

# "...y la familia?"

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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 art-  
work*

*Original poetry  
Vignettes on*

*your imme-  
diate family  
Favorite family  
recipes*

*Cute things your  
kids have  
said*

*Funny stories  
Prayer Requests*

## Finding Family Through Facebook

**Facebook**—Some people refuse to join, others join but don't do too much with it, and some people can't go through a day without checking their Facebook page to see what's going on with everyone on their list of friends. There are days when I don't have time to even read e-mail, much less read what others have written on FB, but like it or not, use it regularly or not, you have to admit that it is a great way to reconnect with people you've lost contact with. The following is an awesome example:

On May 13th I got a "friend invite" from a niece that I only met once—32 years ago!! Leslie had learned that I was Facebook friends with her brother, Oscar Umar González ("Meet Your Relatives", Dec. '08/Jan. '09 issue, page 3) and she contacted me. Wow, was I surprised and excited! After accepting the invitation, I posted the news on FB and within half an hour there was a response from cousin Kathy (Merritt) Caffey, who wrote, "We Riveras find family in the strangest places. I don't know what side of Norma's family you are but I'm a first cousin on the Rivera side. Welcome to the family. Good for Norma." Not long afterwards, Leslie wrote, "Thank you Kathleen Caffey, I am her niece from her brother Oscar González' side. I am so glad I am able to connect with her again."

So right there, a connection was made between two cousins who had not been aware of the existence of one another. Leslie invited me to be "friends" with her younger sister, Diana, who was only 10 years old the one time I met the children of my half-brother, Oscar (known to the family as "Oscalito").

Oscalito was my father's son from a relationship he had prior to marrying my mother. My father did not raise him, and Oscalito took the surname of his step-father.

I have been busy getting to know Leslie and Diana in the last two weeks. ☺  
Read more about Diana and her family on page 3.

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# Indiana Family Reunion 2010

Host Family: The Grandchildren of Carmen Maldonado

We are counting the days for all of you to join us as we host the 2010 Family Reunion. We have received confirmation of families traveling from California, Florida, Iowa, Colorado and Puerto Rico. If you're still undecided we hope you will reconsider and join us for this fun-filled weekend, June 25-27th.

**Friday, June 25th** – East Chicago Marina (Social Center)  
3301 Aldis Street – East Chicago, IN  
Time: 6:30 pm – 11 pm  
Cost: \$10 per person/Cash Bar  
Buffet Dinner and DJ Music  
www.EastChicago.com (Marina Tab)



**Saturday, June 26th** – During the day, make plans to visit Chicago. The world famous Taste of Chicago begins on 6/25. The Taste, held at Grant Park, features over 70 food vendors and free musical entertainment. Chicago is also a great place to visit museums (Science/Industry, Shedd Aquarium, Adler Planetarium, Art Museum). You may also want to consider visiting Navy Pier, home of the Children's Museum as well as IMAX and several specialty shops and restaurants. If you just want to walk around Chicago, that's fun too! Take a stroll by the lakefront or walk the Magnificent Mile, home to many high end shops. (www.explorechicago.org )

If you're staying in Indiana, Chicago is about 30-45 minutes away. I-94 will take you into Chicago (Lake Shore Drive exit). If you don't want to drive, you can take the train, located at East Chicago. Taking the train is the best way to travel – you won't need to fight the traffic or look for a parking garage. The train will leave you right at Grant Park. We hope to have the train schedule available for you when you arrive.

In Indiana, we have the Westfield Shopping Mall, Deep River Water Park, Albanese Candy Factory, the Passion of Christ Shrine, Indiana Dunes National Park (beaches) and various town festivals. There are several casinos in the area also (Ameristar, Horseshoe, Majestic).

After a day of sight seeing, we hope you just want to relax. Come join us at the home of Carmen and Max Carrasquillo for an outdoor affair. Come casual and be ready to eat some Puerto Rican food, catch up with family and listen to music.

Place: The Home of Carmen and Max Carrasquillo (anytime after 5 p.m.)  
10004 Belmont Court  
St. John, Indiana 46373  
219-365-5096 – home

**Sunday, June 27th** – We will hate to see you leave but want to say our Good Byes. Come join us for breakfast at Carmen and Max's home beginning at 8 a.m.



Questions - contact: Myriam Pineda - Myr9045@comcast.net (219)433-9208  
Nellie Feliciano - NEL4743@aol.com (219)678-0582

At this time in our family history...

- On June 8, 1893, Petronila Pacheco was born. She was a sister of Otilia (the mother of Nery, Isidro, Tita and Delia). Their other sister, Francisca, was born on June 11, 1887.
- Auntie Anita Merritt passed away on June 25, 1998 at the home of her daughter, Kathy Caffey in Nebraska. She had been suffering from emphysema for a number of years. Anita was the youngest child of the union of Florencio Rivera and Ana Cruz García, and was only a week old when her mother died.
- On July 3, 1861, my great-grandparents, Manuel Alejo Rivera and Maria Apolinaria Maldonado were married.
- My beautiful and loving sister, Olga María (García) Smith, went home to Jesus on July 4, 2006, having been led to the Lord by our cousin Mary Lillian Pérez only ten days earlier. My heart aches with loneliness for her, but I will see her again in Heaven some day.
- Auntie Adele was born on July 22, 1909 in Peñuelas, Puerto Rico. She was the oldest daughter of the union of Florencio Rivera and Ana Cruz García. She was not quite seven years old when her mother died a week after giving birth to baby Anita.
- Florencio Rivera ("Papa Flor")—our patriarch—died on July 22, 1941.
- My mother, Ana María López Maldonado, was born in Adjuntas, Puerto Rico, on July 26, 1911. She was the daughter of Juan López and María de los Santos Maldonado. She had one older brother, Confesor.



*Diana's son, Robert Junior, at the beach in Florida, a day before he died.*

## Meet Your Relatives

**Diana (González) del Orbe** is the daughter of Oscar González and the granddaughter of Oscar Cruz García. I met her once, in 1978, and now have recently been reunited with her via the internet. It will take us a while to fill in the blanks on the 32 years we didn't have any contact, but we are working on it! So far I know that she is the mother of three children and has four grandchildren. Diana shared a moving story with me about her son, Robert, who passed away three years ago, on May 29, 2007. Here, with her permission, is Diana's story.

My son Robert Junior was 20 when he passed away. However, he suffered a life struggling a battle that many didn't understand and they pushed him away, especially his father and his family. My son suffered of schizophrenia since he was 15. The last 1-1/2 years of his life he tried to commit suicide because he couldn't deal with the voices and he was very upset with his father. I asked him if he wanted to go to the hospital and he said yes. That was the first time he ever asked for help. I took him and in this hospital (Elmhurst Hospital) a sister from my church worked there. She would go see him on the psych ward on her lunch break. She also introduced him to a gentleman that shared with my son Junior the Bible and the Word of God. He was attending the church I belong to but was uncertain and had not surrendered at that time. God spoke to my son then and he accepted Jesus as his Lord and Savior. When Junior came home he looked different; he looked happy. He was going to church a lot more. He apologized to so many of us for the way he behaved with us. He went to training to become a security guard and he passed all his tests and training. He stopped his own medication and was able to cope with every day. God changed him. My son always told me he wanted to be normal and God made him normal. Jesus waited for him to surrender himself and Junior did. Seven months later after his salvation, Junior succeeded every thing that all of the doctors said he would never accomplish. They wanted me to put him in a home because he could be a danger to us and himself. I refused to. God gave him to me the way he was for a purpose and I loved him so much I could never even think about that. He is my only son. I have two daughters. So I could not even think about it. However he did everything they said he could not do. God is so wonderful.

Junior was happy, and his friends took him to Florida on vacation because my son got his first job and he was supposed to start a couple of days after they got back. He was going to do security in an exclusive hotel in Manhattan. He was so happy. On his vacation he didn't realize that Mother's Day he would be away from me so he called me and he was upset. I told him I was fine and he deserved this vacation and I was happy for him so not to be sad. Three days later I found out he got in an accident. He was a passenger on a jet ski and he fell off and his other friend was behind them with another jet ski. He didn't realize that Junior fell off. When he saw my son float up he tried to miss him but he hit him in the head and Junior sunk again. Then he drowned. They revived him on the beach. I got there at 3 a.m. the next day and at 8am the doctor came out and told me he was going under again that they were working in him and he was not responding. I started to cry, my sister Leslie on my right, crying, her daughter-in-law on my left, crying. Then I realized that I shouldn't be crying and I should be glorifying God. So I stopped, put my hands up and said, "Lord I trust in You and I give You my son and do what You know is best." The doctor heard me and she said she was sorry. I told her not to be because they were doing what they could and now it is up to God. I hugged and her told her I was not mad. 45 minutes later they came to me and this doctor told me they revived him. That it was a miracle because they never, never, never work on a person that long. My son was responding to my voice. My brother Tommy and Leslie accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior through what Jesus did with my son and how at peace I was and how I trust and love God.

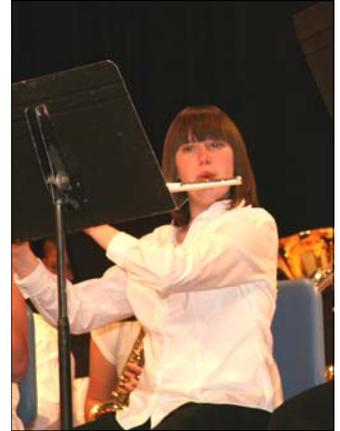
My son stood with us for two weeks. On the day of Memorial Day of 2007 I stood with my son in the hospital. I would pray, sing hymns, read the Bible to him every day. That night the nurse let me sleep in his room but I was to leave at 6 a.m. so she wouldn't get in trouble. My son was kept on a medication that kept him paralyzed because he tried to pull the tubes out that they had on his lungs. So he was not able to move but that night he reached out to me on May 29, 2007, and I grabbed his arm and I whispered to him that I understood and if he felt safe and at peace that I understood if he wanted to go with God. I would be all right and I would never forget him. I kissed him and his feet as I always did. Two hours later he left me to go with his Lord and Savior - he went to live in Paradise. All of the nurses and doctors were so broken, not one eye was dry. They held me and we all prayed. Lots of the nurses asked what Bible I read and what verses I recommended. I told them, "The entire book." There was a mother in the hospital during my stay in Florida whose son got shot in the neck and was expected to die. I prayed with her, shared with her Corinthians, and I gave her a small Bible. Her son was out of intensive care in one week. She was broken by my news with my son and I told her that God works in ways we will never understand so I accept it all as it is because it is God's will not mine. I miss my son so much and I still love him, too. I will never forget his smile, laughter, smell, annoying ways, his joy and accomplishments and more. I wish you had the chance to meet him; you would have loved him, too. But one day you will. Up in heaven with all of our loved ones. Thank you for wanting to know what happened. I love to share my testimony of this experience that God allowed me to experience.

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# 2010 Graduates



Hayli Frosheiser has completed the eighth grade and is headed for high school this fall. Throughout middle school she was a straight-A student and took honor classes. In eighth grade she was yearbook editor and also taught the 6th graders the Thriller dance for their show. Hayli was chosen one of the eight top students in her graduating class to receive the keys of excellence because she works hard and keeps her life in balance while excelling at many things, including honors math, science, English, art, band and choir. She was also voted all-star singer at her school. She wrote a reflection paper on her middle school years and gave God the credit for it all. Although she likes many things, her first love is Jesus. When things get tough she said she goes for a walk and talks to God. She also thanked her grandparents for pushing her in all the right directions.



Now she is looking forward to high school and taking a full load besides Marching and Symphonic Band and Mixed Choir. She also insisted on four years of high school Spanish instead of two; she is proud of her heritage.



Michael García, son of Ruben and Katherine García, graduated with honors from De La Salle High School in Concord, CA on May 23rd. Michael was accepted to five colleges and was offered a partial scholarship to the University of Oregon. He has decided to go to the University of California at Santa Cruz because of their strong programs in his area of interest, Computer Engineering.

Nicole García, shown with brother Michael and in inset, graduated from the 8th grade at Tabernacle School in Concord, also with honors, and has been accepted to Carondelet High School, the all-girl Catholic school that is a sister school to De La Salle.

*“Katherine and I are very proud of both Michael and Nicole for their hard work and achievements.” — Ruben García*



**Marina Ramos** (left) and **Michelle Fastenau** (right), both of whom are daughters of my late sister, Olga García Smith, are now college graduates. Both women graduated with degrees in psychology. Marina, who graduated from UC Davis, will be pursuing graduate studies at the California Institute of Integral Studies in San Francisco. Michelle was also accepted at a graduate program for psychology.

Congratulations to Marina, Michelle, Michael, and Nicole. It's a proud time for the García clan.



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# New Arrivals!



Meet baby **Julian Alexander**, son of Julie Rivera, grandson of Raulito Rivera, and great-grandson of the late Raúl Rivera and his widow, Julia. Baby Julian's great-aunt Kathy sent me the photos, along with the birth statistics: the baby was born in Orlando, Florida, on March 27th, weighing 6 pounds., 11 ounces, and measuring 19 inches.

Now meet **Mirra Noemí Quiñones**, baby daughter of Ruben and Lisa Quiñones, and granddaughter of Randy and Norma Pettit (me!!). Mirra was born at 12:54 p.m. on May 1st, in Martinez, California. She weighed 7 pounds, 9 ounces and measured 19 inches and is absolutely BEAUTIFUL!! Older brother, Marcel, 2, already loves his baby sister.



← Mirra was getting her hair washed for the first time. She seemed to really enjoy the beauty parlor treatment.



*These graduation photos of Nicole García (story on page 4) were received after that page was printed out.*



A little more info on Nicole... Her graduation ceremony was June 2nd. She was awarded the "President's Award for Educational Excellence" and the school's "English Award of Excellence." The following was said of Nicole during the presentation of the English award:

"This year there were several English students in class that were really gifted, but this young lady is a student who came to mind with this English award. She is an outstanding English student. She has a great gift to use language in written form, which is evidenced with her amazing poetry rhymes, her grammar skills, and her overall interest in class each day. She is an amazing young lady, who consistently does great work in class. She is somewhat quiet in class at times, but yet she has an incredible ability to use words effectively, both written and orally. She is a great role model to other young people, and I will miss her greatly next year."

## A Page Out of Our Family History

As explained in the last issue, DNA testing along the paternal line (Florencio Rivera, his father, Manuel Alejo, Manuel Alejo's father, José de los Santos, etc.) has revealed that our Y-Haplotree is R1b1b2. This haplogroup was prevalent in Western Europe, predominantly in the Iberian Peninsula, which encompasses Spain and Portugal.

The oldest record that I have on this line is the birth of Francisco Rivera, the father of José de los Santos, in 1762. I'm hoping to continue searching for more data on our family tree this summer, but until I find out more, we can't even be sure that the Rivera name continues all the way back to the men who traveled with Columbus. After all, my siblings and I are supposed to be Riveras, but Dad didn't get the Rivera name at birth because his parents weren't married at the time. His birth record says "Oscar Cruz" (no second last name). He later tacked on his mother's second last name as well and enlisted into the Merchant Marines as Oscar Cruz García. The Americans, not familiar with the use of two surnames, converted Cruz into a middle name, and henceforth my father was officially Oscar C. García. So who is to say if six or more generations ago the paternal line way back is another surname instead of Rivera due to a couple not being married? The Catholic church was very strict about not including information on the father of the child if the parents were not legally wed, and public records are virtually nonexistent from so long ago.

Did our ancestors sail with Columbus? Or did they arrive in the flood of European immigrants that followed? I have to admit that I have been scouring historical records in search of the names of the men who sailed with Columbus. There is a fantastic website (<http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/caribarch/columbus.htm>) that lists the names of the men who traveled with Columbus on his first voyage to the Americas.

Between 86 to 89 men accompanied Christopher Columbus on his first voyage. There were 20 on the Niña, 26 on the Pinta, and 41 on the Santa María. After the Santa María sank, 39 men were left to establish a fort, La Navidad (the Santa María sank on Christmas eve), in the village of the Taino cacique Guanacanagari. I perused the list and although there were several Garcias, I didn't find any Riveras. However, (sour grapes?) Puerto Rico was not "discovered" during that first voyage so that list is really of no consequence to our mission.

On his second voyage, there were "seventeen ships, 1500 men, horses, pigs, beasts of burden; almost everything that would be needed to reproduce an Iberian homeland in what had been described as an earthly paradise." [Vista article, "Columbus, My Friend", Nov. 3, 1991, by William F. Keegan]. Is there a list of these 1500 men? I haven't found one.

When the Spaniards arrived in Borikén, the Taino population was living in peace. Their bows and arrows were used only in self defense against the periodic invasions of the cannibalistic Carib Indians who came to kidnap their young men and women. They spent their days lazily swinging in their hammocks and playing ball or dancing their "areytos". Their yucca patches were cultivated by the women, while the men employed themselves in the building of canoes and *bohíos* (huts). All this changed at the hands of the ruthless Spaniards who greedily enslaved them and treated them cruelly in their quest for gold. Ultimately there were distributions of Tainos among the early settlers, which eventually led to a Taino rebellion. Squelched by the mighty Spanish hand, the few Tainos that survived the diseases, weapons and ill-treatment fled to the mountains, where over time they intermarried with the Europeans. Nevertheless, they remain a strong thread in the tapestry of our Puerto Rican ancestry.

# Relatives

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# Write

Norma:

I think that the DNA article was fabulous. What a great source of information this is. I have talked about doing this on my own for a while now, but since you have had Ruben tested and now Joi is doing it, no need since it covers both sides male and female. I can't thank you enough for having this done. What an enlightenment. It comes as a great comfort knowing where my origins originate from. Sadly, we can't find out my father's side of things since there is no surviving male in our immediate family. I can't wait to see what the results are for Joi and find out what the origins are on our mothers' side of the family. How interesting.....I love it. Thank you so much for doing this. Can't wait to get together at the family reunion, cuz. Love ya, Meryem Merritt

That DNA testing with mouth swabs is FANTASTIC!!! Too bad Jimmy passed away at 18. Had that not have happened, we could have possibly found out who Grandpa's real dad was. Still ... that's AWESOME!!!

:) Vanessa Braddock [Meryem's daughter]

Update on mtDNA testing: Cousin Joi has sent in her cheek swabs! Preliminary results on the maternal ancestry of Adela, Oscar, María, Elena, Guar, and Anita should be in by June 23, with more extensive results due by July 7th. We'll keep you posted on the results!

Thank you Norma for the amazing coverage of our Circa Vintage store. We have been crazy busy and have just started an online store. The girl in the white beaded gown in the photo [April/May 2010 issue, page 3] is your cousin Angie Stick[e]. Pepi's daughter. She does a lot of modeling for us and other organizations. Thanks again for the story!

We will be at a NARTS resale convention in Palm Beach June 25-27 and will be missing the reunion this year. We will look forward to all the photos.

Angie is modeling some of our store outfits. A few of these I only use for shows. All are vintage. She has been doing quite a few fashion shows for our store and she is always a hit!

Love, Carol



Check out our new online store!  
[www.circavintageshoppe.com](http://www.circavintageshoppe.com)

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c/o Norma I. Pettit  
2426 Meadow Lane  
Placerville, CA 95667  
Phone: (530) 642-8960  
E-mail: [mamanony@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mamanony@sbcglobal.net)

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

## Birthday Greetings

Jayden I. Feliciano (8) - June 5    Meryem Rivera (59) - June 19    Lilliam Rivera (67) - July 11  
Máximo Carrasquillo (34) - June 5    Enid Rivera (25) - June 20    José Medina (60) - July 11  
Jeremy Carrasquillo (33) - June 5    Norma (García) Pettit (58) - June 20    Kayla N. Reinke (11) - July 15  
Nellie Feliciano (50) - June 9    Laurie Jimenez (51) - June 21    René Rivera Jr. (48) - July 21  
Annette García (27) - June 10    Tommy González (40) - June 21    Vickie Jimenez (50) - July 22  
Joyce Montalvo (10) - June 12    Jason Pineda (31) - June 22    Christina Krause (32) - July 23  
Alicia Rivera (28) - June 12    María L. Feliciano (27) - June 24    Annalise Cruz Rivera (6) - July 24  
Julia Cruz Vilá (84) - June 13    Scott Hargraves (45) - June 25    Cynthia Feliciano (32) - July 25  
Leslie Feliciano (25) - June 13    Cindy Nicholson (39) - June 29    Ada Rivera Segarra (30) - July 25  
C.J. Burch (21) - June 14    Alura G. Barnes (17) - June 30    Rachel Nicholson (10) - July 26  
Emily Medina (32) - June 15    Angel Feliciano (15) - July 2    Fernando Vázquez (20) - July 28  
Garnet Rivera (65) - June 15    Elizabeth Rivera (14) - July 5    Paul Krause (65) - July 30  
Kimm (Reinke) Hargraves (47) - June 16    Eric R. Stenroos (27) - July 7  
Ken Reinke (47) - June 16    Carmen Nydia (Feliciano) Carrasquillo (54) - July 7

## Anniversaries

Ken & Vanessa Braddock (7) - June 15  
Annie Meléndez & Wilson García - June 15  
René & Carmen Rivera (49) - June 17  
Jenny & Ted Reinke (49) - June 18  
Angela & David Nicholson (13) - June 21  
Angélica & José L. Medina (62) - July 9  
Edna & Edwin Rivera (6) - July 11  
Rosanie García & José Jasad Santiago (1) - July 11  
Garnet & Carlos Rivera (23) - July 14  
Cindy & Christopher Nicholson (17) - July 17  
Joanne & Robert McLaughlin (13) - July 21  
Randy & Norma Pettit (28) - July 30

*¡Feliz Cumpleaños!*