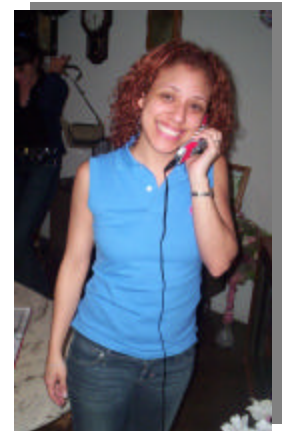
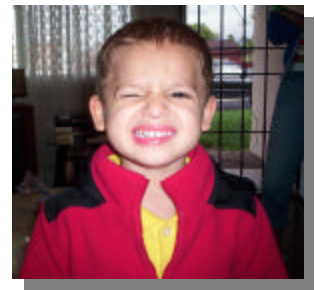
When I first arrived there I was first introduced to Annie's three lovely daughters and darling grandson. From left to right in this picture, the three young ladies are Rosanie (27, a pharmacist), Annette (22, a recent college graduate, continuing on to medical school), and Joannie (25, a psychology student). Next to Joannie is her little son, Jayden I. Feliciano (3).

As I entered the living room, a stream of people started emerging from the kitchen, and I met one after another of Wilson's relatives. But my heart almost stopped when I met the man of the house, Miriam's husband, Miguel Pérez. As I shook his hand I stared in amazement, and I said, "Se parece a mi papá." Amid everyone's chuckles, Annie and her mother, Rosa, (who both remembered my father well) admitted that this man did have a strong resemblance to my late father, Oscar. Although taller and not as thin as my father had been, he had the same ruddy complexion, prominent cheekbones, bushy eyebrows, and hair.

So later, when Olga arrived, she first met Annie at the door and then when Annie introduced her to Don Miguel, I asked, "Who does he look like?" Everyone was waiting, all lined up in the living room, to hear what she said. With her eyes still on him she said, "My father. He looks like my father," and everyone roared with laughter.



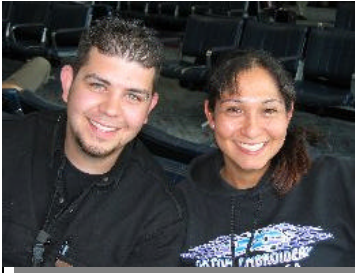
Our visit with all these wonderful people was awesome—filled with so much laughter and the excitement of finally meeting. Everyone was warm and loving. Our time together passed quickly, but we will be seeing more of them in a couple of weeks when we are all at the family reunion. Yip-pee!



Student News

Teal Barnes, son of Angela and Michael Barnes and **Dustin Cavino**, son of Teena and Rich (both boys are Olga's grandsons) graduated from the eighth grade this May. In August they will be starting high school at Benicia High. Congratulations, guys! Keep up the good work!

Tory Pettit, daughter of Randy and Norma (me!) Pettit will be spending a semester in the country of Uganda in Africa to broaden her knowledge of world cultures. She will be leaving in August and returning in December, God willing. Please keep her in your prayers!

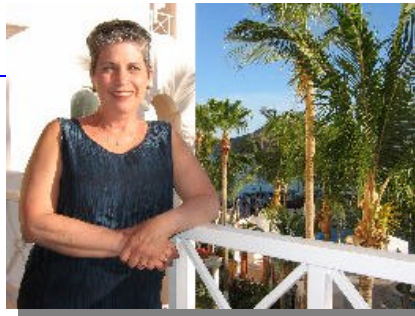
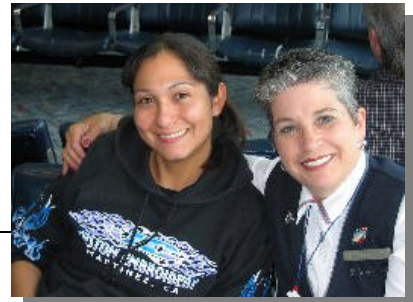


Other Family News

On April 20th, Olga's youngest daughter, **Marina Ramos**, stopped in Denver, Colorado on her way to visit her family in Martinez, California. Recently returned from Saudi Arabia, Marina was on leave from the Air Force.

Cousin Joi was working that day (she works for United Airlines) but she and her son, **Eric Stenroos**, managed to meet Marina's plane and snap a couple of pictures for the newsletter. Thanks, Joi.

Welcome back to the States, Marina! See you at the reunion in Puerto Rico. Yippee!!



Speaking of Joi, she and Vic took a week-long vacation to Cabo San Lucas, Mexico during the month of April, which they greatly enjoyed, as evidenced by their relaxed smiles. They spent a good part of their time scuba diving, and when they returned, their local TV station aired one of their underwater pictures.

Belatedly celebrating Auntie Marie's 93rd birthday in her home in San Francisco...

Dave Finch, Auntie Marie & me

Norma, Auntie Marie & Aunt Delia

Dinner in a Chinese restaurant.





Update on the Family Reunion in Ponce, Puerto Rico, June 24-26, 2005

Guess who is going to be there? **Auntie Marie Nicholson!!**
She will be traveling on the same flights as the Finches and the
Pettits. At 93, she is the queen bee of the family!

This is the agenda for the reunion:

On Friday, June 24th there will be a welcome at the home of Mon and Luz Elena in Punta Diamantes. For directions on how to get there, call 939-645-0354. The menu on this first night will consist of rice and beans (together), *pollo en fricasé*, fried, ripe *plátanos* (jibaritos), green salad, avocado, creole bread (*pan de agua*) and butter, *arroz con pollo* and stewed beans, typical island drinks and sodas, dessert (surprise).

On Saturday, Junio 25: Breakfast will be served in the home of René and Carmen (Titi), at Urb Bello Horizonte, 1013 Calle Guarionex, Ponce. P.R. For directions on how to get there please call 787-290-5633 or e-mail renerivera@coqui.net. Breakfast will consist of *empanadillas*, *rellenos*, *alcapurrias*, *quesitos*, rolls, ham and eggs, bread and butter, juice and coffee.



The great **fiesta** in the evening of Saturday, June 25th will take place in the *Colegio de Péritos Electricistas*, en la Carretera 503 en route to Tibes from Ponce, next to *el Parque Indígenas*. For reference on how to get there please call Heriberto Rivera Sevilla (Papo) at 787-329-2891. The *fiesta* will begin at approximately 6:00 p.m., and will bear the name of *Navidad en Junio* (Christmas in June). All the music, food and decorations will be representative of a typical Puerto Rican Christmas.

The great feast of this evening will include a roast pig, *pasteles*, *arroz con gandules*, *viandas*, *pavo en fricasé*, *morsillas*, *arroz con dulce*, *harina con coco*, and *dulce de lechosa*. If you don't know what all of that is, oh well, just eat it—you'll like it! There will also be the famous *coquito*, to sweeten the palate.

NOTE: On this night there will be a gift exchange. The gifts must cost \$5 or less. This is just a souvenir of the person and the family reunion. Every person who brings a gift will exchange with another person who brings a gift. It is not mandatory that you bring a gift, but if you don't you cannot participate in the gift exchange.



Sunday, June 26th: This is the final day of the reunion for those who have to leave. We will gather in the home of Edwin Rivera Sevilla in Urb. Bello Horizonte #873, Calle Menta, Ponce, P.R. Tel 787-843-1101. The menu is *algarrete*, whatever that means. René says to just come hungry and dig in. Sounds good to me!

Folks, all this has been meticulously and lovingly planned by our island cousins—René and his brothers and sisters and their spouses. There will be many surprises that are not even mentioned here. These cousins have spent countless hours meeting to plan and organize this extraordinary event. In addition, they have opened up their homes, and even remodeled and made other alterations to accommodate those who are traveling from the mainland so as to make the trip more affordable for us. Words can never express our appreciation for their sacrifice, so the best thing we can do is to be there, be happy, be hungry, and be ready to meet so many relatives that our heads will not stop spinning for weeks. And yes, Tom Smith, you'll need to pack your dancing shoes!

www.ylafamilia.org website update

Donate \$20 or more and receive a complimentary copy of the 2004 Family Reunion DVD!

Your generous donations will help maintain this site. All of your donations go directly to paying expenses related to reserving space on the internet for this web site and paying for the annual registration renewal of the domain name.

There are two ways to donate:

- (1) Via the internet with your credit card, click on the PayPal Donate button on the website (\$5.00 minimum, please)
- (1) By check or money order, please mail your donation to:

*“y la Familia.org“ Donation
 c/o Carlos M. Rivera
 3760 W. Smokey Row Road
 Bargersville, IN 46106-8890*

ANNUAL OPERATING COSTS:

Web Server space: \$165 / year
 Domain registration: \$14.95 / year
 Web site revisions: Donated time

Thank you!

Relatives Respond

Hi, Cousin.

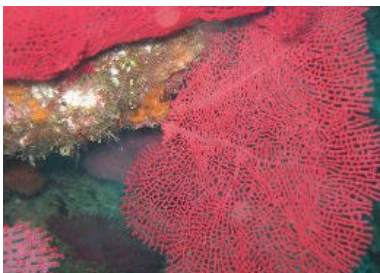
This is Edwin Rivera (Edwincito) son of Edwin Rivera Sevilla, nephew of Tío Papo, Titi Lillian and Tío René. I just moved to Texas about 2 years ago. And I would like to stay informed about our family's affairs.

I was told by Felita and Junito that you had a family newspaper. I would be happy if you can add me to your mailing list. I tried to make it to our family reunion in Awilda's house but I was on my honeymoon. I also know this year it will be held in Ponce, PR.

I will not be able to make, because my brother, George, will be getting married. So I will be in P.R. from Aug. 26th till the 4th of Sept. for that event, but I will make it the following year. Hoping to meet you and those of our family I still have not met.

Hello, I was contacted by my cousin, Annie Melendez Garcia, who is a pharmacist in the town of Peñuelas, Puerto Rico. She mailed me some information regarding a family reunion in Puerto Rico. Unfortunately I do not think we can attend; however, we are eager to connect with any family members. I live in East Chicago, IN and have 4 brothers and 2 sisters. My mother, Lydia, was Doña Mela's daughter. My mother had one brother, Juan, who is Annie's father. My mother passed away in 1974 and her brother passed away a few years later. My grandmother passed away about 3-4 years ago, unfortunately I'm not very good with the years however I do have some information written down, it's just a matter of looking for it. If you can pass on any info I would greatly appreciate it or if you're looking for additional information regarding my grandmother, I would be happy to help. Nellie Feliciano Lopez.

Nellie and I have had great fun corresponding back and forth after this initial e-mail. Also, Nellie's teenage niece, Stephanie, has sent me several e-mails and shows great interest in meeting "new" family members. That is so exciting! Are you confused about the new cousins? If you are a child of Oscar, María, Elena, Guar, or Anita, then Annie and Nellie are your second cousins. Stephanie would be your second cousin once removed. Edwincito is your first cousin once removed, since his father is your first cousin. If you want to further clarify relationships (or be blown away by the enormity of our family), be sure to attend the family reunion!!



A view of...

underwater sea life, as photographed by Cousin Joi during the trip she and Vic made to Cabo San Lucas in April.

The child shown on page 3 is Cousin Meryem Merritt.

"¿...y la familia?"

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Visit us on the Web at www.ylafamilia.org.

Birthday Greetings

Jayden I. Feliciano (3) - June 5
Isidro Rivera (86) - June 8
Annette García (22) - June 10
Alicia Rivera (23) - June 12
Julia Cruz Vilá (79) - June 13
C.J.. Burch (16) - June 14
Emily Medina (27) - June 15
Garnet Rivera (60) - June 15
Kimm (Reinke) Hargraves—
(42) June 16
Ken Reinke (42) - June 16
Nelson Rivera (42) - June 17
René Rivera (66) - June 19
Meryem Merritt (54) - June 19

Norma (García) Pettit (53) -
June 20
Laurie Jimenez (46) - June 21
Tommy González (35) -
June 21
Scott Hargraves (41) - June 25
Cindy Nicholson (35) -
June 29
Alura G. Barnes (12) - June 30
Elizabeth Rivera (9) - July 5
Eric R. Stenroos (22) - July 7
Lilliam Rivera (62) - July 11
José Medina (55) - July 1
Roberto Rivera Sevilla (65) -
July 14

Angela Barnes (36) - July 15
Kayla N. Reinke (6) - July 20
René Rivera Jr. (43) - July 21
Vickie Jimenez (45) - July 22
Olga (García) Smith (58) -
July 22
Christina (Krause) Darnell
(27) - July 23
Ada Rivera Segarra (25) -
July 25
Rachel Nicholson (5) - July 26
Fernando Vázquez (15) -
July 28
Paul Krause (60) - July 30

Anniversaries

Kenneth & Vanessa Braddock (2)
June 15
Annie Meléndez & Wilson García
René & Carmen Rivera (44) -
June 17
Jenny & Ted Reinke (44) -
June 18
Angela & David Nicholson (8) -
June 21
Angélica & José L. Medina (57) -
July 8
Garnet & Carlos Rivera (18) -
July 14
Cindy & Christopher Nicholson
(12) - July 17
Joanne & Robert McLaughlin (9) -
July 21
Michael & Angela Barnes (8) -
July 26
Randy & Norma Pettit (23) -
July 30