

El Boricua



House of Puerto Rico San Diego Newsletter http://www.HouseofPuertoRico.com

"El Día de San Juan" Family Picnic



Photo by Angel Rosa

Contents

President's Message	I
"El Día de San Juan" Family	7
Picnic	2
Casilda Pagán Scholarship	3
Capt. Humbert Roque Versace	3
Barbie Doll Designer	5
Mother's Day in Tijuana	5
HPRSD Museum	6
Hosting Efforts	6
Casita News	7
Focus Groups	7
Dominoes Club	8
Christmas Dinner/ Dance	8
Upcoming Events	8
Cultural Corner	9
Membership Corner	
Pot Luck Spot	
Editor's Note10	0

Executive Board	10
Board of Directors	10

President's Message

Greetings to all! We continue to have a productive year. I am pleased to bring you up to speed on our progress this year as well as an important upcoming event—the HPRSD Annual *Día de San Juan* Members Picnic.

We had a very successful turnout for our hosting the Puerto Rican film El Clown during the San Diego Latino
Film Festival in March.
Thanks to Areito Borincano
for their performance. They
managed to get a few of us up
there dancing, including me.
The film was wonderful and
highly recommended if you
haven't seen it. Thanks also
go to the SDLFF for allowing
us to host this annual
fundraising event.

We continue to have excellent turnouts in other events and programs such as the new Domino Club every 1st

May/June 2007

Sunday of the month, the Casita Sunday Open House, the monthly Fiesta Nights, and the hugely successful House of Pacific Relations Ethnic Food Fair (EFF) on May 27th. The Domino Club is steadily growing in attendance. We have moved to behind the casita under the tree. During Fiesta Nights we have joined Manny Cepeda in Viejas as well as for his birthday in Habana Restaurant, and we saw Evelyn Diaz Cruz' award winning play, GLASSCORD, at the USD with an after-show with Areito Borincano. The next Fiesta Night is on June 8th for those who want to catch Jose Feliciano's concert in support of the Access Latino Health organization. Check our website for links. If all goes well, the College Student / Youth Committee (CSYC) will host the August Fiesta Night with a bonfire evening. If you have ideas for future Fiesta Nights, let me know.

I would like to highlight that in all our activities, especially in the latest EFF, all the volunteers who participated were nothing less than *extraordinary*. Everyone was committed to the tasks in hand as well as enthusiastically sharing their PR spirit. You can't get any better than that! Again, thanks to you all.

Last but not least, we have our HPRSD Annual Día de San

Juan Members Picnic scheduled for Saturday, June 23rd from 10am – 5pm. Bring your family, your dates, your guests... Be sure to get your tickets early. No transactions are allowed on site. See details on the website and in this newsletter. We are back at the Admiral Baker Park where we have a full schedule planned for everyone! Tito 'Party Rican' Colon will provide his DJ salsa treats all day. Manny Cepeda and his Sabor Cubano will provide an afternoon performance. We will have Puerto Rican food. Get your combo plate tickets. The CSYC have games all planned out for kids (young and old alike) which should be a lot of fun. Check our website for details and ticket options.

Also, during the picnic we will have the 1st HPRSD Domino Club Tournament. Make sure you sign-up with your partner. Provide us with your team member names and team name. Participation donations apply to cover costs and awards. Spots are limited so sign up early!

If you are interested in helping out with the Picnic to make sure it runs smoothly, please let me know.

Saludos cordiales,

Dr. Aileen Alvarado-Swaisgood President Cell 858-395-5765 Email quepasa@houseofpuertorico.com

"El Día de San Juan" Family Picnic

This year the "El Día de San Juan" members' family picnic will be held on June 23rd, 2007 at Admiral Baker Field located on 2400 Admiral Baker Rd. in San Diego's Mission Gorge Area from 10:00 a.m to 5:00 p.m. Parking fee is \$1.00.



Photo by Angel Rosa

There will be games for the kids and kids at heart, food, dancing, and fun! You can bring your own food and drinks or purchase preregistered food tickets. Glass containers and hard liquor are **NOT** allowed on the premises. Charcoal grills are allowed. Please **NO** propane or butane gas grills. No canopies either. There will be plenty of tables.

Current members can purchase entrance ticket for \$2.00 for each adult member or member's guest at the

website – www.houseofpuertorico.com. Tickets must be purchased by June 21, 2007.



Photo by Angel Rosa

We'll be accepting pre-orders of food. Food tickets donations are for \$10.00. You get a plate of *Arroz con Gandules*, salad along with two out of the three items: *Pasteles de Masa*, *Alcapurrias*, or *Pastelillos de Carne*. Due to park regulations, we can not exchange money at the park.



Photo by Angel Rosa

Tito will be back again spinning the disks.



Photo by Angel Rosa

Get your team ready for the domino tournament. The preregistration donation for teams of two will be \$20.00 per team. This donation will go to the cost for prizes and domino tables and supplies.

Check our website for more information about the event. Hope to see you there! And don't forget the sunscreen.

Please be advised that this is event is NOT the same Puerto Rican/Salsa Festival held in San Diego in years past.

Casilda Pagán Scholarship

Will you be entering college or a vocational educational program during the 2007-2008 school years? Do you enjoy conducting community service and would like to learn more about the Puerto Rican community? The House of Puerto Rico San Diego is currently sponsoring an educational/vocational scholarship. Casilda Pagán scholarship is being offered to San Diego County Residents or House of Puerto Rico High school seniors/ graduates or college/graduate students. With this award, we hope to assist youth or adults in the attainment of their educational and professional goals.

Casilda Pagán Scholarships are awarded yearly. All

interested applicants should visit the House of Puerto Rico San Diego website, www.houseofpuertorico.com for the application. Please remember that the scholarship deadline is **July 31, 2007**.

Thank you, Jaime D. Chavez

Applications for the Casilda Pagán Scholarship are due by **July 31**st, **2007**. For more information, please attend the HPRSD members' meeting, call **619-234-3445**, or check the webpage:

www.houseofpuertorico.com
Last year we had one winner:



Photo by Aram Peréz

Capt. Humbert Roque Versace Fifth Puerto Rican Medal of Honor Recipient

As we honor our fallen soldiers over the years during **Memorial Day**, it is noteworthy that based upon an "internet article" published by a former Marine and Boricua writer, Tony Santiago (AKA: "Tony the Marine"), I first became aware of a Vietnamese prisoner of War (POW), **Captain Humbert**

Roque Versace, U.S. Army, was killed, in captivity as a prisoner of war, by the Viet Cong during the Viet Nam War. Captain Versace, who was a graduate of West Point, was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor (MOH). The MOH "is the highest medal awarded by the United States." It has been awarded, since 1863, to a total of 3,428 individuals in the nation's history. The MOH "is awarded by the President in the name of Congress to a person who...distinguishes himself or herself conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life or her life above and beyond the call of duty while engaged in an action against an enemy of the United States...." (cf.:

http://www.americal.org/awar
ds/moh.htm).

Based upon my research over several months, I was able to corroborate that there have been a total of five (5th) Puerto Ricans that were awarded the military's highest medal, the *Congressional Medal of Honor*. In July 2002, President Bush posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor to Captain Humbert Roque Versace [Puerto Rican - Italian American]. Captain Versace's mother was Tere Rios, the Puerto Rican writer who wrote the book from which the 1960s T.V. sitcom, 'The

Flying Nun", was based on. In an interview that appeared in **The Catholic Review** in 1964 (02/28/1964, p. 6), the "Mrs. Humbert J. Versace" (Mr. Versace was a retired Army Colonel), expressed several ideas as to why many of her writings, or publications, had Puerto Rico, and Puerto Rican, themes in them.

According to the website titled "Congressional Medal of Honor Society", it presented the official citation, and basis, for which Captain Versace was awarded his MOH, namely:

"Born: 2 July 1937, Honolulu, HI. Entered Service at: Norfolk, VA. Citation: For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty, Captain Humbert R. Versace distinguished himself by extraordinary heroism during the period of 29 October 1963 to 26 September 1965 while serving as a S-2 Advisor, Military Assistance Advisory Group, Detachment 52, CA Mau, Republic of Vietnam. While accompanying a Civilian Irregular Defense Group patrol engaged in combat operations in Thoi Binh District, An Xuyen Province, Captain Versace and the patrol came under sudden and intense mortar, automatic weapons, and small arms fire

from elements of a heavily armed enemy battalion.

As the battle raged, Captain Versace, although severely wounded in the knee and back by hostile fire, fought valiantly and continued to engage enemy targets. Weakened by his wounds and fatigued by the fierce firefight, Captain Versace stubbornly resisted capture by the over-powering Viet Cong force with the last full measure of his strength and ammunition. Taken prisoner by the Viet Cong, he exemplified the tenets of the Code of Conduct from the time he entered into Prisoner of War status.

Captain Versace assumed command of his fellow American soldiers, scorned the enemy's exhaustive interrogation and indoctrination efforts, and made three unsuccessful attempts to escape, despite his weakened condition which was brought about by his wounds and the extreme privation and hardships he was forced to endure. During his captivity, Captain Versace was segregated in an isolated prisoner of war cage, manacled in irons for prolonged periods of time, and placed on extremely reduced ration. The enemy was unable to break his indomitable will, his faith in God, and his trust in the United States of America.

Captain Versace, an American fighting man who epitomized the principles of his country and the Code of Conduct, was executed by the Viet Cong on 26 September 1965. Captain Versace's gallant actions in close contact with an enemy force and unyielding courage and bravery while a prisoner of war is in the highest traditions of the military service and reflect the utmost credit upon himself and the United States Army." (cf.: http://www.cmohs.org/recipie nts/versace_cit.htm)

By: Daniel M. Lopez, Staff Writer, *El Boricua*

Barbie Doll Designer

Guest speaker at this month's Culture Corner was Katiana Jimenez, fashion designer, former Barbie Doll designer for Mattel. Katiana was born in Puerto Rico, relocated to San Diego when she was eight years old and went on to Otis School of Design in Los Angeles where she received her Bachelor of Fine Arts with a major in Fashion Design. She worked for Mattel for 10 years contributing her efforts to the following doll designs:

- Maiko (Memories of a Geisha) - won Doll of the Year Award in 2006
- A Cynthia Rowley designer doll

- An Armani doll Festivals of the World collection:
 - o Carnival doll
 - Diwali doll celebrates the Indian lunar year
- Tales of the 1001 Arabian Nights doll - fashioned after the story of Shaharizad

She was in the Designer's Spotlight for the Barbie Convention of 2003.

Inspired by Indian and Spanish designers, Katiana says that "design is an expression of herself and her spirit...the dolls reflect the essence of her journey."

Katiana has designed over 200 dolls for Mattel. Did you know that original Barbie Dolls, in good condition, can go for as much as \$10,000?

Katiana currently works for Rock Solid, a design firm, which creates clothing for women. And while she is excited about her new adventure in design, she misses the intricate detail of designing Barbie Dolls which involved not only the clothing, but all the accessories too. She hopes to teach in the future.

Katiana's mottos are:

- Embrace your uniqueness
- Live life to the fullest
- Don't be afraid to dream

She feels that a great sense of style is an expression of who

you are and that style is your own unique expression.

For more information on Katiana Jimenez see her website: www.katiana.org

Emmy Martinez

Mother's Day in Tijuana

On Saturday, May 12, 2007 three members of the House of Puerto Rico, San Diego joined in the festivities of Dorcas House Mother's Day celebration. These HPRSD members were Joe Carballo, Emily and Stephen Velez-Confer. Stephen is the director of activities and fund raising for this foster home for Mexican children whose parent(s) are in jail in Tijuana.

The day's event was an opportunity to honor the biological mothers and relatives of the children along with the staff mom's of the home who love, care and support these children throughout the year. The day's plan was to have the children sign the special certificates that were made, prepare the carne asada taco meal fixings, and enjoy the day with the special moms. On a "quick" trip to Costco (in Tijuana) for some beverages, Stephen and Joe took 4 of the boys with them. Joe treated the boy's to a snack from the Costco food court which ended up being a

whole pizza. Having a chance to run errands is always a treat for the children. It helps get them out of the house.



Photo by Emily Velez-Confer

Joe had the honor of keeping the carne asada coming, by working the BBQ with the help of one of the older boys, Alexis. Emily made corsages for all the moms and they were given to each mom by the children.



Photo by Emily Velez-Confer

It was a very special moment when each group of children (single or siblings) handed out the special certificates to the moms as well. Each family group received applauses. When Syliva Laborin was honored for her "Luz Materna" (her guiding light as director of the home) the applause got even louder.

Joe made some new friends and hopes to be able to visit with his wife and school group to help with the activities at the home that are planned throughout the year.

Emily Velez-Confer

HPRSD Museum

HPRSD Museum committee hopes that you enjoyed the special exhibit featuring Nativity scenes (*Nacimientos*) and Three Kings (*Los Tres Reyes Magos*). This year they plan to reorganize, update, and renew the exhibits in the cabinets, poster boards, and artwork on the walls. An exhibit on arts and crafts of contemporary Puerto Rican artists will be added.

Look for five new posters on prominent Puerto Ricans, who have made a name for themselves in Sports, the Arts, Politics, and Music, etc. The artwork on the walls will be rotated. And some of them will include the images of the prominent Puerto Ricans to complement what's on the poster boards.

These new exhibits and updates will be displayed by the end of the year.

Hosting Efforts



Photo by Bonita Martinez

Are you trying to figure out how you can meet your 10 hour volunteer requirement to the HPRSD? Why don't you become a host for "La Casita"? It's fun! You may even make some new friends.

In the month of July, there will be two opportunities for you to come to the hosting orientation classes. Join Joe Carballo on Sunday, July 8 or July 29, 2007 at 1:00 p.m. at "La Casita". Please contact him at jcarballo@san.rr.com if you would like to attend one of the orientation days or find out when the next orientation will be held.

Volunteers are needed to help host "La Casita" every Sunday except on Christmas and New Year's Day weekends. Volunteers will provide explanations, answer questions, and guide people through "La Casita" which is open from 12:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m.

May/June 2007

If you're unable to host at this time, please stop by anyway on Sunday to socialize. There is no need to wait for the HPRSD Members meeting to come socialize.

Casita News

We had some prominent
Puerto Rican visitors come to
"La Casita". Dr. Norman
Maldonado, former president
of the University of Puerto
Rico and president of the
School of Medicine. Dr.
Antonio Grillo gave him a
private tour of "La Casita".
Dr. Maldonado was Dr.
Grillo's mentor.

Dr. Rafael Berrios and Dr. Jorge Ostalaza from San Pablo Hospital in Bayamon Puerto Rico also visited "La Casita". Rick Clark and Ralph Costas gave them a private tour of "La Casita". Here's a little tidbit: Dr. Ostalaza delivered Aileen Alvarado-Swaisgood's (our president's) first baby, Alex in Chicago 15 years ago.

All were very impressed with "La Casita" and the work we are doing in San Diego.

On Tuesday, May 29, 2007, we hosted the seniors of the San Diego High School of International Studies. Each senior was required to do a presentation on their accomplishments while attending high school, which by the way, is a requirement

for graduation. Our cottage was set up so that three students could do their presentations at the same time.

We thank Angel & Carmen Rosa for hosting and allowing our organization to be a positive force in the community on that day.

Focus Groups

Here's an update on some of the categories that we discussed about our volunteer functions for the House of Puerto Rico San Diego throughout the 2007 year. The categories were: Events, Cultural Programs, Youth Programs, and Awareness Programs.



Photo by Angel Flores

Awareness – Aileen Alvarado Swaisgood, our president, is in the process of redoing the web-site from scratch. Angel Rosa, one of our veteran members, has taken thousands of photographs over the many years the HPRSD has been an organization. Aileen is working on a link on our new web page titled: the Faces of Puerto Rico, pictures taken from the many events/functions that the HPRSD has been involved in over the years.

Brochures: We are trying to get P.R. military people involved by supplying them with our brochures. Emilie German will distribute brochures to the Tropical Star Restaurant, Andres Restaurant, Miami Grill, Banco Popular, etc. We have gotten rave reviews on our newsletter El Boricua. Especially on the electronic (e-mail) version of the newsletter since it is in color. Bonita Martinez is doing a great job in getting this newsletter out to the public.



Photo by Angel Flores

Youth Programs: What programs can we develop for elementary school level children, middle school level and young professionals? How do we launch them? How many volunteers can we get? Are there programs that we can help with, or should we arrange a fiesta night for the young professionals? Here are some of the ideas the members came up with from the four focus groups that met:

May/June 2007

Elementary Group: An idea is to have one week, during the summer, of intensive immersion in the PR culture. We should focus on 5th graders, giving them, as an example, music lessons, or a cooking class – teaching them to make basic PR dishes like rice and beans, or PR children's games. And there would be an assignment to produce a tangible item by the end of the week to show what they learned.

Middle School: Seasonal sports events, such as baseball, should be taken advantage of by quizzing children about local baseball athletes, interjecting the discussions with talk of PR baseball players. The children should also be taken to the local games. Can we get the players to talk to the children, sign autographs? The same idea can be used for different venues such as music and dance – to get them to know the traditional rhythms of the PR culture. We can have a day or two to show them videos of PR and interact with them, answering questions about PR – the history of PR, the beauty of the island, the infrastructure, the language, the food, the different regions and what is significant about that area. Also, movies and movie stars: J Lo. Tito Puente, Marc Anthony, Jose Ferrer, etc., etc.

College level/Young

Professionals: Meeting (networking) with other young adults, more sports programs, helping them form a little league team; again, learning the culture of their parents and grandparents, learning to play musical instruments.

Manny Cepeda and Jose Cruz (a new member to the HPRSD) have volunteered to help organize the Youth Programs.

Emmy Martinez

Dominoes Club



Photo by Bonita Martinez

Every first Sunday of the month,

We ask for a minimum \$1.00 donation from each domino player with the proceeds going towards "La Casita".

If you're interested, contact Bobby Rivera at bobbyrivera2002@hotmail.com.

Due to park regulations NO ALCOHOL will be permitted within our area. This is a family event and we ask everyone to act responsibly. I'm looking forward to renewing La Casa De Puerto Rico's domino club and bringing a taste of San Juan to San Diego.

Christmas Dinner/ Dance

Mark your calendars now. The annual Christmas Gala Dinner/Dance will be held on **Saturday, December 15**th **2007** at the Portuguese Hall in Point Loma from 6:00 p.m. – 12:00 Midnight. There will be more information in the months to follow.

Upcoming Events

June 23, 2007
"El Día de San Juan" Family
Picnic

August 18, 2007 BoricuaFest

September 9, 2007 Balboa Park Lawn Program

December 7 & 8, 2007December Nights on the Prado

December 15, 2007 Christmas Dinner/ Dance Portuguese Hall Point Loma 6:00 p.m. – 12:00 Midnight

*Volunteers are needed to make each event a success. If you wish to volunteer please call 619-234-3445.

Cultural Corner



In our monthly meetings, members of the House of Puerto Rico, or visiting guests, are invited to share their experiences with the Puerto Rican culture. Tom Perry, one of the original founders of the House of Puerto Rico, and Jaime Diego Chávez initiated the series. This is a great opportunity to share our culture, art, music and history of Puerto Rico.

If you are interested in sharing your experiences about Puerto Rican culture, music, dance, stories, or folklore in a culture corner, please call Jaime Diego Chávez at 619-234-3445.

Gracias,

Jaime Diego Chávez

Cultural Corners for 2007

July – NO MEETING

August – Rick Clark/ Puerto Rico Video Presentation

September – Dr. Antonio Grillo-López/The Taino People of Puerto Rico

October – OPEN

November – ELECTIONS For the 2008 Executive Board

December – NO MEETING

Membership Corner

(Please let me know if I left your name out!)

New Members

Daniel y Lucila Diaz Raul Eliza Anthony Martinez Jane Marie Molina Jose M. Velez José y Loretta Arjona Ajee Ortiz Noemí Flores

Lifetime Members

Angel & Carmen Rosa
Nelson & Bonita Martinez
Walter & Ann A. Rodríguez
Benjamin y Maria Santiago-Rivera
Rafael y Sophie Costas
Emily & Steven Velez-Confer
Antonio & Maria S. Grillo
José Ruben y Margaret Santiago
Dionisio y Judy Flores
Angel y Artemiza Medina
D. Antonio & Rosemarie Lopez
Eduardo Rodguez
Bobby & Jesse Rivera
Casilda Pagan de Romero

Ten Year Members

Martha Senturia y Warren Cintrón Robin y Manny Cepeda Cruz Swedelius Angel L Flores Jaime Diego & Lucy Chavez Don Kenny and Maria Martinez Adolfo and Maribel Velez

Renewals

Felicita Codiamat
Lucy y Hector Concepcion
Jose y Yolanda Aguayo
Zahydie and Joseph Annandono
Blanca y Julio Baez
Gloria y Bart Mayol
Emilanda Martinez
John & Terry Kingston
Jessica & Stephen West

Yearly membership dues are \$35.00. The HPRSD also

offers Lifetime and 10 Years Memberships. The cost for the Lifetime membership is \$500. The cost for the 10 Years membership is \$250.

The HPRSD By-Laws are available. If you would like a copy, please call **619-234-3445** and leave a message indicating whether you would like a hard copy (printed version) or a soft copy (e-mail version).

Pot Luck Spot



Photo by Nelson Martinez

After the HPRSD members meeting, there are too many empty pots at our Pot Luck. Make it, bake it, or buy it and we'll eat it!

Elise Caruso

Editor's Note



If you're interested in helping out on the newsletter, please let me know by calling Bonita Martinez at 619-234-3445.

To help defray the cost of stamps and printing, the "El Boricua" can now be sent as an Adobe PDF files over email in **color**. If you would like to receive the newsletter by e-mail, please let me know.

Remember, if you choose to receive the newsletter by e-mail, you'll be able to forward the newsletter to family and friends and see it in **color**.

Gracias,

Bonita Martinez

The House of Puerto Rico San Diego (HPRSD) is a non-profit organization established and governed by the laws of the state of California, for the purpose of sharing and promoting the culture of Puerto Rico to the people of California. Membership to HPRSD is open to anyone who is interested in the heritage and culture of Puerto Rico.

Are you moving? If you are, please let us know in order to update our member and general mailing records.

Are you interested in advertising your business in our newsletter? If so, please send information with payment to the editor at the address below. Here is the price list for the year (6 issues):

Business Cards \$50 Half Page \$125 Full Page \$200

All correspondence to HPRSD should be addressed to:

House of Puerto Rico San Diego P.O. Box 81982 San Diego, CA 92138

You can also find us in the Internet at: www.houseofpuertorico.com

***Information about the 2007 Scholarship can be found in our WEB Page!

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Sophie Costas

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Photographers:

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Pot Luck Coordinator:

Elise Caruso

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Joe Carballo

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