

# "...y la familia?"

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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*

## I Remember...



*In the Oct/Nov 2012 issue of the newsletter, the article "Reflecting About...Moving Away" (Pettit, p.3), I made mention of my maternal grandmother, Mama Santa. Tía Tita Medina wrote me a note saying that the*



*article touched her heart. "We loved her very much," she wrote. "I enjoyed her stewed eggplants. Also, I used to help her mend her broken dolls with egg whites. Delia and I have fond memories of her and your mom. Ana [my mother] also was a wonderful hostess. During the war we used to gather at their house to play bingo and drink ginger tea. Bless their souls."*

*Cousin Kathy (Merritt) Caffey and cousin Carlos Rivera have sent me some "I Remember" stories and I have one of my own, so the focus of this issue is going to be stories of yesteryear. If your memory gets jogged, you can send me stories for publication in future issues. I'd love to share them!*

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# *I Remember...the SpongeBob Contest*

*by Kathy (Merritt) Caffey*

For as long as I can remember, Hayli and her Poppy (Jim) have had a love affair with SpongeBob. I swear they memorized those shows and relate to each other over the dinner table various episodes even today.

Back when Hayli was much younger Jim came up with this idea...and he has some doozies. Anyway SpongeBob was having a contest of some sort and Hayli wanted to enter. Her chances of winning were next to none. Jim decided she was going to be a winner (well she is already a winner in our eyes). He went to great lengths to plan out how he was going to accomplish this. Most of these shows do not publish the winners; you have to write in for a list.

So she sent in her entrance as was required and waited with grand anticipation to see if she would win or not. After the entrance time was over she received a letter in the mail telling her she was indeed a winner and that she would receive a phone call confirming this. Oh, how she waited, asking about the phone call. Finally a phone call did come from Jim's cell phone to the home phone asking for Hayli Frosheiser. Jim, disguising his voice, asked her all about SpongeBob and his friends and told her that he was glad she was a winner out of the many that had applied. He told her to watch for a package in the mail that would contain her prize.

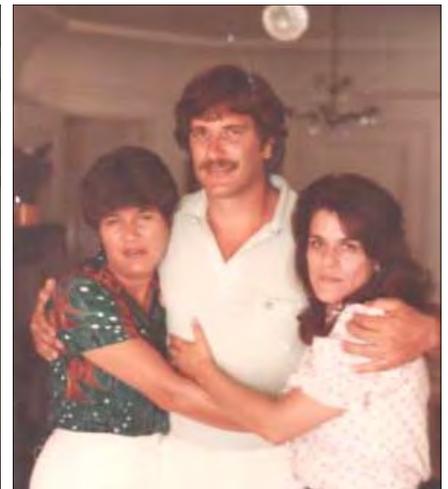


Several weeks later a large package did arrive in the mail with a great many SpongeBob and friend items. She truly believes, maybe to this day, that she was a winner and her Poppy was the happiest man in the world to give his granddaughter a great deal of pleasure with a well laid out plan that made her at that time the envy of her friends. It shows to what lengths a grandfather will go to make a granddaughter happy.

To this day, I think he has taught her a great gift ...love and imagination.

Feb. 8th marks four years since the passing of **María Nicholson**. Who can forget how charming she was as our Queen Bee at the 2005 Family Reunion in Ponce, Puerto Rico, and how much she enjoyed being honored with a plaque from the mayor?

In her memory, I am printing a photo of her with my two youngest children, Lucas Randall and Ana Victoria Pettit, taken on a visit to see her in 1989.



The photo on the right is of Auntie Marie's three children—Jenny, George, and Victoria, taken in 1985.

## “I Remember...The Bull and the Mangoes”

a story that Isidro Rivera told to the family gathered at his house this past Thanksgiving, recounted here by his oldest son, Carlos.



One day dad went out hunting for mangos to take to the market to sell. He found a mango tree in a pasture where cows were grazing. He had to climb over a fence to get to the tree. After collecting some mangos he began to climb down, when unfortunately a bull took interest in him and approached the tree huffing and puffing and shaking his horns.



Dad decided he would stay in the tree hoping the bull would get tired and leave, but for a long time it did not. Finally the bull wandered away but still kept an eye on dad. Dad said that he looked at the fence, and looked at where the bull was and where dad was and tried to figure out whether he could beat the bull to the fence since the bull had to “run the hypotenuse” of the triangle to the fence.

Dad thought he might have a chance. So he quickly jumped down, leaving the mangos behind, and ran as fast as he could to the fence, barely outrunning the bull. As he scurried under the barbed wire fence as fast as he could, his shirt got caught on one of the barbs and tore. He said he was more upset over tearing his shirt than losing the mangos since it was one of only two shirts that he owned. He laughed and laughed telling us the story until tears ran from his eyes.

## The Way We Were



1. José and Tita Medina at the home of Oscar García (Ponce, Puerto Rico) around 1984.
2. Olga, Norma and Joi—snug as three bugs in a rug—at the Pettit home in Placerville, CA in 1994.
3. Cathy Rivera, (Raúl’s daughter) date unknown, but it looks like she was about six years old here, judging by her missing teeth. ☺



# My Elementary School Burned Down

By Norma I. (García) Pettit

Even though it happened almost 54 years ago, I remember it like it was yesterday—the image of my mother standing on the sidewalk with other mothers and children, and the women were all crying at the sight of our charred, destroyed elementary school. The newspapers reported that a boy had started the fire in the principal’s office. He had broken in to burn a test paper in which he had written “rin” instead of “ran.” The boy was later sent to a mental institution.



Jefferson students were disbursed among several other San Francisco schools. My brother and sister were sent to Parkside while I was bused to Francis Scott Key. In the photo at left, taken on June 1, 1959, Jefferson’s principal was explaining to students about their assigned schools. I like how she is pointing with a classroom bell! I am the tall girl, almost 7 years old, standing on the left side of the blackboard.

For the first few years I was in the main building at 43rd Avenue and Kirkham. My feeling, corroborated by my friends Diane and Sandy, who were in the same grade, is that we “Jefferson kids” were resented by students and staff alike because we caused Francis Scott Key to be overcrowded. We were the outsiders and were often bullied or harassed by the regular FSK students.

When we were in fifth grade, three classes were moved to the Annex a couple of blocks away from the “new” school. The Annex consisted of three bungalows in a row, and a pathetic looking playground. One part of the playground had a chain link fence surrounding a pit that presumably had been part of the foundation of a building that no longer stood there. This fence had an unlocked gate, and while we typically didn’t enter that area, if one of our playground balls ended up in the pit, one of us would climb down in there to get it. No problem—no scolding by teachers—no complaints by students. Across the street from the Annex there was a sandwich shop that sold the best hamburgers in the world for 50 cents. We were allowed to go there for lunch, but only if we walked to the corner and crossed at the crosswalk. The thought of jaywalking was very tempting, but we never disobeyed; we didn’t want to lose our privilege of eating in the sandwich shop. I didn’t go there often, but whenever I asked Mom for 50 cents to buy a hamburger, she never refused me the money, even though it was the price an entire “Card Ticket,” with which students could ride on a City bus or streetcar ten times.

My memories of our time spent in the Annex are joyful ones. We absolutely loved school now that we were isolated and had our own space. Our teachers seemed happier, too. On Open House, I was really excited to show Mom my beloved classroom, and I was so surprised to hear her say, “Ay, bendito,” as she gingerly went up the sagging wooden steps to the decrepit bungalow. I guess to her it seemed like a pathetic little school, but it was like heaven to us kids.

Even so, there was great anticipation about returning to a beautiful, brand-new Jefferson School, which we did in 1964. No more being bused to the other end of the Sunset District! I could walk to school and get home from school much earlier. When students from overcrowded Grattan School were bused to the new Jefferson School, we original Jefferson kids tried to be welcoming to them—we knew how it felt to be the outsiders. Some of the “Grattan” kids became very good friends of mine.

Whatever happened to the boy who allegedly set the school on fire? Cousin George Nicholson sent me a website link that told his story. He spent five years in the mental institution. Now in his 60’s and wheelchair bound due to diabetes, he never married or had children. He still claims he is innocent.



¿...y la familia?

# Sasha's 75th Birthday Bash



1. Sasha and her sis, Joi 2. Sasha's daughters, Laurie, Vickie and Edie, cutting fruit for the platter 3. A radiant "birthday girl" 4. Vickie and Sasha dancing 5. Sasha and grandsons, Julian and Dustin 6. A touching moment as the girls toasted their mother 7. Edie catered, but many helped to create this beautiful spread



There were about 75 friends and family members in attendance at a rented hall in Crestone, CO to celebrate Sasha's 75th birthday on Friday, January 18th. The hall was festively decorated, a wonderful band played, there was an array of delightfully delicious platters of food, and the birthday girl was toasted with touching words of love and admiration. Nothing was lacking in this birthday bash that proved to be a testimonial to the special place that Sasha holds in the hearts of so many people. A beautiful Sasha, still using a walker after her recent knee replacement surgery, was even able to dance. Happy belated birthday, Sasha!



**Mary Lillian Pérez Turns 50**  
She began her birthday celebration in Puerto Rico. Her birthday is on Jan. 6th (Three Kings' Day), so there were festivities everywhere. The celebration continued after she returned to South Carolina, and you know what? I think she is still partying!

Congratulations to Heriberto Rivera and Lorena Maldonado on the birth of their first child, a boy. **Kaden Amir** was born on Dec. 18th in Ponce, Puerto Rico. His grandfather, Heriberto Sr., known to all as Papo, is tenderly holding his newest grandson.

# 2013 Family Reunion in Disneyworld

Previously, I had indicated that Cousin Frankie Valentín, who works at Disneyworld, would be able to get us a group rate for a package that included hotel stay, entrance tickets to the various theme parks, and a meal plan. After talking with him again recently, he explained that this would not be feasible. With the diversity of needs, desires, and family budgets, each family will have to find their own package plan that suits their needs and make their own reservations. I had taken a poll to see at which Value Resort people preferred to stay, and the majority chose Disney's Art of Animation Resort. Frankie pointed out that for some people it would be more practical to stay at a cabin where they can fit a larger family and have a fully equipped kitchen to prepare meals in. Others might find even the Art of Animation Resort a bit out of their price range, as there are other value resorts that cost less per night. So, we suggest that everyone check out the different options and make their own reservations as soon as possible.

You can visit [www.disneyworld.com](http://www.disneyworld.com) for information and package plans. There is a free vacation planning DVD that you can order--mine is hopefully on its way. Also, you can get package plans through Southwest Airlines or AAA Insurance. If you know of someone who has been there, pick their brains about plans; the choices are almost limitless, and I, for one, find it confusing.

The official reunion dates will be June 21-23, 2013, but many of us will want to stay longer at Disneyworld to see as much of it as we can. Some of us have never been there before! We are foregoing a formal banquet hall evening for this reunion, as it will take away from time enjoying the theme parks. What Frankie has suggested instead is to gather at an area he can reserve for us where we can visit with each other, take group pics, watch fireworks and have a catered dessert. That will involve an additional cost for each person; I will have to get more info from Frankie about that. We would probably schedule this for Saturday night. If anyone has any other/better ideas about what we can do to gather together, please let me know ASAP and I will share the information with the rest of the group.

“...y la familia?” presents:

**THE RIVERA FAMILY COOKBOOK**

FEATURING:

- Your favorite family recipes
- Recipes in both Spanish and English
- History of famous Puerto Rican dishes
- Anecdotes about your recipes ...and much more!

Submit your recipes to Norma at [mamanony@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mamanony@sbcglobal.net)  
by **January 31, 2013** Feb. 28, 2013



**Tory Pettit** wants to create a Puerto Rican cookbook filled with family recipes. This notice was already sent out via e-mail and posted on Facebook, and it also appeared in the December issue of “...y la familia?” Although quite a few have expressed an interest in participating and excitement about the cookbook and we have received a few recipes, we are still waiting for more! Please take the time to dig through your family recipe box and send me a few of your favorites. Tory is especially looking for Puerto Rican recipes. Don’t worry about whether or not you think yours is the best recipe or whether others will like it...there are as many variations of *pasteles* and *habichuelas guisadas* as there are cooks. We can publish several recipes for the same dish, and people can choose the one they prefer and/or tweak any recipe to their liking. **René**, we’re waiting for your *domplines* recipe!! And who knows how to make *mofongo*—one of my favorite dishes?



**Cousin Papo** (on the right), seen here with his older brother **René Rivera Sevilla** and his nephew, **Edwin Rivera Soto**, cooked up huge pots of *sopón de pollo* (a hearty chicken soup) that he transported on his pickup truck and served to less advantaged people on the streets of Ponce. This has been his New Year’s tradition for 41 years. God bless cousin Papo and his helpers!



Some of Papo’s kids and grandkids also helped.

*A heartwarming tradition*

## “¿...y la familia?”

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

## Birthday Greetings

<b>Eduardo Medero</b> (25) - Feb. 2	<b>Gwendolyn Rivera</b> (11) - Feb. 27	<b>Joi Stenroos</b> (63) - Mar. 18
<b>Juan González</b> (52) - Feb. 2	<b>Dustin Yager</b> (28) - Mar. 3	<b>Raynell H. Díaz</b> (32) - Mar. 19
<b>Katherine García</b> (48) - Feb. 4	<b>Adam Campos</b> (18)- Mar 3	<b>Veronica Nicholson</b> (15) - Mar. 21
<b>Brook Rivera</b> (34) - Feb. 5	<b>Miguel González</b> (20) - Mar. 3	<b>Michael Rivera</b> (14) - Mar. 22
<b>Angela Nicholson</b> (46) - Feb. 6	<b>Matthew Hargraves</b> (13) - Mar. 3	<b>Mackenzie Eddy</b> (20) - Mar. 24
<b>Maritza Rivera</b> (50) - Feb. 11	<b>David Trinidad</b> (40) - Mar 4	<b>Todd Anthony Springer</b> (11) - Mar. 24
<b>Alessandra Carrasquillo</b> (9) - Feb. 13	<b>Marcel Antonio Quiñones</b> (5) - Mar. 5	<b>Sonia (Quiñones) Rambo</b> (35) - Mar. 26
<b>Melissa González</b> (27) - Feb. 15	<b>Stephen Nicholson</b> (16) - Mar. 11	<b>Barbara Nicholson</b> (67) - Mar. 26
<b>Nicole García</b> (17) - Feb. 16	<b>Jayrick Barbosa</b> (12) - Mar. 12	<b>Julian Alexander Rivera</b> (3) - Mar. 27
<b>Jaysli Barbosa</b> (11)- Feb. 17	<b>Karen Rivera</b> (34) - Mar. 15	<b>Milagros Rivera</b> (70) - Mar. 28
<b>Ruben García</b> (64) - Feb. 21	<b>James Caffey</b> (71) - Mar. 15	<b>Lisa (Finch) Warner</b> (47) - Mar. 28
<b>Felícita Soto</b> (57) - Feb. 21	<b>Jenny (Nicholson) Reinke</b> (75)- Mar. 17	
<b>Heriberto Rivera</b> (61) - Feb. 24		

## Anniversaries



Sheila Andujar and  
Edwin Rivera (16)  
Feb. 15

Frankie and Amy Valentín  
(10) - Mar. 29

Sonia (Quiñones) and  
Jake Rambo (11)  
Mar. 30

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