

"...y la familia?"

VOLUME 13, ISSUE 4

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Needed for Future Issues:

"Stuff" about you and yours...

Announcements

*New baby
Engagement
Graduations
Promotion
New address*

Upcoming Events

*family parties
Reunions
Weddings*

Article, 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*

SASS Competition Winners!

Yuly Springer, first-born daughter of Ruben Garcia and granddaughter of Oscar and Anita, is pictured here with her husband, Todd. Both are first place winners in SASS competitions. SASS, the Single Action Shooting Society, is an international organization created to preserve and promote the sport of Cowboy Action Shooting.

It took Yuly four months to make this dress, and she was rewarded with winning Third Place in the SASS National 7th Year Convention.

In October of 2007, the Springer's home town of Los Banos celebrated their Centennial. Yuly joined Cowboy Fast Draw and place 8th in the State Championship. Todd Placed 1st in the "65 and still alive". Yuly took 2nd (she says she let him win).



Todd Springer, alias "California Drifter", and Yuly (García) Springer, alias "La Bandida".

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Look What I Still Have

By Joi (De Nardo) Stenroos...*My Record Collection and Carrying Case!*

These are memorable 45's that were played over and over and over during my teen years during the 1960's in San Francisco. I can remember walking from the house to a store on Noriega Street just to buy the newest song heard on the radio. I think they were going for 99 cents then. Here are some of the titles included in my case:

Just Once in My Life - Righteous Brothers
A Wonder Like You and Everlovin' - Rick Nelson
Twistin' the Night Away - Sam Cooke
Johnny Angel - Shelley Fabares
I Feel Fine - The Beatles
She's A Woman - The Beatles
Do You Want to Know a Secret?
- The Beatles
Big Girls Don't Cry - The 4 Seasons
Big Bad John - Jimmy Dean
What A Party - Fats Domino
Palisades Park - Freddy Cannon
Can't Help Fallin in Love
- Elvis Presley
Rock-a-Hula Baby - Elvis Presley



Are you singing any of these tunes yet?

The Way We Were

When we were kids growing up in San Francisco, back in the 1950's, taking a trip to visit Auntie Adele in the Sacramento area was a big deal. We could only drive there when Dad was home from one of his Merchant Marine voyages. Here we are in our Sunday best, posing in front of Auntie Adele's Carmichael, California home.

As you may know, Joi lived with us off and on, due to Uncle Angelo and Auntie Helen often having to work at night. This photo was taken around 1956.



Standing: Oscar and Anita García
Seated: Norma, Joanne (Joi), Ruben, and Olga

At this time in our family history...

- Hilario García, Jr. and Juliana Pérez were married on Feb. 1, 1861. Hilario's brother, José de la Cruz García became the maternal grandfather of my grandmother, Ana Cruz García.
- Florencio Rivera Maldonado and Ana Cruz García were married on Feb. 12, 1914.
- Auntie Marie and Achilles G. Nicholson were married on Feb. 15, 1937.
- Dionicio del Carmen Rivera Maldonado (a sister of our family patriarch, Papa Flor) was born on Feb. 20, 1867.
- Victoriano Rivera Maldondo (my father's great-uncle) was born on February 23, 1845. He was a brother of Manuel Alejo Rivera Maldonado (my father's paternal grandfather).
- Juan Julian Rivera Maldonado was born 131 years ago, on February 28th. He was five years younger than his brother Florencio (my father's father), and died on New Year's Eve at the age of nine-and-a-half. This is probably the brother that he sometimes spoke of.
- Pedro Alcántara Rivera Maldonado, one of Florencio's paternal uncles, was born on March 21, 1844. He was the sixth child born to José de los Santos Rivera and Cipriana Maldonado.

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SASS Competition Winners

(continued from page 1)

The entire Springer clan is involved with SASS events, from parents Yuly, alias “La Bandida” and Todd, alias “California Drifter” to the youngest Springer, five-year-old Toddy. The Springer children have developed remarkable skills in rope trick performance.

SASS endorses regional matches conducted by affiliated clubs, stages End of Trail (the World Championship of Cowboy Action Shooting), promulgates rules and procedures to ensure safety and consistency in Cowboy Action Shooting matches, and seeks to protect

its members’ 2nd amendment rights. Yuly explains that in SASS you use .357 or .45 single action pistols, .375 or .45 single action rifles and a Coach shotgun. Live cowboy ammo is used. SASS members share a common interest in preserving the history of the Old West and competitive shooting.

SASS participants are required to select an alias from a historical, fictional or Hollywood character of the Old West, and then develop a costume accordingly. At End of Trail 2008, Yuly and her friend, Loreal Lewis, placed 1st in the Soiled Dove Contest with costumes that were inspired by the 2006 movie, “The Bandits”, starring Selma Hayek and Penelope Cruz.

The Springers’ home town of Los Banos is located in California’s Central Valley. Yuly and Todd have four children.

Yuly works as a real estate

agent at Coldwell Banker. Between work and the family, Yuly enjoys sewing and designing new outfits for upcoming events. She began sewing in May of 2007.

At Convention 2008, Yuly placed 3rd in the Best Dress category. Her dress took her four months to design and complete. Yuly has made dresses and some vests for others, and has had a large order placed with her for this upcoming spring, so she will be very busy these next few months. Yuly says that she’s always looking for buttons or anything else that she can use for her projects, so instead of throwing them away, send them to her and she will put them to good use.

Yuly Springer
741 Wood Duck Court
Los Banos, CA 93635-9448

Yuly would also welcome feedback on this feature article on her family’s unique interests. E-mail her at zulyooly@yahoo.com.



2009 Family Reunion News...

What's so Special About Peñuelas?

In the Oct/Nov '05 issue of "...y la familia, I wrote an "A Page Out of Our Family History" column about the mountain community in Peñuelas, Puerto Rico, where our ancestors lived for generations. I told of Auntie Marie's childhood memory of her mother being carried away in a hammock, down a mountain trail, to be buried in a cemetery in the town. I related how awed I felt when Cousin Annie Meléndez showed Joi and me the bottom end of that trail, where it arrives in the town. It's now a paved road, but just seeing the trail on which my grandmother's body had been brought into town was like viewing Auntie Marie's story from another angle, and it was somehow thrilling and important to me. Later, back in California, as the three of us were looking at the picture that Joi had snapped of that mountain community as viewed from an upstairs window in Annie's house, Joi said, "I want us to go up that mountain the next time we go to Puerto Rico."

"In four years!" Olga added, as she jabbed at the picture emphatically with her finger. "In four years we are going back to Puerto Rico and we are going to climb that mountain!" So that's why we decided to have the 2009 reunion in Puerto Rico again.

Well, you all know the sad reality is that Olga died less than a year later, on July 4, 2006. I remember telling Olga's daughter, Angela, about this over the phone, some months after Olga had passed, and Angie tearfully said, "Then I'm just going to have to climb that mountain for Mama." Tragically, Angie herself succumbed to cancer in October of 2007. The trip up the mountain is still on, though. Joi and I, and several others who have joined in the mission, want to climb that mountain in memory of Olga and Angie.

That's part of the reason.

Ever since I was a little girl, I have been interested in family history. I remember asking my mom and dad to tell me stories about what life was like when they were children in Puerto Rico. I asked about my grandparents, three of whom I never even got to meet. I wrote down all the information they could give me on their own grandparents, aunts and uncles. This interest grew into a hobby that I don't get to work on nearly as much as I'd like to. Throughout the years, though, I've unearthed baptismal records, marriage and death records, names of missing relatives, even a census record dating back to 1822 that said that my great-great-grandfather, Pedro Vilá, owned 22 acres of land, a house, a cow, a horse, a mare and a turkey! I've recorded stories told by my father, Oscar, by his uncles Agripino and Angelito, and other persons. But seeing the end of the mountain trail that connects Barrio Santo Domingo with the town of Peñuelas that day in 2005 was like taking a physical peek into our family history. I began to imagine the thrill of actually seeing the top of that trail, of walking on some of the land that our ancestors lived on, where generations of them were born and died. I now feel that there can be no substitute for walking the land, and that if I want to truly "know" these ancestors, I have to go to where they lived, where they worked the land with their hands. Maybe nothing looks anything like it used to be. Maybe no one there remembers our family. But I will be happy knowing that I fulfilled a promise to my sister, and that I made the pilgrimage to the mountain community from where our family has its roots. The trek up the mountain (most of which will be by car, I believe) is scheduled for Saturday morning, June 20th, and is open to anyone who wants to join us.

Among the relatives keen on making this trip to Puerto Rico for the family reunion is my niece, **Marina Ramos** (Olga's youngest daughter). You will recall that Marina's sister, Angela Barnes, died of cancer in October of 2007, just 15 months after Olga passed away. It is Marina's most heartfelt wish to somehow enable Angela's children to accompany her to Puerto Rico for the reunion. Angela's desire was to have her ashes scattered in Puerto Rico, and Marina rightfully feels that Angie's kids should be present when their mother's ashes are scattered. However, Marina can't bear this expense alone, so if you would like to contribute to the "Barnes Fund", please send a check to her at the following address.



Marina Ramos
435 Community Ln., Apt. 17
Woodland, CA 95695

*Any amount would be
appreciated!*

*Angie's kids—Teal, Marlin, and
Alura—at the Pettit's Christmas
party, Dec. 20, 2008*

Your Prayers are Requested

Two other grandchildren of Olga's—Teena's two oldest kids—were involved in an vehicular accident on Friday night, January 16th. While Shanda was not seriously hurt, Dustin remains in very serious condition at St. Francis Hospital in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Dustin suffered a broken neck, one leg broken in four places, and head injuries that caused swelling and bleeding in the brain, among other injuries. The latest update, provided by Marina, adds infection in his broken leg to the list.

Dustin's parents, Rich and Teena have been at his bedside every day. This has been a very difficult time for the Cavino family, which includes two younger boys (Raymond and Robert).

Please pray fervently for Dustin to have a swift and complete recovery from all of his injuries.

Cards may be sent to: Dustin Cavino,
RR5 Box 1670
Eufaula, OK, 74432.

Other Family News



Autism: A developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age 3, that adversely affects a child's educational performance. People with autism typically exhibit stereotyped behaviors, interests, and activities.

On October 14, 1997, weighing 8.1 pounds and measuring 21 inches, Edwin Joel Rivera Andujar was born and changed my life for always. Since I was a kid, I always hoped to have a family and to have a baby boy. For some reason, I always sketched in my mind all the characteristics that I wanted to see in my first baby, and to my surprise God sent me what I requested in my prayers. He sent me the son that I always dreamed of, the one that I drew in my mind, and on top of all this, He sent him to me "Special Edition".

Before his first year, Edwin was a normal baby, but more or less at 15 months of age he stopped speaking, stopped visual contact, and liked to be alone, sitting down to watch Barney and Fiel a la Vega rock band videos. This behavior continued and we talked about it with his pediatrician. After several studies, finally at the age of three, he was diagnosed with autism. My wife and I were very confused because we had never heard about this condition and we started learning about it and finding ways to help our son. Immediately he started at an autistic group at school, and started occupational and verbal therapies which he still continues. His development was slow but we celebrated every single step, every single goal that he reached was celebrated as the biggest one. Very difficult years passed, but in April of 2007 we tried another therapy called "Functional Neurological Organization". Every single day in the evening my wife works with Edwin, bringing to him all the exercises and therapy that will improve his capacity to talk, behave and make visual contact. Also, we tried a gluten free and sugar free diet in order to complement the treatment and therapies.

Today, at 11 years old, Edwin Joel fights against all challenges with a very big and brave heart to reach a lot of achievements such as improved visual contact. He speaks and tells us everything he wants, and his behavior has improved and is more peaceful. Also, believe it or not, he cooks his own breakfast every morning, and his dinner (like rice, beans and some desserts like cheese or guava pudding, among others). He's a very smart guy and a guru on the internet. Every single day he does something new that amazes me. He shows me that he is very happy. Thank God that every member of his family loves him and watches out for his quality of life, especially his six year old brother, Gabriel Omar, who came into our lives like an angel sent by God to take care of him because he knows Edwin like no one else. Every day when I came from work I look into his eyes, and as I give him a very huge hug, the thought comes to my mind..."This is my boy, my autistic hero".

—Edwin Rivera Soto

Christmas pics, stories and artwork

¿...y la familia?



Christmas Pictures E-mailed to Me

Clockwise, starting from bottom left: Eric, Madison and Donna celebrating Christmas at Vic and Joi's house; Carlos and Garnet's grandchildren; Jim and Kathy Caffey's granddaughters; Kirsten and her boyfriend, Jason; the cutest baby boy in the world, Marcel Antonio Quiñones, during the Christmas party at his Grampa Randy and Mama Nony's house.

Excerpt from an e-mail from Vanessa Braddock: As our children grow older and as we start to do more and more stuff together, I have been reflecting more and more on my childhood and all of the memorable moments I had with my

mom. First, I have to say that as a child, my mom was the most important person in my life. Sure, she still tops the list, but has to share that title with my husband and my children ... which, of course, I am certain she doesn't mind doing. :o) As I reflect back on my childhood, I remember things like doing crafts with my grandmother and building things with my grandfather, God rest their souls. I remember baking cakes in the easy bake oven that my father bought for me & spending time playing school with my two closest childhood friends. But the best and most vivid memories that I have from my childhood are of all the time that I spent with my Mom. No matter what we were doing, it always felt special to be doing things with her. My favorite things that we did when I was a child were all of the crafty things that my Mom was, and still is, so good at doing. Whether we were Batiking shirts and pillow cases, tie dying anything available, cleaning, painting & firing ceramics or simply doing crafts involving paper and crayons or paint ... I always had the best time with her! I would even go to the basement just to be with her, watching her create the most beautiful stained glass windows ever! By the way ... she was also the BEST Girl Scout troop leader EVER!

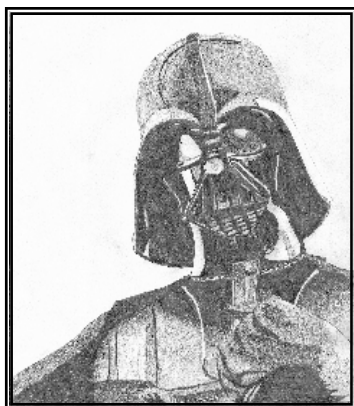
I have been spending a ton of time with our babies lately doing a bunch of crafts. They absolutely LOVE painting and creating things. We have made some of our own Christmas decorations this year,

since our decorations are in storage in Iowa, and are making homemade Christmas gifts this year as well. I have framed some of their paintings and hung them on our wall. I have also had them paint pictures on canvas and I've hung those on the wall as well.

Anyway, I just wanted to share with you that as a mother I have finally taken the time to realize and reflect back on how important and instrumental my own mom was and still is in my life. Thank you for all the good times, Mom. I love you!



Anita and Logan Braddock



Hayli has really become fascinated by Star Wars. She is in honors language arts, math, science and now art. She did this pencil drawing in a couple of hours while we have been watching the old star wars trilogy. —sent in by Hayli's grandmother, Kathy (Merritt) Caffey

Get Published!

Our daughter, Tory Pettit, sent Randy and me a wonderful Christmas present: a book of pictures that she took and anecdotes that she wrote about South Korea. It is a beautiful, hardbound book in color that she published through a website called Blurb.com. I was doubly excited to receive this gift because I had recently begun thinking about publishing a book on family remembrances, and here was a way that it could be done. There are already many stories that I have printed in the "I Remember" column of "¿...y la familia?" in the past twelve-and-a-half years, but most of those have been written by me. I'd like to invite members of the family to send me their memories of years gone by. I will print them in upcoming issues of the newsletter and gather up the best of the "I Remember" columns for a family book that will definitely be something to treasure. Then anyone who is interested can purchase one of the books directly from Blurb.com.

So get your fingers limbered up, get on the computer, or take a pen in hand a grab a pad of paper...get those stories to me soon so as not to lose out on this golden opportunity to be a published contributor in a very special book!

y la Familia Website Undergoes an Extreme Makeover! By Carlos Rivera

The y la Familia website is more than six years old and showing its age. In digital years, the website could be considered the equivalent of over 60 years old and should be put out to pasture! Of course, that statement does not apply to humans, especially considering that I too am a member of the 'more than 60 years old' group and a proud carrier of my AARP card and excitedly waiting for my shot at the senior citizen discounts available everywhere! ☺ I feel full of energy and not ready for the rocking chair yet....but, I shouldn't digress. I decided it was time for an extreme makeover.

The NEW y la Familia website will sport a brand new and hopefully updated look (see photo accompanying this article). **Phase I** involves **rebuilding the structure of the site**, its layout and rewriting and refreshing the contents. *No longer will you be required to log in to view most of the information it has to offer. That will include the family history, genealogy tree and newsletters.*

Phase II of the development of the website will be **an overhaul of the family tree area**. *New to this area will be the ability for you to update your own family's history. BUT*, in order to do so, you will have to join the membership as a bona fide family representative. This is a sensitive part of the website and it will be necessary to increase its security it to keep out hackers and spammers. Membership will have to be approved. There will be no temporary pass as there is now. I am also contemplating giving members the opportunity to upload family photos. There will be some restriction on size and quantity of photos, but it will be a great way to share.

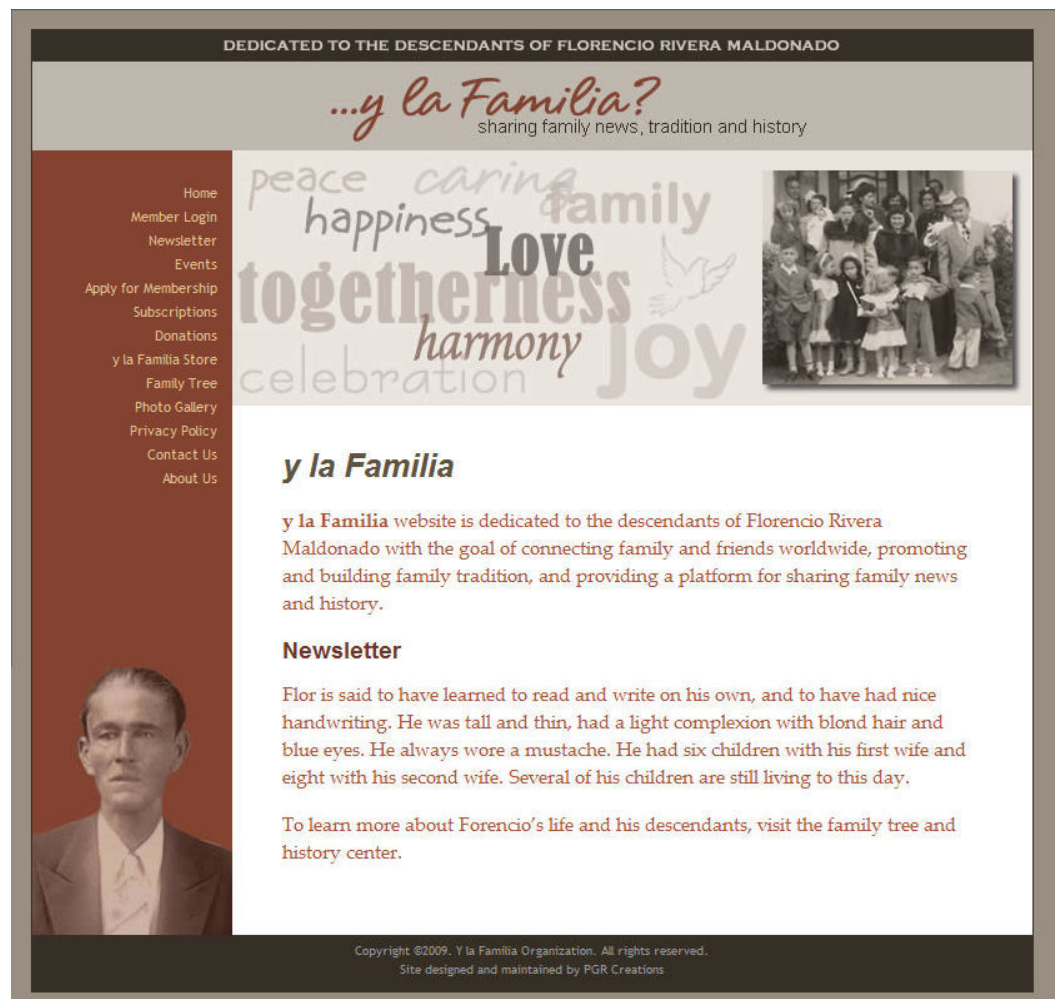
Phase II will require significant effort at custom programming. There is no software I know of that can be installed on a website that will draw a family tree. Therefore, I will be programming this from scratch. It is complicated and it will take a lot of time before it is finished. I ask for your patience and understanding.

New Features:

- Updated look
- Easier navigation
- No membership required to view family information (except for the family directory).
- Ability to update your own family tree (membership will be required)
- Ability to upload family photos (membership will be required)
- (future) English and Spanish versions of the website.
- Subscription to the newsletter (digital or paper format)

Other enhancements being considered:

- A family bulletin board where you can leave messages for others (membership will be required)
- A family Resources page where you can advertise your business or services and hopefully offer a family discount or trade services.



Do you have a suggestion?

“¿...y la familia?”

c/o Norma I. Pettit
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Visit us on the Web at www.ylafamilia.org.

Birthday Greetings

Eduardo Medero (21) -
Feb. 2

Juan González (48) - Feb. 2

Katherine García (45) - Feb.
4

Brook Rivera (30) - Feb. 5

Angela Nicholson (42) -
Feb. 6

Maritza Rivera (46) -
Feb. 11

Melissa González (23) -
Feb. 15

Nicole García (13) - Feb. 16

Ruben J. García (60) -
Feb. 21

Heriberto Rivera (57) -
Feb. 24

Gwendolyn Rivera (7) -
Feb. 27

Dustin Yager (24) - Mar. 3

Miguel González (14) -
Mar. 3

Matthew Hargraves (9) -
Mar. 3

Marcel Antonio Quñones
(1) - Mar. 5

Stephen Nicholson (12) -
Mar. 11

Rafael González (40) -
Mar. 13

Karen Rivera (30) -
Mar. 15

James Caffey (67) -
Mar. 15

Jenny (Nicholson) Reinke
(71) - Mar. 17

Joi Stenroos (59) - Mar. 18

Raynell H. Díaz (28) -
Mar. 19

Veronica Nicholson (11) -
Mar. 21

Michael Rivera (10) -
Mar. 22

Mackenzie Eddy (16) -
Mar. 24

Todd Anthony Springer
(7) - Mar. 24

Sonia (Quiñones) Rambo
(31) - Mar. 26

Barbara Nicholson (63) -
Mar. 26

Milagros Rivera (66) - Mar.
28

Lisa (Finch) Warner (43) -
Mar. 28

Anniversaries



Sheila Andujar and
Edwin Rivera (12)
Feb. 15

Frankie and Amy Valentin
(6) - Mar. 29

Sonia (Quiñones) and
Jake Rambo (7)
Mar. 30