

"...y la familia?"

Volume 16, Issue 4

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Needed for Future Issues:

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

Family recipes

Cute things your kids have said



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¿...y la familia?

Our Family Tree

If you think you will find our family tree within the next few pages of this newsletter, think again! I currently have 3,724 names in my Family Tree Maker program. The total number of marriages is 1,135, the total number of generations in the file is fourteen, and the total number of different surnames is 557. Granted, my Family Tree Maker file is comprised of some tangents, such as my ex-husband's ancestry (important to my children and grandchildren, but not relevant to most of you), my mother's ancestry (again, not pertinent for a lot of you), some ancestry on the Finch line, the Hernández line (Auntie Rosita's ancestry), the Sevilla ancestry, and other little offshoots from the main trunk. But by and large, the vast majority of these names are a part of that massive family tree in which we all have our roots.



The exciting part for me is to discover how many of these branches of the family tree intertwine and connect at one point or another. Take for example the family of Teresita Rivera, a second cousin of mine on my mother's side of the family. She and I are related through her mother, Rafaela Collado, who was my mother's first cousin. Teresita's maternal grandmother (Carmen López) was a sister of my maternal grandfather (Juan López). But Teresita's maternal *grandfather* (Francisco Collado) was the son of one of my maternal great-grandmother's sisters (María Petronila Torres). So, by making this connection, this man (Francisco Collado) who I thought was no blood relation to me, turned out to be my first cousin twice removed, while his wife, Carmen López, was my great-aunt—yet Francisco and Carmen were not related to each other.



Here's another example: Cousin Annie Meléndez (who with her husband Wilson García) hosted the 2009 Rivera Family Reunion in Peñuelas, is a first cousin of the Feliciano siblings (who hosted the 2010 Family Reunion in Chicago). That's Annie with Myriam Feliciano in the picture at left. Annie's father, Juan, was the brother of the Felicianos' mother, Lydia. But in doing a little research on Annie's husband (because of him being a García from Peñuelas— to see if we connected), I found that one of Wilson's uncles, José García, was married to Natividad Feliciano, an aunt of our Feliciano cousins. So the Feliciano siblings and Annie's family connect in two different ways.

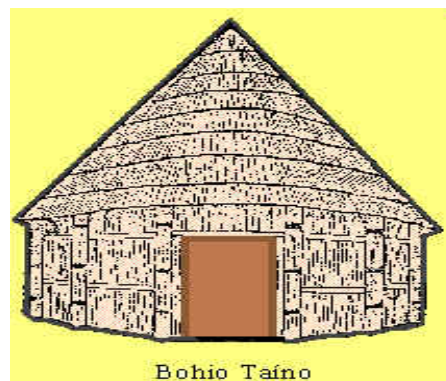
Okay, let's go back to my cousin Teresita. Yes, she is a cousin on my mother's side of the family, BUT her *father*, Juan Rivera, is a direct descendent of Lope Maldonado, our ancestor who you may recall was one of the first mayors of Utuado. Juan Rivera's paternal grandfather was Ildefonso Rivera, the son of Manuel Rivera and Marta Maldonado. Marta was a great-granddaughter of the aforementioned Lope Maldonado.

I was recently pointing out some of these connections to my brother, Ruben García, and he commented, "It's not a family *tree*, it's a *web*." I loved that, because it's so true!

Puerto Rican Primer

The Taino Indians, Cont.

The first part of this article was printed in the Oct/Nov 2011 issue, and the second part was promised for the following issue. However, due to the passing of Cousin René's wife, Carmen Medina, coverage in that issue was dedicated to her and a continuation of the Taino article is appearing here instead.



Imagine the "Eden" called Borikén. It was ruled by nature. A place that was almost completely a rain forest from shore to shore. A place filled with yagrumos, alelés, ceibas, orchids, wild mushrooms - some over 6 feet wide, over 100 species of palm trees, bamboo, elephant ear leaves of the yautía, giant philodendron, giant ferns, mamey and guava trees. A place where wildlife such as cangrejos, manatees, giant sea turtles, iguanas, cotorras, and carpinteros lived undisturbed by man. Giant fish jumped out of rivers and oceans. Each evening Borikén was cooled by the breezes of the Mar Caribe and serenaded by trillions of coquíes. This was our Isla del Encanto during the reign of the brave Taíno people.

In spite of having been almost completely wiped out within two decades, the Taínos left us their heritage - a legacy. Traces of Taíno physical characteristics are found in Taíno descendants clustered in areas of Borinquen. The names of many towns (Mayagüez, Coamo), foods (mamey), instruments, trees and plants are original Taíno names. We have little detailed knowledge of Taíno culture, religion and daily life. What we know comes from Spanish documents and from recent excavations.

Much has been said of the Taínos lately, but it wasn't until the early 1900's that the study of the Taínos took off. The origin of the Taínos was not proven until 1950 when scientists were able to trace them through their unique **white-on-red pottery**. Their origins are in the Orinoco and Amazon River basins - what is now Venezuela and Guianas. The Taínos began their migration, in waves, through the Caribbean Islands in approximately 900 BC. Their origins have been traced to the Village of Saladero in Venezuela.

The Taino dwellings were called **bohíos** and were round with conical shaped roofs without windows. (See illustration at top of page.) The **caney**s, always located in a prominent location, were rectangular structures with windows, built for the caciques and bohiques only. They were large and sometimes housed 15 families. The shelters were built from *bejuco*s and *red de caña* and had thick walls. Each *bohío* and *caney* had storage space made from a flat surface that hung from the roof of the dwelling. The storage space was filled with woven baskets that contained useful items. The floor of the dwelling was made of packed dirt, and was immaculately clean. A *fogón*, a *burén* (griddle) and an *olla* (a large covered clay pot for cooking) were found along with *dujos* and hammocks for seating. Tamed parrots and small (now extinct) domesticated dogs were kept.

Taínos cultivated bitter manioc or **yuca** in conucos (raised gardens). **Conucos** were tall mounds of loose dirt built for farming. They were 10 to 15 feet wide and as tall as a man. The *yuca* was planted in the *conuco*, since it needs aerated soil.

Yuca was the Taíno staple food, and from it flour and casava bread were made. The Taínos primarily used tubers as a source of food. Also harvested were guanábana, yautía, squash, mamey, papaya, pineapple, achiote, sweet potatoes, yams, and corn. Peanuts, lerenes, guava, soursop, pineapples, sea grapes, black-eyed peas, ajíes caballeros, and lima beans grew wild.



Source: Figueroa, Ivonne. "Tainos". *El Boricua*. <http://www.elboricua.com/history>. 1996.

As space allows, the Puerto Rican Primer on the Taino Indians will continue in future issues.

Soursop (guanábana)

A PAGE OUT OF OUR FAMILY HISTORY

Felipe Maldonado Orozco and Rosa María Caraballo

Felipe Maldonado was the second of seven children born to Lope Maldonado and Juana de los Reyes Orozco, both of Arecibo. Felipe was also born in Arecibo, in about 1712 and died in Utuado in about 1797. His first wife was María Jacinta Ruiz, with whom he had ten children. María Jacinta died in 1751, and Felipe married Rosa María Caraballo in Utuado about 1753.

Rosa María Caraballo was born in Arecibo in about 1718. She and Felipe had the following seven children together:

1. Juan M. Maldonado, born Nov. 21, 1754 in Utuado, Puerto Rico. He died in Utuado about 1821.
2. **Antonio Maldonado**, born Oct. 9, 1755 in Utuado, and died in Peñuelas on Nov. 27, 1814. He married Juana Santiago, and our family patriarch Florencio Rivera descends from this union.
3. Joseph Maldonado, born Oct. 16, 1756 in Utuado, and died in Utuado in 1799. Joseph married Paula Santiago of Utuado and they had twelve children.
4. Bacilio Maldonado was born on June 14, 1759 in Utuado.
5. Rosa Maldonado was born in Utuado on Sept. 1, 1761 and died in Adjuntas on Feb. 22, 1839. She married Francisco Rivera of Guayanilla.
6. Juan Maldonado was born in 1763 in Utuado and died in Utuado in 1821. He married María Nieves of Arecibo and they had eleven children.
7. María Marta Maldonado was born in 1774 in Utuado and died on Feb. 21, 1839, in Adjuntas. María Marta married Juan Damasio Torres of Utuado.

Felipe's son, Antonio, was the father of Felipe Maldonado Santiago. Felipe married María Apolinaria Rivera and they had five children. One of their children was María Dominga Maldonado, who became the mother of Florencio Rivera. Antonio was also the father of Cipriana Maldonado. Cipriana married José de los Santos Rivera, and one of their eight children was Manuel Alejo, who became the father of Florencio Rivera. In other words, Maria Dominga Maldonado and Manuel Alejo Rivera were first cousins. When this cousins married there were special "dispensas" given by the Catholic church.



Guess Who This Baby Is?

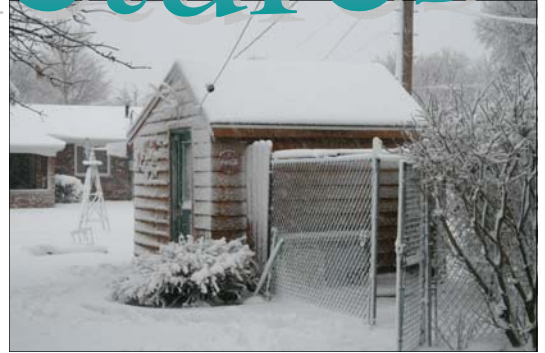
The answer is found on
page 6.

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 Maldonado (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 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.*

¿...y la familia?

Winter Pictures



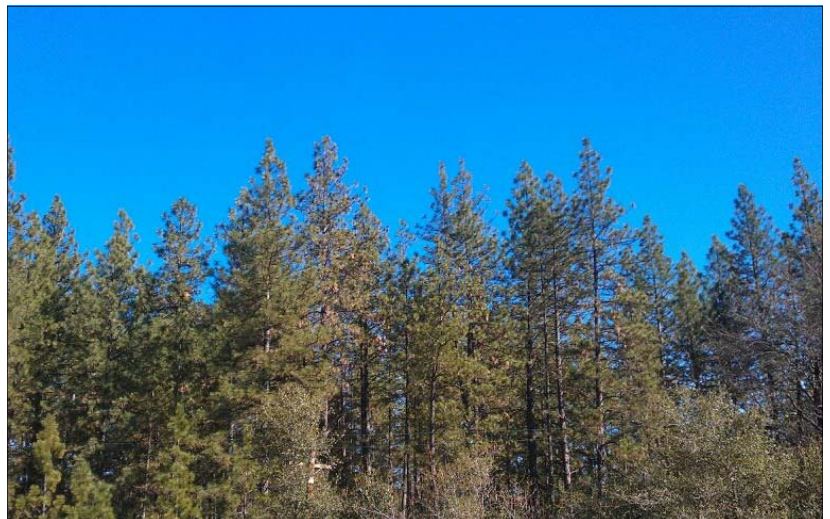
Snow in Seward, Nebraska...photos by Kathleen Merritt Caffey.



Snow in Denver...photos sent in by Joi De Nardo Stenroos.



*Snow in Seattle...
Photo by Tory Pettit*



*And then there is Placerville. No snow yet!
Photo by Norma García Pettit*



Wilson García Dies

Wilson García, husband our cousin Annie Meléndez of Peñuelas, Puerto Rico, passed away from a massive heart attack on Feb. 4, 2012. He was in Santo Domingo at the time of his death, where he had gone to check on the apartment that he and Annie have there.

Wilson was the son of Reynaldo García and Victoria Piña. Married to Annie for 36 years, Wilson was the father of Rosannie, Joannie, and Annette and had three grandchildren by these three daughters. He is shown in this photo dancing with Annie at the family reunion that they hosted in Peñuelas in 2009.

Many condolences and our heartfelt sympathy to Annie, her daughters, grandchildren and the extended family that is grieving the loss of this dear man.



Ruben and Lisa Quiñones made a short but sweet trip to Puerto Rico to attend the wedding of Ruben's youngest brother, Heriberto (Tito) Quiñones. They were only there for four days, but savored every minute with the family.



Dennis Nelson and his wife, Marina Ramos-Nelson (youngest daughter of Olga García Smith), are expecting their first child! The couple, who married last July, are overjoyed at the news. The baby's due date is August 17th. Many congratulations to the happy couple and best wishes for a healthy baby!

New Arrivals!

Congratulations to **Teena Warren**, daughter of Olga María (García) Smith and granddaughter of Oscar and Ana García. Teena gave birth to healthy twin babies born a month early, on January 23, 2012. **Angeleena Sue-Lianna Ketcher** was born at 7:36 a.m. and weighed 4 lbs. 7 ozs. **Timmothy Jiohnnny-Wayne Ketcher** was born at 7:39 a.m. and weighed 3 lbs. 15 ozs. May God bless the little ones with continued good health.



The baby pictured on page 4 is Ruben García,, son of Oscar and Ana López Maldonado.

2012 FAMILY REUNION



We are honored to host this year's Rivera Family Reunion in Laurens, South Carolina on June 22, 23 and 24, 2012. Our theme is "I love you forever". Jackie, Waleska, Mom and I have been busy planning and organizing this grand event with what represents what our family is all about—LOVE. We love forever and celebrate every day the love that was passed on by those we have lost but still remain in our thoughts and hearts. We want this Family Reunion to be a joyous event to pass our love on and to be remembered forever. Make your reservations; call Wally to order your t-shirts! (864) 872-1070. WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU SOON!

Tenemos el honor de hospedar La Reunión Familiar Rivera este año en Laurens, Carolina del Sur el 22, 23 y 24, de junio 2012. Nuestro tema es "Te quiero para siempre". Jackie, Waleska, Mami y yo hemos estado muy ocupadas planeando y organizando este evento que representa el gran "AMOR" de nuestra familia. Nos encanta celebrar cada día el amor que fue transmitido por aquellos que hemos perdido, pero aún permanecen en nuestros pensamientos y corazones. Queremos que la Reunión Familiar Rivera sea un acontecimiento feliz para pasar nuestro amor y que sea recordado para siempre. ¡Realiza tus reservaciones; llama a Waleska (864) 872-1070 para su pedido de sus camisetas! ¡ESPERAMOS VERLOS PRONTO!

HOTEL ACCOMODATIONS

\$50/night Economy Inn - (864) 681-1153

120 Bolt Drive, Laurens, S.C. 29360

This hotel is a 2 min. drive to Helen's house and we have initially blocked 10 rooms. Owner has agreed to cut us a deal if additional rooms are scheduled.

\$87/night Comfort Inn - (864) 963-2777

I-385 & Fairview Rd, Simpsonville, SC 29681

This is on the interstate about 26 min. away, close to Wal*Mart, restaurants, etc.

ITINERARY

DATE: Friday, June 22, 2012: LOCATION: Helen's House – 514 Church Street, Laurens, SC 29360

Welcome dinner Southern style with a Puerto Rican twist.

DATE: Saturday, June 23, 2012: LOCATION: Waleska's House – 709 Church Street, Laurens, SC 29360

WEAR YOUR T-SHIRTS!!!! Breakfast will end at 10am. Sharing our love at the Pool, Music, BBQ and RUMBA! Until 3PM

6:00pm I love you forever Dinner, Dancing, and more Loving. Directions will be provided.

DATE: Sunday, June 24, 2012: LOCATION: Waleska's House – 709 Church Street, Laurens, SC 29360

Morning Breakfast.

Family Trip and Tour.

Left over guests over Helen's House for RUMBA!

“¿...y la familia?”

c/o Norma I. Pettit
2426 Meadow Lane
Placerville, CA 95667
Phone: (530) 327-9361 **NEW!!**
E-mail: mamanony@sbcglobal.net

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

Birthday Greetings

Eduardo Medero (24) -
Feb. 2

Juan González (51) - Feb. 2

Katherine García (47) -
Feb. 4

Brook Rivera (33) - Feb. 5

Angela Nicholson (45) -
Feb. 6

Maritza Rivera (49) -
Feb. 11

Melissa González (26) -
Feb. 15

Nicole García (16) - Feb. 16

Ruben J. García (63) -
Feb. 21

Heriberto Rivera (60) -
Feb. 24

Gwendolyn Rivera (10) -
Feb. 27

Dustin Yager (27) - Mar. 3

Miguel González (17) -
Mar. 3

Matthew Hargraves (12) -
Mar. 3

Marcel Antonio Quiñones
(4) - Mar. 5

Stephen Nicholson (15) -
Mar. 11

Rafael González (43) -
Mar. 13

Karen Rivera (33) -
Mar. 15

James Caffey (70) -
Mar. 15

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

Joi Stenroos (62) - Mar. 18

Raynell H. Díaz (31) -
Mar. 19

Veronica Nicholson (14) -
Mar. 21

Michael Rivera (13) -
Mar. 22

Mackenzie Eddy (19) -
Mar. 24

Todd Anthony Springer
(10) - Mar. 24

Sonia (Quiñones) Rambo
(34) - Mar. 26

Barbara Nicholson (66) -
Mar. 26

Julian Alexander Rivera
(2) - Mar. 27

Milagros Rivera (69) -
Mar. 28

Lisa (Finch) Warner (46) -
Mar. 28

Anniversaries



Sheila Andujar and
Edwin Rivera (15)
Feb. 15

Frankie and Amy Valentin
(9) - Mar. 29

Sonia (Quiñones) and
Jake Rambo (10)
Mar. 30