

# "...y la familia?"

VOLUME 15, ISSUE 2

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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 im-  
mediate family*

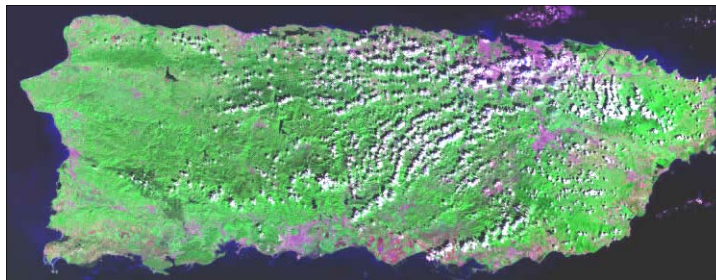
*Favorite family  
recipes*

*Cute things your  
kids have  
said*

*Funny stories*

*This is **your**  
family news-  
letter. Fill it  
with things  
about your  
family!*

## *Puerto Rico en Nuestros Pensamientos*



With hurricane season fully upon the Caribbean, we are always on the alert for news about these fierce tropical storms heading toward Puerto Rico. A while back, Hurricane Earl was in the news, and the story was that after passing through the Caribbean, it *might* bring heavy rains to the mainland

U.S. Yet the satellite image on my computer screen showed a huge, angry white swirl obliterating the view of Puerto Rico. I let out a yelp, and Luke, who came over to read the news, echoed my thoughts out loud: "What? They don't even mention that the hurricane is right over Puerto Rico!"

I posted a note on Facebook inquiring if anyone knew how the family in Puerto Rico was after the hurricane, and got a flurry of responses of others who were equally concerned. Within a day or so our worries were eased when we learned that everyone was fine. Thankfully, Hurricane Earl did not cause any serious damage to the island, and we can only hope that the 2010 hurricane season will pass without any major disasters.

In our hearts and prayers, too, are family members who are battling cancer: Cousin René, who lives in Ponce is dealing with prostrate cancer, Cousin Helen, who lives in South Carolina, is undergoing chemo for colon cancer, Cousin Edwin Rivera (René's youngest brother) was recently diagnosed with cancer in his liver, and now René's daughter, Vicky is having her second surgery of thyroid cancer. In previous generations we hadn't had to deal with this terrible disease, and now it seems to be attacking our family unmercifully.

*Please, please, please, continue to lift up these relatives in prayer!*

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# *¿...y la familia?* I Remember... *Puerto Rico*

By Norma I. (García)

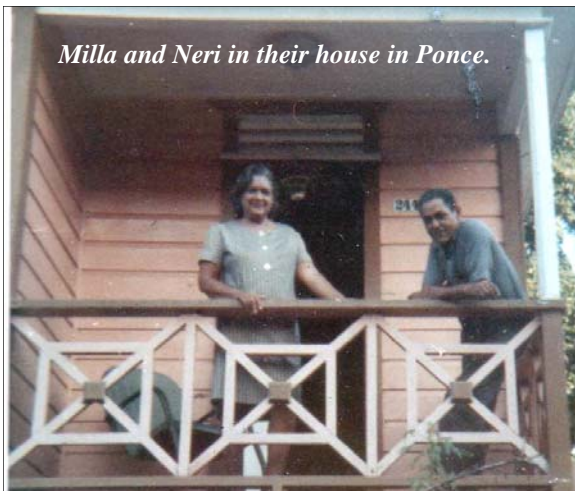
My earliest memories of Puerto Rico stem from the time that my mother, siblings and I lived in La Playa de Ponce for about eight months when I was three years old. A hazy image flits through my mind of the time that I was helping my grandmother, María de los Santos Maldonado Torres (known to us as Mama Santa), hang clothes on the line in back of the house. My job was to hand her the clothespins. I handed her one and said, “*Toma.*” She took the clothespin from me while gently correcting me. “*Se dice ‘tenga’. ‘Toma’ es para tomar café.*” There it was—my first grammar lesson—and what a wonderful way to explain it to a child who was too little to understand the concept of formal and informal address in the Spanish language. It’s been some 55 years since that day, and I still haven’t forgotten it.

As the name “Playa de Ponce” would indicate, we lived very close to the beach. My brother, Ruben, used to love to hunt for crabs, and once we were all standing around a box in our front room, admiring Ruben’s latest catch. Mom told me to shut the front door, which was wide open, but not to slam it. Ha! I *did* slam the door shut, and tottered backwards from the effort, landing butt first in the box. I was immediately hauled out of the box by my startled mother, who rescued me in the nick of time from a pinch in the rear end by the angry crab. Everyone laughed about that for a long time! Another lesson learned...don’t slam the door if Mom warns you not to.

I was not of school age yet, of course, but Olga and Ruben attended school while we were there. I remember Ruben telling a story of how he arrived late to school one day, and in an attempt to sneak in, actually *crawled* up the aisle to his seat. When he got to his spot, there was his teacher staring right at him. After school he was sent home with a note to his father (who wasn’t even living with us at the time; he was at sea), and for good measure, a little girl from his class was instructed to walk home with him and make sure Ruben’s dad got the note. On the way home, they were cutting across a field in which a man was working. The girl asked Ruben, “*¿Ese es tu papá?*” Ruben nodded, and the girl walked up to the unsuspecting man and handed him the note, while Ruben hightailed it home!

It wasn’t until 1969 that I returned to Puerto Rico, this time for a visit of a few weeks during the summer between my junior and senior years of high school. I stayed with relatives on my mom’s side of the family, but Dad, who was living on a fishing boat in La Parguera, would come to get me and take me to visit the family on his side. I remember visiting Tío Neri and Tía Milla, and feeling an instant connection to this uncle who looked a lot like his brother, Uncle Isidro. Neri and Milla were both so warm and hospitable. We would spend more time at Tío Guar and Tía Elena’s house, though. Tía Elena was such a wonderful cook—it is no wonder that her children are great cooks, too. Mostly, though, I remember the skinny little *negrita* who would come scurrying down from her house higher up on the hillside, with her hair still wet from her shower, flashing a huge smile. This little ray of sunshine was Mary Lillian, the one and only. I was always as excited to see her as she was to see me. What a cutie, and so sweet and affectionate! She was quite the little chatterbox and she was interested in learning English from me. I’ve tried to find pictures of her from that time—I thought I had at least one or two—but sadly, I haven’t been successful, and Mary Lillian says she has NO pictures of herself as a child.

The experience that I had that summer was so fantastic that I enrolled in the University of Puerto Rico and moved there in 1970. I ended up living in Puerto Rico for 11 years. Like all of us who have lived there or visited the island, Puerto Rico has a special place in my heart.



*Milla and Neri in their house in Ponce.*



*Oscar, Guar, and Luz in Tío Guar’s house in Ponce.*

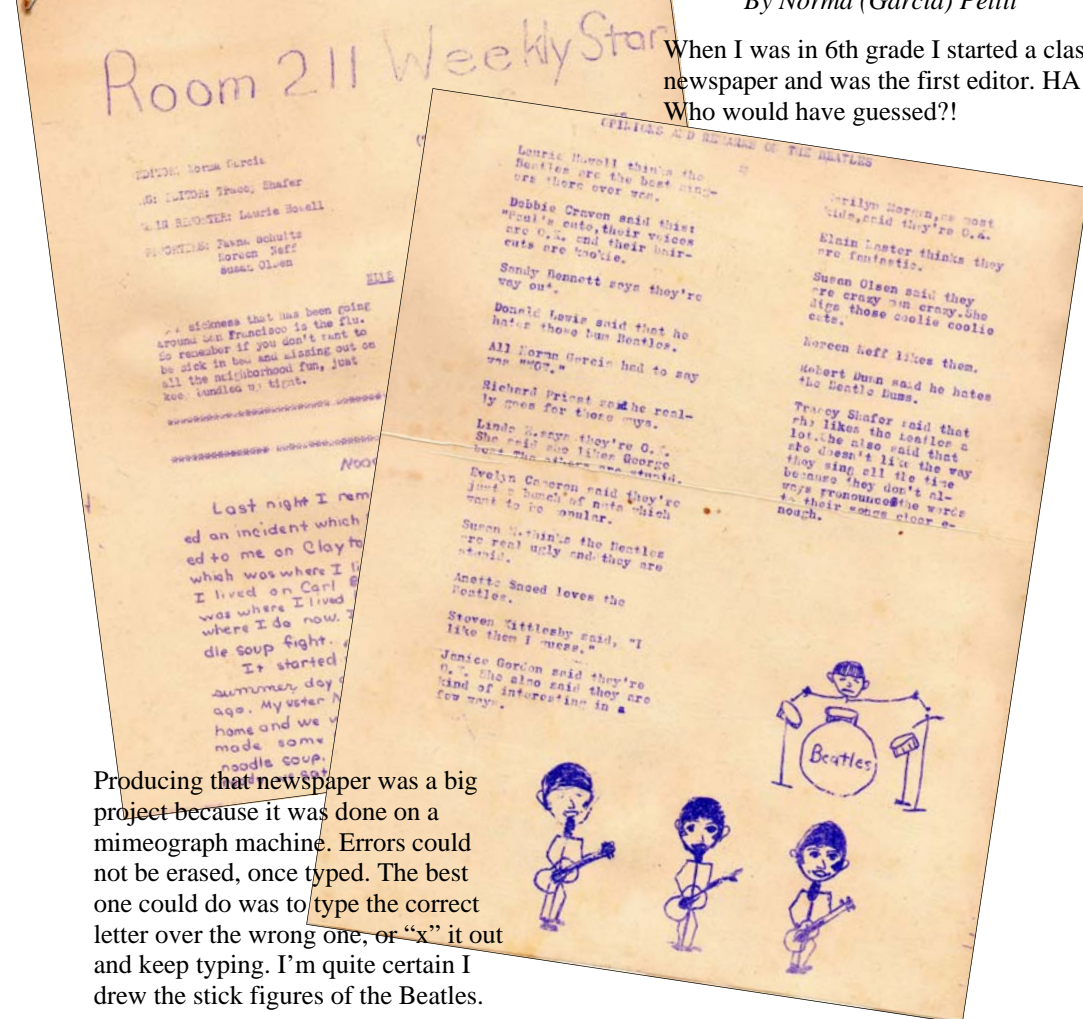


# Look What I Still Have

¿...y la familia?

By Norma (García) Pettit

When I was in 6th grade I started a class newspaper and was the first editor. HA! Who would have guessed?!



Producing that newspaper was a big project because it was done on a mimeograph machine. Errors could not be erased, once typed. The best one could do was to type the correct letter over the wrong one, or "x" it out and keep typing. I'm quite certain I drew the stick figures of the Beatles.

The  
Way  
We  
Were

Mamá Otilia,  
Tío Guar, and  
Auntie Marie  
In Puerto Rico,  
probably in the  
early 1970's.



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

- Elena and Sinforiano (Guar) Rivera were born on October 1, 1913, according to their baptismal records.
- Rosita Hernández and Isidro Rivera were married on October 2, 1945.
- My niece, Angela (Warren) Barnes, passed away on Oct. 8, 2007.
- On October 10, 1815, José Santa Ana de la Cruz married Lorenza de Santiago in Peñuelas, Puerto Rico. José Santa Ana was a great-uncle of Máximo Cruz Vilá. (See last entry for a reminder on who Máximo was.)
- Achilles George Nicholson was born in Elias, Greece 118 years ago on October 10th. He was the husband of Auntie Marie, and the father of Jenny, Victoria, and George. He died on November 3, 1953.
- David Finch, husband of Aunt Delia, and father of Bryan Finch and Lisa (Finch) Warner, passed away and was laid to rest on Oct 31, 2007.
- Oscar Cruz García, second child of Florencio Rivera and Ana Cruz García, was born on October 30, 1910. He was my father.
- Máximo Cruz Vilá was born on November 18, 1853. He and María Engracia García were married on November 3, 1877. Their daughter, Ana, was the mother of Adela, Oscar, María, Elena, Guar, and Anita.



¿...y la familia?

# Meet Your Relative: Daisha Caristo

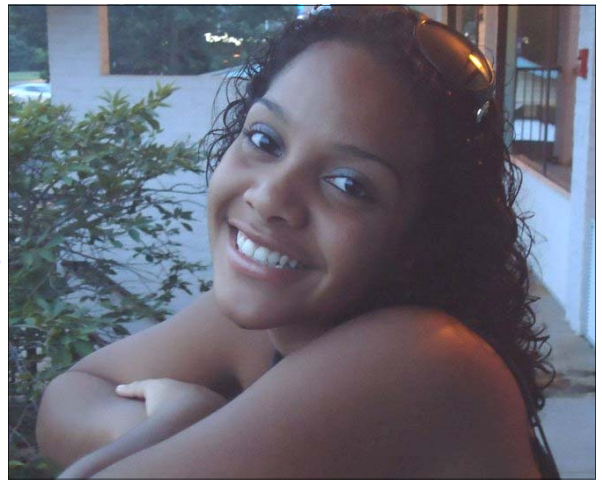
*This young lady is the daughter of my niece, Diana (González) Orube.*

*My name is Daisha Caristo, I am 16 years old and I am proud to say I am a part of Christ's family, I was saved when I was 11 years old. I heard a message being preached on heaven and hell and it really scared me, I prayed the salvation prayer and became a child of God. For years I struggled with doubts of my salvation, but as I got more into the word of God, I started growing and learning. God assured me that I was saved. In 2008 I went to a teen camp and made*



*a decision to change my life for God; many decisions lasted but many of them did not. In 2009 I had a chance to go to a revival conference in Wisconsin and the Lord showed me so much that needed to be taken out of my life. A month later I surrendered my life to the Lord and began to pray about Christian Schools. God lead me to be home schooled that year; however, I kept on praying about Christian School. Finally I took a leap of faith, knowing that if it's the Lord's will He will provide the money. God gave us so much to start with, not much to finish, but I know that we can be the poorest family in the world and if this is His will everything will be*

*provided, because he is the ULTIMATE PROVIDER and there is NOTHING HE CANNOT DO. God has placed me in an International Christian School that pleases my mother with their standards. I know it has been a short time in the school, one month to be exact, but being in this school has taught me to rely all on God. I continue to depend on Him fully and because of my dedication and obedience I have seen so many of my prayers answered and how the Holy Spirit keeps me uplifted. God also showed me that is it all right to break down and humble myself to Him. God is my Savior and I rejoice in Him! Please keep me and my education in prayer.*



*Thank you and God Bless , Daisha Caristo.*



*Titi, Norma, I would like to add something too about Daisha that she did not mention. As a mother I would like for you to see what struggles she went through and how wonderful the Lord is with us. When my son died I was in Florida and I could not make the arrangements for the service, Daisha took it upon herself and made all of the arrangements. Her older sister, Evie, helped out with getting the pictures for the slideshow and contacting everyone about the date of the funeral. However, Daisha did the rest. She kept so strong in the Lord and she did a wonderful job. Also, she has made an oath to God of keeping herself pure until marriage. They do dedications for this at my church and she came to me and said she wanted to be part of it. The teens receive a gold band as a reminder of their oath. She wears hers proudly even when people ask if she is married she is proud to share with them that it is a purity ring. They mock her at times and then there are others that just do not care. She gets a chance to always share with others about this ring. It shows how she is honored to belong to Christ. Well I just wanted to share. This is her moment with you but there is so much more to know about her. Daisha is so humble and that makes her so special. I love my daughter with all my heart, soul, might, and being. My children keep me living and God keeps me living for them. I praise God for giving me such wonderful and loving children and grandchildren. Praise be all to God.*

*Diana Orube*

*Diana raised \$1,550 toward her annual tuition by babysitting, housecleaning, and having garage sales, but even with her parents' support, they are still short. If you would like to help with Daisha's tuition, please contact Diana at [dianadelorbe2007@yahoo.com](mailto:dianadelorbe2007@yahoo.com).*

¿...y la familia?



## Other Family News

*The three daughters of Cousin Milagros Rivera recently got together for a visit and posed for this lovely photo. From left: Waleska, Helen, and Jackie.*

*In addition to still undergoing chemo therapy following surgery for colon cancer, Helen also had a heart catheterization done on September 28th. That went well, and Helen is feeling better. What a strong woman!*

The article below appeared in the magazine published by the trucking company that my husband, Randy, works for. He was honored for 10 years of service and a million miles of safe driving. Besides being featured in the magazine, Randy was sent to Phoenix to participate in a ceremony, and was given a ruby ring and other tokens of the company's appreciation.

## Million Mile Award Recipient



**Million Mile Award recipient Randy Pettit**, has only been a truck driver for ten years, and has been with Knight Transportation for his entire trucking career. Most days, he loves his job. Before being a truck driver, Randy had his own glass business and did everything from etched glass to retrofitting windows. Realizing that as he got older he'd have a hard time continuing in the glass business, he opted for the cushy sit-down job of a truck driver. (Ha ha!)

Seriously, though, he attributes his longevity and productivity to having good driver managers and terminal managers. As a father of four and a grandfather, Randy also appreciates the fact that Knight Transportation is a family-oriented business.

By the way, Randy's million miles have been accident and citation free and Randy has consistently participated in the safety program at the Tulare Division. We'll include a picture as he receives his ring in the next issue of Knightline!

**Randy is an excellent example of what a true professional truck driver is! Thank you for all your hard work over the years. We look forward to your second million miles!**

Randy is originally from Daly City, California, but now lives in the Sierra Nevada foothill town of Placerville. He and his wife of 28 years, Norma, live in a 75 year old home which they bought 24 years ago and have spent nearly a quarter of a century restoring and remodeling.

"I think we're done now," says Randy. "We'll just call it good and enjoy its 'rustic charm'. I'm now free to enjoy my hobbies of four-wheeling and music."



¿...y la familia?

# A Page Out of Our Family History

By Norma I. (García) Pettit

As the Spanish teacher in a public middle school, I try to expose my students to the obvious variations in the Spanish language that are associated with different Spanish-speaking countries. For example, the textbook may teach that in Mexico a peach is called *un durazno*, whereas in Puerto Rico, we say *un melocotón*. In Costa Rica, a banana is called *un banano*, but in Puerto Rico we call it *un guineo*. I like for them to learn about the similarities and the differences between the cultures in Spain and Latin America, but I often will emphasize the Mexican culture and their way of speaking since most of the contact that my students will have both in California and in their travels will be with Mexicans or Mexican-Americans.

This year, however, I found that a rare Puerto Rican family had moved within the boundaries of my school district and I now have a son and daughter of this Puerto Rican couple in my Advanced Spanish class. I have had numerous conversations with the mom, and she has come to help out in the classroom a couple of times already. Every time I talk to her I sigh with the pleasure of hearing the vocabulary and intonations that are specifically Puerto Rican.

In recent issues I disclosed that the DNA testing samples sent in by my brother, Ruben García, and our cousin, Joi (De Nardo) Stenroos, proved that our maternal ancestral lines reach back to the Taíno Indians. What many people don't realize is that the Taíno language is also still present in Puerto Rico—in the names of towns, lakes, rivers, and in everyday words that are part of the Puerto Rican vernacular. These Taíno words which have lasted for hundreds of years give an indigenous flavor to our way of speaking and differentiate it from the Spanish spoken in other parts of Latin America. Undoubtedly, the Spanish spoken in various parts of Latin America is affected by the indigenous languages spoken by the pre-Columbian tribes that lived there, and in many cases (although sadly not true of Puerto Rico) continue to inhabit those lands.

A common phoneme in the Taíno language was *gua*. We see it in such town names as Guayama, Guánica, and Guaynabo and in the word *guayo*, which was a tool for scraping yucca or other roots. The *guayo* used by the Taínos was constructed from a palm frond in which sharp stones were symmetrically incrustated. A modern day *guayo* is a cheese grater. Another word with *gua* is *guarapo*, which is the juice from the sugar cane. My father's brother, Florencio (nee Sinforiano) was known to one and all by the nickname "Guar," and I was told a long time ago that it was short for "Guareto", which means twin. What no one told me, though, was that *guar* is a Taíno word, the root of which suggests duplicity, as in *guare*, *gemelo* [twin], or in the word *guareta* used in reference to wheels or fruit. Of course, Tío Guar **was** a twin (with Auntie Helen).

Here is a list of some other words that were derived from Taíno words. In some cases the spelling or pronunciation was changed a bit:

*barbacoa*—a four-legged stand made of sticks, used for cooking

*batey*—yard area

*canoa*—canoe

*cokí* [now spelled *coquí*] - tree frog

*colibrí*—hummingbird

*cucubano*—lightning bug

*guaraguao*—red-tailed hawk

*güicharo*; *güiracho*; *güiro*—a percussion instrument made out of a gourd

*jamaca*—hammock

*macana*—a club used as a weapon

*maraca*—maraca; percussion instrument

*mime*—small fly

*nasa*—fishing net

*tabacú*—tobacco

***"My father's brother was called Guar. What no one told me was that "guar" is a Taíno word suggesting duplicity, as in twins."***



Sources: Solá, Edwin Miner, *Diccionario Taíno Ilustrado*, 2002  
www. Puerto Rico.com

¿...y la familia?

# Relatives Write

Norma, thanks for the lovely newsletter and your thoughtful comments regarding the reunion. My family really enjoyed the opportunity and love the thought of getting to know more family. As a family here in Indiana, we only have each other. We were all born in Indiana, except for Hector, and we have lived here our entire lives without any family nearby. Our immediate family keeps growing; lots of new babies this past year. But it's great to meet new relatives and begin new relationships.

Thanks again for the great newsletter and for including so many pictures. We hope everyone had a chance to relax, take in the sights in Chicago and feel like family. We can't wait until next year's reunion.

Nellie



## Flamboyán Update

*By Joi Stenroos*

*One Year Later*



*I finally got a couple of pictures of the "tree" which is now one year and a few months old. It will soon outgrow its pot and I am hoping that transferring it to a larger one won't hinder its growth. Vic calls the plant "Hector." The second picture is looking down on Hector so that you can see how spread out the leaves (soon to be branches???) are. We are hoping it will survive Colorado's winter. Right now [written on Sept. 15th] he's in heaven with temps in the high 80's and low 90's as long as he gets several "mistings" a day from his own little squirt bottle for the sense of humidity.*

*[Note: Joi and I brought back flamboyán seeds from Puerto Rico last year. I didn't get so much as a weed growing out of my pot where I planted my seeds. ☺ Joi got three seedlings, and Hector is the sole survivor.]*

## *“¿...y la familia?”*

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*Visit us on the Web at [www.ylafamilia.org](http://www.ylafamilia.org).*

### ***Birthday Greetings***

***Teena Warren*** (39) - Oct. 3

***Christine Rivera*** (14) - Oct. 3

***Roxanna Rivera*** (40) - Oct. 6

***Eric J. Montalvo*** (33) - Oct. 7

***Ruben A. Quiñones*** (34) -  
Oct. 12

***Mike Shenker*** (34) - Oct. 12

***Felipe René Rivera*** (27) -  
Oct. 13

***Lourdes Rivera*** (37)- Oct. 13

***Edwin Joel Rivera*** (13) - Oct. 14

***Jackie (Correa) Eddy*** (46) -  
Oct. 15

***Sonia Rivera*** (36)- Oct. 15

***Austin Rivera*** (16) - Oct. 17

***Annalise L. Nicholson*** (8) -  
Oct. 17

***Javier Rivera*** (37) - Oct 18

***Virginia T. Feliciano*** (21) -  
Oct. 21

***Sierra Campos*** (14) - Oct. 21

***Tito Shenker*** (13) - Oct. 22

***Vicky (Rivera) Cabán*** (46) -  
Oct. 23

***Brandi Klene*** (41) - Oct. 24

***Randy Pettit*** (55) - Oct. 27

***Victoria Nicholson*** (71) -  
Oct. 28

***Madeline Rivera*** (44) -  
Oct. 28

***Joanne McLaughlin*** (63) -  
Oct. 29

***Julie Rivera*** (18) - Nov. 2

***Alex Joel Rivera*** (15) - Nov. 2

***Lisa Quiñones*** (34) - Nov. 3

***Adalberto Rivera*** (27) - Nov. 5

***Orlando Rivera*** (55) - Nov. 6

***Stephanie Feliciano*** (21) -  
Nov. 6

***Matthew Thompson*** (5)-  
Nov. 7

***Lydia N. Carrasquillo*** (31) -  
Nov. 7

***Rosa M. Rivera*** (87) - Nov. 8

***Austin Miller*** (16) - Nov. 8

***Joannie García*** (30) - Nov. 9

***Neysha Rivera*** (20) - Nov. 12

***Juan Meléndez*** (65) - Nov. 12

***Lilliana Charice Cruz*** (8) -  
Nov. 15

***Joseph T. Springer*** (14) -  
Nov. 15

***Esmeralda Rivera Delgado*** (6) -  
Nov. 16

***Carol (Medina) Wright*** (58) -  
Nov. 17

***Michelle (Cabán) Su'a*** (22) -  
Nov. 17

***Amanda Knox*** (23) - Nov. 22

***John Feliciano*** (48) - Nov. 22

***Rose A. Segarra*** (10) - Nov. 23

***Marcantonio Williams Jr.*** (3) -  
Nov. 25

***Kaylee Noemí Valentín*** (2)  
Nov. 25

***Hector L. Feliciano*** (60) -  
Nov. 26

***Edwin Rivera*** (56) - Nov.  
27

***Solimar Delgado*** (23) -  
Nov. 28

### **Anniversaries**

***Kimm and Scott  
Hargraves*** (14) -  
Oct. 18

***Yamil and Bianca  
Williams*** (3) -  
Oct . 20

***Muñeca (Osorio)  
and  
David Simon-Baker***  
(4) - Oct. 21

***Alicia (Rivera) and  
Mike Tokar*** (3) -  
Oct. 27