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### Eustaquio Quinonez

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# South Colton Oral History Project

## Interview Summary

**Interviewee:**

Estaquio Quiñonez

**Interviewer:**

Tom Rivera

**Interview Date:**

May 2, 2015

**Interview Location:**

Colton, CA

**Length:**

00:36:01

**Interview Summary completed by:**

M. Camacho Nuno, 2024

**Description:**

Tom Rivera interviewed Estaquio Quiñonez on May 2, 2015. In this interview, Quiñonez discusses his family history and childhood experience in South Colton. Most of his family has already lived in Colton for over 100 years at the time of the interview. His grandfather was deported with his eight children, who were citizens, to Mexico during the American Repatriation. Having been born and raised in Colton, Quiñonez also speaks of how he got his nickname, "Taco", and the impact that baseball and outside activities had on his life. He also discusses living in the Project and staying close to people he met there. There was also talk on the Vietnam War and how a handful of people he knew fought and many died, including his brother. Some died in Vietnam while others died from later complications. Throughout the interview, Quiñonez discusses his time as a youth in the Sea Scouts and how he collected food donations in South Colton for Thanksgiving and Christmas. He ends with a story about an incident with a beer keg at a Quinceañera and talking about friends, one last time, who had passed or are older.

**Subject Topic:**

- South Colton
- The Projects
- Repatriation
- Chicano History
- Baseball
- Vietnam War/Agent Orange
- Sea Scouts

**Spatial Coverage:**

Name of Site (if relevant)	General Location/Address
South Colton	California
Cooley Ranch	California

**Temporal Coverage:**

1912-2015

**Key Events:**

- How the nickname of Taco came about for Quiñonez.
- Grandfather and the 8 children, the latter citizens, were deported during the Repatriation.
- Quiñonez living in the Projects of South Colton.
- Quiñonez's time as a youth participating in the Sea Scouts.
- Albert Gonzalez builds a baseball diamond for Quiñonez and his friends.
- The Vietnam War led to the deaths of some friends from the Projects, including Quiñonez's brother.
- The Quinceañera and Beer Keg incident.

**Key Organizations:**

- The Sea Scouts

**Interview Index:**

Media Format	Time (hh:mm:ss)	Topic Discussed
Digital Video	00:00:23 - 00:01:26	Estaquio Quiñonez explains how Eustaquio turned into the nickname Taco.
Digital Video	00:03:59 - 00:05:08	Grandfather and his 8 citizen children's deported to Mexico during the Repatriation due to a competitive and much bigger dairy farm.
Digital Video	00:06:59 - 00:09:29	Living in the Projects of South Colton and playing baseball.
Digital Video	00:13:54 - 00:15:48	The Vietnam War and the death of soldiers from the South Colton Projects.

**Related Materials**

Additional oral history interviews are available from the South Colton Oral History Project at CSUSB, <https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/colton-history/>

**Full interview transcript can be found below.**

## Interview Transcript

### Start of Interview:

[00:00:00]

TOM RIVERA: Good morning. My name is Tom Rivera and today is May 2, 2015, and we're at the Colton Museum, and we are continuing to do -- continuing our oral history of South Colton. And our guest this morning is [Taco Quiñonez?].

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: (inaudible)

TOM RIVERA: Before I -- Taco, let me introduce you formally. How do you pronounce your name?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: [Eustaquio?].

TOM RIVERA: Eustaquio Quiñonez. Now, Eustaquio, how did you get the name Eustaquio?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: You know, I'm named after my dad's great-uncle. And that's the only thing I could tell you. I always -- myself I've always wondered also, and I asked my mom, "Why did you name me Eustaquio?" "Because that was in your daddy (inaudible)."

TOM RIVERA: Oh, it's a family name.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Exactly.

TOM RIVERA: It's a family name.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Exactly.

TOM RIVERA: And do you mind if I call you Taco?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: [00:01:00] No problem. Everybody calls me that.

TOM RIVERA: How did you get the nickname of Taco?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: When I was in grammar school, about the second grade I would say, in South Side [Grammar?] School in South Colton, the kids couldn't pronounce my name, so they --

TOM RIVERA: Like me, they couldn't pronounce the name.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: So they said, "Hey, Taco!" (laughs) "Taco, Taco! It's Taco!" You know?

TOM RIVERA: What grade were you in?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: About second grade, I would say.

TOM RIVERA: Second grade, you said.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Yeah, around then.

TOM RIVERA: And were you born and raised in Colton?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Yes. Yes.

TOM RIVERA: Born and raised in Colton. And when did your mom, dad, or grandpa come to Colton?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: My mom was born in Colton. She's from Colton in 1922.

TOM RIVERA: And what was her name?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: [Sara Arellano?]. They --

TOM RIVERA: Where did they live?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: On Florez Street. *South* South Colton.

TOM RIVERA: Yeah. Yeah. On Pine -- Congress. Past Congress.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Congress. There's Fernando and then there's Florez Street.

TOM RIVERA: Right. Right. Really is [La Paloma?].

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: [La Paloma?].

TOM RIVERA: [La Paloma?]. And tell me, [00:02:00] did -- what about your dad? Where did he come --?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: My dad was era mexicano. He was born in Durango, Mexico.

TOM RIVERA: And when did he come to Colton?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Oh, the 1940s.

TOM RIVERA: The '40s.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Yes.

TOM RIVERA: And why did he come to Colton?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: In search of work. A better life.

TOM RIVERA: And why Colton, Taco?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Because he traveled by boxcar, and I guess that this is where the work was. They heard of -- well, actually, I'll tell you. My grandparents came to Colton the f-- okay, my grandfather came to Colton the very first time in 1912. Over a hundred years ago. And he worked there, he worked in the cement plant. And then he went back to Mexico. About 1914, I would say. And he told the people over there, from where, you know, from [Guanajuato?] [él era ranchito?], he told them, you know what, life [00:03:00] is miserable here. It was during the Mexican Revolution. There's nothing here, man, we can't plant, because they won't allow us anymore. They confiscated most of the land, so they were dirt poor. So, they got together a little belongings, whatever they could gather. And they traveled north. All the way to El Paso, Texas. Well, Juarez, actually. And they crossed the border. Grandma would say that it costs a quarter to get over.

TOM RIVERA: To cross the border?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: To cross the border. You pay a quarter, (inaudible).

TOM RIVERA: And you're here. And then from El Paso, they came here?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: No. From El Paso, they went to the state of Arkansas.

And my dad --

TOM RIVERA: Looking for work.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: And my granddaddy worked in the mines over there.

And then from El Paso, no, from Arkansas, in 1920, they came to Colton again. It

was the second time. But [00:04:00] my granddaddy, on Flores Street, had a small business going. Dairy, a dairy business. And he delivered milk and stuff for -- okay. My granddaddy had a d--

TOM RIVERA: Granddaddy had a little dairy --

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: A little dairy.

TOM RIVERA: -- on Flores Street, and Flores was just off of Congress Street.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Exact. And the fact that [Olwa Mansa?] was a bigger dairy, who was owned by the Portuguese, that -- and they turned my daddy in.

They had a business going, and my daddy was not a citizen of the United States.

And this is in the 1930s, now, okay. We're hitting the Depression now. So my daddy, my granddaddy was deported with all his American kids. Okay.

TOM RIVERA: In the '30s.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: In the '30s.

TOM RIVERA: Repatriation?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Repatriation.

TOM RIVERA: Repatriation.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Repatriation.

TOM RIVERA: And how many kids were there?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: About eight of them.

TOM RIVERA: The whole family.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: [00:05:00] All of them.

TOM RIVERA: Todos.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: It didn't matter. You were Mexican, out of here. Unwanted.

TOM RIVERA: And they were here in Colton?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: They were all born here.



TOM RIVERA: And they loaded them on a railroad --

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Railroad --

TOM RIVERA: -- track, and --

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Right here.

TOM RIVERA: -- took them back to Colton?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: No, no. They didn't -- my daddy, my grandpa, like I said, had a little business, so he could afford a vehicle. He had a little Model A. Threw everything in the -- remember *The Grapes of Wrath*? That's what they looked like, going back over there. So ahí van. There was no roads back then, [Tommy?]. No roads. This -- I don't know how the hell he got so far. So in the 1940s, late '30s, they started coming back. And my mom tried to come back about 1942. They wouldn't allow her, because they thought that she ran away. She didn't want to serve in the military. Didn't care. Women and men was just the same. You know, they were able-bodied, they could go in the military. So, it wasn't until about 1945, maybe, my mama was allowed to come back, [00:06:00] after the war. And that's the s-- part of the story.

TOM RIVERA: So there was tremendous struggle, then, for the family.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Yes.

TOM RIVERA: There was.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: There was, back then.

TOM RIVERA: Now when were you born, Taco?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: I was born in 1946.

TOM RIVERA: After they came back.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: After Mexico. Yes, yes.

TOM RIVERA: And where did your family live?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: We lived -- first we lived in Third Street, en la calle cinco. You remember the last -- right next to the school, secondary school? There was like a little farm there? There were also relatives, a lot of us. My uncle [Manuel?] and [Ruth?], and all of them.

TOM RIVERA: So you have family here in Colton.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: We always have family.

TOM RIVERA: Lots of family.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Yes. So, they remained here, but like I say, my grandpa was deported, you know, with all the kids. It was sad, because, allá -- there was nothing over there either, you know? They struggled and struggled and struggled and struggled, you know. So.

TOM RIVERA: So you're right, it was a *Grapes of Wrath* kind of a --

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: You got it.

TOM RIVERA: -- a scene.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Yes. It sort of was.

TOM RIVERA: And when they came back, you said you lived on Fifth Street?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Yes.

TOM RIVERA: And then after Fifth Street, [00:07:00] where did you live?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: We went to South -- the projects, around there.

TOM RIVERA: La Paloma, the projects.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: And we were there -- go ahead.

TOM RIVERA: Were these the old projects, Taco? The --

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: No, the ones that are there now.

TOM RIVERA: Oh, you went to -- those were '52, they were built in '52.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Yeah, '52.

TOM RIVERA: '52. So you lived in those projects.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Yes. I lived there until 1970s. Then we went to  
(inaudible).

TOM RIVERA: Nineteen-seventy -- you were there for almost 20 years.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: And -- in South Colton, yes, yes, yes.

TOM RIVERA: Now [Henry?] can't see your face, so you better --

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Oh, yes, sorry, I'm sorry.

TOM RIVERA: Okay, better, Henry? Okay. Y luego, este -- tell me about  
growing in the projects.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Ah!

TOM RIVERA: Yeah, tell me about it.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: It was beautiful. Oh, man. We -- all the kids would get  
together, you know. All we did was play baseball. Colton was a community of  
baseball. I'll say, it is. All we did was play baseball [00:08:00] every summer, man.  
South Colton Park, different teams, you know. And then, later on, we went into  
better organized ball, which is the Lions, there was the Lions and the [Octopus?].

TOM RIVERA: The Lions Little League?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: We all played, and so we started getting -- growing and  
growing and growing and growing, and finding new interests. Like girls.

TOM RIVERA: And how many -- (laughs) how many people lived in the  
projects, do you remember?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: I would say, God.

TOM RIVERA: How many apartments were there?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: I would say, man.

TOM RIVERA: Está grande, ¿verdad?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Yeah.

TOM RIVERA: It's a good-sized community.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: I would say at least 75 to 100. Because they're together. (hits table twice) One (hits table). There's two (hits table) in one building, two (hits table) another building, yeah. I would say about 75 to 100.

TOM RIVERA: And you said it was a wonderful experience, because, number one, you guys played a lot of sports.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Yes.

TOM RIVERA: What else [00:09:00] was good about it?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: The people.

TOM RIVERA: Tell me about the people.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: The people were good people. We all stick together. We had -- back then there wasn't very many phones. So, you had a phone, you were allowed to go make a phone call. From -- your friend, (inaudible) [Maria?], "Can I make a phone call?" "Sure. Go right ahead."

TOM RIVERA: So, everybody would help each other.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Exactly. There was only one phone. Well, you remember.

TOM RIVERA: Yes.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: [Charlie?] (inaudible) had one. We used to line up there to call the girls.

TOM RIVERA: Yeah. That was on the corner of --

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Right there.

TOM RIVERA: -- [Oh?] and [La Cadina?].

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Yeah, yeah. And La Cadina now, yeah. And --

TOM RIVERA: So you would line up there to --

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Sometimes. The kids --

TOM RIVERA: -- to make calls.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: -- three or four guys. "Come on! (inaudible) [grip?!]"

TOM RIVERA: To call the girlfriends?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: The one used to go there and kick the booth, "God damn it, hurry up!" [Jamie Reese?]. (laughter)

TOM RIVERA: How did you meet Jamie Reese?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: I met Jamie Reese in [00:10:00] the 1950s, late 1950s, '55, '56. His daddy had a liquor store in South Colton.

TOM RIVERA: On Fifth Street.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: On Fifth Street. Jamie's Liquor. And that was Jamie. All the time, you know. But I've known Jamie a long -- over 60 years.

TOM RIVERA: So you're still good friends.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Yeah. I was going to call and tell him about this event here, but I didn't get around to it.

TOM RIVERA: Well, tell more about the projects. You had a lot of kids.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: A lot of good kids.

TOM RIVERA: A lot of kids.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Every summer, we'd pack up to go pick (inaudible) in Hemet. Or up north. All three months of vacation, we picked, made money to buy school clothes.

TOM RIVERA: So this would happen every summer?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Every summer.

TOM RIVERA: And the majority of people that lived in the projects --

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: A lot of people would go, yes. A lot of people would go. We'd all pack up (inaudible) by Hemet. Like *The Grapes of Wrath* again. We would run a trailer, throw everything in the back of the trailer, and [00:11:00] there we go.

TOM RIVERA: (laughs) And you would leave right after high -- after school.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Yep.

TOM RIVERA: And then return just before school started.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Well, you know, in 1964, I was sitting outside (hits table)  
-- I don't -- you remember the [Hernandez?]? [Trudy?] and [Chico?]

TOM RIVERA: Yes, yes, yes, yes.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Trudy drove up in a little red '51, '52 Chevy. He was  
looking for [Danny Cordero?]. Remember the Corderos?

TOM RIVERA: I remember. Yes.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Danny and [Bobby?], well, Bobby has passed away.

TOM RIVERA: Well, Bobby -- Bobby passed away?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Bobby passed away. And then there was Peter.

TOM RIVERA: Bobby and Peter went to school.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: They did, really?

TOM RIVERA: We went to school (overlapping dialogue; inaudible).

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: He passed away about three years ago. Bobby and  
there was Peter. There was a bunch of other kids. His dad (inaudible), okay. And I  
was sitting out there, they asked, "Hey, Taco, you want to go work?" "Yeah, I'll go  
work." "Where?" "[Arrowhead?] (inaudible), on G Street. Across from the old  
wrestling arena." I worked there and -- but I didn't have no way to [00:12:00] get  
over there, I was still in high school and I didn't have a car. I would walk all the way  
from Colton to San Bernardino. And at night, I would get out about eight, it was  
already dark, I walked all the way back.

TOM RIVERA: And then that place is close to the baseball stadium.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Exactly! So, that was one way I worked when I was in  
high school. That's why I didn't go out for sports. Because we needed -- we were  
needy, we needed, you know, extra help, financially. And I helped out. And

another thing that I liked about South Colton was that everything was close by. You could walk to la tiendita, okay.

TOM RIVERA: La tiendita was across the park.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: ¿Te acuerdas?

TOM RIVERA: Yeah.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: It's still there?

TOM RIVERA: It's still there.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Still there. Then we'd go to -- oh, we'd walk to the show. South Colton. New Colton, right here. This -- and everything was so easy to get to. Then we'd go play in the river.

TOM RIVERA: It was next to the projects.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: ¿Te acuerdas? The river, man, we'd go there, we'd pretend we were Huckleberry [00:13:00] Finn. We would build rafts and float down the river, eh. The other thing we used to do in the river, we used to pick up the crawdads, pull the tails off, take a coffee can, some salt, a little fire. Then we -- the first time I eat shrimp. (laughter) See, we did all of that. We were, like, I don't know, we grew up like the old days still, you know. And I -- it's one good thing I like about being around Colton, South Colton. The one thing that I talked to -- who did I mention it to? This gentleman here. Okay, you know how the projects are. Okay. Small streets. I know -- there's [Ash?], by the office, that street is Ash. And then there's Barry. Barry is not a very long street. That might be about not even a half a block. Well, out of there, during the Vietnam War, 11 guys came out. But you [00:14:00] show me --

TOM RIVERA: From the projects?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: -- you show me a street anywhere that, you know, where eleven guys came out and, like, three of them died in Vietnam.

TOM RIVERA: Do you remember who they were?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Ah, yes. [Michael de Arcy?], for the first one.

TOM RIVERA: Michael de Arcy, and they have a school named after him in Bloomington.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: [Isais Bravo?].

TOM RIVERA: ¿Cómo?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Isais -- Bravo. The Bravos, and there was another one, oh, he died later, my brother. [Hernando?] Quiñonez. He was also in 'Nam. He came home very, very sick from over there, from the Agent Orange. He passed away also, so I was thinking about. But three guys died from that. Actually, four. There was [Tiger Flores?], también. He passed away in Arizona due to that. I mean, it was 11 guys.

TOM RIVERA: From the projects!

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: The projects.

TOM RIVERA: Vietnam!

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Vietnam. Listen.

TOM RIVERA: That's a lot!

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: They made about two or three stay, went to Germany. But, you know, [00:15:00] it's amazing that so many guys from the little street. Y todos chicanos. You know. They used to show you how to be patriotic, you know. And we're still. I don't know, it's sad, you know. These guys are forgotten, actually. Forgotten. Be nice to put a little mural in South Colton. What we got was, we got the rock, you know, the (overlapping dialogue; inaudible).

TOM RIVERA: Sí, the "Welcome to South Colton". Did you know the [Duronos?]? [Gallito Duron?]?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: I remember, what's his name?



TOM RIVERA: Ralph and --

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Yeah, what's his -- yeah, yeah, yeah, I remember, yeah yeah.

TOM RIVERA: You remember those -- yeah, Gallito was in my class.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Really?

TOM RIVERA: [Richard?], Richard Duron.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Yeah, I remember him, yeah.

TOM RIVERA: Richard Duron, yeah.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Yeah, he was in Vietnam, too, [¿o qué?].

TOM RIVERA: No sé.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Oh, no, no, okay. Yeah. Yeah, I remember him, yeah.

Yeah, I'll tell you, it was just amazing, you know, just -- I think back and I go, "Man, I wish I could go back to those days."

TOM RIVERA: (laughs)

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: No, I really do. [00:16:00] I miss it, man. I miss it.

TOM RIVERA: Now, you've always in lived in city Colton.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Yeah. Well, no, not -- I live in Bloomington now.

TOM RIVERA: Oh, you live in Bloomington? And, do you have a family, Taco?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Yes, yes, yes, yes.

TOM RIVERA: How many kids do you have?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Four.

TOM RIVERA: How old are they?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: How old is [Janet?]?

F1: Forty.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: That's my wife. But that's my youngest daughter.

F1: In her 40s, I believe 45.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Janet's 45?

F1: I believe so.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: No shit.

F1: Her sister (overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Yeah, she was born in '69!

F1: Yes, '69.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Yeah, so that ought to make about that.

F1: Yeah. Her sister's 41, 34, actually, 35.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: And you?

F1: And then I'm 33.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: That's my youngest daughter.

TOM RIVERA: Oh, that's the baby.

F1: Yes.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: That's the baby.

TOM RIVERA: That's the baby.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: She got her master's from (Lawrence?).

TOM RIVERA: Oh, congratulations!

F1: Thank you so much.

TOM RIVERA: What area?

F1: Curriculum instruction, education. I'm a high school teacher

TOM RIVERA: Which high school do you teach at?

F1: Bloomington High School, actually.

TOM RIVERA: Oh, you're -- you stayed home.

F1: Yeah, I live in Grand Terrace now. Very close by.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: That's her husband [Brian?] over there.

TOM RIVERA: [00:17:00] How you doing?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: He's also a college man.

F1: [Redlands?] (inaudible)

TOM RIVERA: Oh, very good. Very good. And you're from USC.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: No, I got kicked out (overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

TOM RIVERA: You were --

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: I got a -- you know, this is South Colton!

TOM RIVERA: University of South Colton.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: South Colton! (laughter)

TOM RIVERA: Now, also, you know, when I was growing up, I grew up on [O?] Street. You know, around the corner from where you guys lived.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: I know.

TOM RIVERA: And you're absolutely right. We used to be -- play every day at the park. Every day we used to play at the park.

F1: Tom, I'll talk to you in a minute.

TOM RIVERA: All right, take care, good to see you. We used to play all the time and we used to have wonderful teams, because we had a lot of you guys that lived in the projects. So we put the teams together, and then we would play teams from out of -- from San Bernardino and Riverside, and different teams that we used to travel. And, were you ever a Boy Scout with [Ray Brill?], Sr.?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: I'll tell you what, [00:18:00] I was a Sea Scout. We wore sailor uniforms. With [Ben Martinez?]. Remember Ben Martinez?

TOM RIVERA: Yes.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Yeah. Ben Martinez was [our master?].

TOM RIVERA: Well, tell me, how did you get involved with the Sea Scouts?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Let's see. I don't think I remember the [boss?]. They had a sister that was older, maybe, and -- no younger than maybe -- what year did you graduate?

TOM RIVERA: I graduated '58.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Fifty-eight graduated. No, she died in '62. So that was [Jenny?] (inaudible). Eran de Texas, ellos, originally. And her brother, [Nick?], would always tell me, "Why don't you join the Sea Scouts?" So one day, all right. So I joined the Sea Scouts, and our explorers. And we did a lot of good for the community. On Thanksgiving, we would put on our uniforms and go around Colton from door to door, [00:19:00] asking for canned foods, non-perishable items, for the needy. We, yes, we did that. On Christmas we did the same thing. We would go over Colton, collect cans. The stores too, you know. And they -- people would donate. On Christmas, we would bring everything to the Catholic church over here. Immaculate Conception. And the father there would pack everything in boxes and distributed them to the needy. And we would march in the Orange Grove Parades. Back then there was military marches, and Boy Scouts, Explorer Scouts would march.

TOM RIVERA: The orange grove was a big thing here.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: [And my brother?] (overlapping dialogue; inaudible).

TOM RIVERA: Now it's not, you know (overlapping dialogue; inaudible).

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Then we go to the Date Festival in Indio, we'd march over there too. And we did a lot of good things, the Scouts.

TOM RIVERA: Were you with [Louis Forte?]?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: No me acuerdo.

TOM RIVERA: He was [00:20:00] also in the Sea Scouts.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Probably so.

TOM RIVERA: Yeah, the Explorers.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Because there was so many, you know, kids there, that -  
-

TOM RIVERA: And where did you guys meet?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: At the Wilson School.

TOM RIVERA: At Wilson.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: At Wilson School

TOM RIVERA: I didn't know that Wilson had a Sea Explorers.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Yes, we did. That's the way we always met. They still have the Explorers, but now they run along with police, you know, they kind of work maybe with firemen, you know, help. You know, even Highway Patrol has a program like that. I was over there about two months, and they were asking for volunteers. Older people, though, retirees, like us. To help give them a hand, because they are -- they cut down so much.

TOM RIVERA: You said you're retired.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: I retired.

TOM RIVERA: When did you retire?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: A year and a half ago.

TOM RIVERA: And where were you working?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: I worked for 41 years in a warehouse, a paper company. We made those cardboard boxes.

TOM RIVERA: Oh, warehouse.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Warehouse. Every box, everything that's here comes in a box. We made those.

TOM RIVERA: [00:21:00] Well, Warehouse used to be here in Colton.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Yes, it was.

TOM RIVERA: And then it went to Orange County

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Anaheim.

TOM RIVERA: Anaheim.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: And I went with them. They shut the plant down in 1990.

And we went to Anaheim. Not everyone. You had to qualify first. You had to be a good worker in order to be able to go there.

TOM RIVERA: And did you drive every day?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Every day.

TOM RIVERA: With [Chibi?] and --

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: It w--

TOM RIVERA: Chibi [Reese?]?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Chibi Reese. It wasn't so bad, Tommy, at first, because it was about 15 guys that went over there. And we would carpool. But as time went on, from 1990 to about 2000, lot -- half of the guys left. Because they were older guys, they retired.

TOM RIVERA: They were retired.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Some guys found jobs here, you know, closer to home.

So I want to -- but the last of the original stayed until it was over. That's it. I'm retired. And then warehouses was bought out by International Paper in '08. So, it wasn't the same anymore, you know. They cut a lot of benefits. [00:22:00]

International Paper took a lot of benefits away from us that warehouse had given us, so. (hits table) But I put in 41 years. Just with Warehouse and International Paper.

TOM RIVERA: And then driving back and forth to --

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Can you imagine? And now I can't see how the heck I did it. Because I'm on the freeway now, especially in the evening and night, I can't

drive. I can't. I'm afraid to drive. People don't drive the way they used to. They're not courteous anymore. And they drive too fast. They run stop signs, red lights. They can't drive like we used to anymore.

TOM RIVERA: Well, you know, getting back to South Colton, la calle siete.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Oh, la calle siete.

TOM RIVERA: La calle siete. I always classify it as the Broadway of South Colton.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: The other Broadway, exactly, that's good.

TOM RIVERA: The Broadway of South Colton.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: That's a good classification, I would say, oh yes.

TOM RIVERA: When you hear that, why -- what comes to mind when you say "the Broadway of South Colton?"

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: The bus. The restaurants. It was a main center of South Colton, where everybody [00:23:00] met. Barber shops. What else, what else? The stores, you know. There was [La Victoria?], [Martinez?] Bakery, [Larlas?], you know. And then there was the five bars, I remember.

TOM RIVERA: And the church was there, also.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: The church, yeah. La calle [L?].

TOM RIVERA: And the gasoline station.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Yeah, the -- ¿cómo se llamaba? Don Daniel. There was one there.

TOM RIVERA: That's right, Don Daniel.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Don Daniel, remember that?

TOM RIVERA: The gas station, the corner.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Had one little pump, I used to go crank it and fill the container. It had, you know -- one -- numbers, how many gallons you fill. It was eighteen cents, then it went up to twenty cents, then twenty-four.

TOM RIVERA: And then they had the pool hall there.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Oh, [Sisto?]? Sisto's pool hall!

TOM RIVERA: What was Sisto's last name?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: I can't remember.

TOM RIVERA: But Sisto, ¿verdad?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Yes, S--

TOM RIVERA: [Llamas?]?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: I used to remember Sisto. Oh, Llamas, yeah, maybe. Yeah, maybe was. Yeah. The pool hall in the back.

TOM RIVERA: No, Sisto was from M Street. [00:24:00] But Llamas was -- owned the barber shop.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: The barber shop, Llamas.

TOM RIVERA: And the liquor store. And that whole building. Who owned the other part of the building, [La Sombrero?]?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Was it in [Milton?]?

TOM RIVERA: Was it Milton?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Milton.

TOM RIVERA: Milton, what's the last name?

F1: Milton, (inaudible) you remember that, but (inaudible).

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Milton owned that right there.

TOM RIVERA: Yeah. Milton, what was his last name?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: [Noriega?].

TOM RIVERA: Noriega. Did you ever meet him, or --



EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: (laughs)

TOM RIVERA: No?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Well, he told me a story. (laughs)

TOM RIVERA: Yeah. Tell us a little bit about that story.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Well, okay. Is it going to be recorded?

TOM RIVERA: Yes. But you clean it up.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: All right. Tell the truth.

F1: Tell the truth. (laughs)

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: My uncle's daughter -- who would be my cousin, right? -- [00:25:00] had a quinceañera there. We rented the hall. We went to [Chino?], to the dairy land, and we take down a steer. We shot it, put it in the back of our truck, brought it to South Colton, and they butchered it. My uncles were butchers. All that carne together, you know, prepared, so. We went there. But when we rented the hall, Milton, he says, "All right, you can rent the hall, but you have to buy two kegs of beers automatically." Okay. So, it's no problem. Says, "You drink your kegs, then I'll open my bar." That. So there was quite a few people that showed up. So the first keg went fast, okay. So Milton [00:26:00] says, "Ah, (hits table) that's it. No more kegs. No more keg beer." "Wait a minute! We bought two kegs!" "Well, I'm going to open my bar now. You want beer, you got to buy from me now." "But we still have another keg over there." "No. When it's over you take it with you." "All right." So the party was over. My uncle [Ruben?] went up to him, go, "Hey Milton, we're going to take our keg now." "All right." Went in the trunk of the car. It was a big car. Big car. Big in power, you know, they had big trunks back then. He says --

TOM RIVERA: When was this, Taco?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Oh, was it, must have been about s-- let's see, let's see. [Sylvie?] was born in '67, '77, about '82, '83 that she was 15. So, my uncle says,

“Oh, we need a pump!” You know? The pump for the keg to get the b-- [00:27:00] siphon the beer out. (inaudible) “Hey [Milt?! We need a pump.” He says, “No. I can’t lend you, man. We’ll bring it back.” And they said, “[Toméense la cerveza como les de su chingada?].”

TOM RIVERA: (laughs)

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: “The hell? Come on man, don’t be that way.” They said, (inaudible) “Milton! Don’t be that way, you know. We paid you for it.” “All right,” he goes. “I’ve got a pump at home. But you got to (hits table) follow me. So we can get.” So my uncle says, he gets in his car and, him and some other person. My uncle was, “Follow him, Taco, follow him, follow him! Don’t lose him, don’t lose him!” He took off, I took off behind. Guess where he went. To the police station. He went in there, he go, “A ver, cabrones, díganme.” Now tell me.

TOM RIVERA: Nice guy. Nice guy.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Nice guy.

TOM RIVERA: Nice guy. (laughs)

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: You see, we’d been [00:28:00] drinking, you know. We didn’t want the police to come out. We’d been drinking, because we were, like, at a party there. (hits table)

TOM RIVERA: Right, you were (overlapping dialogue; inaudible).

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: I mean, we weren’t totally intoxicated, you know, we were (overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

TOM RIVERA: It was a party. Celebration.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: So that’s what he pulls on us. So. Next day, [Gilbert Payez?], I don’t know if you remember Gilbert Payez, he worked at the pipe company, South Colton, Las Pipas.

TOM RIVERA: Las Pipas, yeah.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: My uncle called him, (inaudible), “Come over, how do we get this beer?” And you know, on kegs, on the old kegs there was a -- on the side was an opening. And there was a cork in there. You remember? I don’t know, there was a cork in there. A big cork like that. (The other guy?), some kind of a tool, round, long like that, and the hammer went, pah! Went in, so we were, (makes whooshing sound), filling our buckets, (makes whooshing sound).

TOM RIVERA: (laughs)

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: That’s how we opened it. But Milton said, “Nope.”  
(laughs)

TOM RIVERA: So that’s one wonderful memory [00:29:00] that you have of Milton.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Of him. Oh, I have that memory, I experienced that memory, yeah. Oh, you know, that was just the way he was. You can’t condemn him for it, you know. Maybe he had a bad day, you know.

TOM RIVERA: Well, he was a businessman, (overlapping dialogue; inaudible).

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Businessman. Exactly, exactly.

TOM RIVERA: And he owned the Sombrero for a long, long time.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Very long time.

TOM RIVERA: And during World War II, lots of --

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Oh, yeah. Lot of guys went through that.

TOM RIVERA: Let me ask you, being raised in Colton, living in Colton, what are the best memories that you have about growing up in Colton?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Shit, there’s a lot of them. Like I say, my experience in the projects. Going to the [Cuninos?].

TOM RIVERA: That’s okay. The [Cuninos?] was our swimming hole.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Exactly. Yeah. We used to hang out over there during the summers. [00:30:00] And stealing watermelons from --

TOM RIVERA: [Coolie?] Ranch.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Coolie Ranch. Those are just memories, you know, that we used to -- we were kids, you know. Camping out over there, overnight, in the -- by the river. We did all that.

TOM RIVERA: All we had to do was cross the river, there was the Coolie Ranch.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: There was. Many, many stories. There was -- I -- I can't rightly say. The people. I always remember the good people that I -- especially older ones. I was just talking to [Dennis?], to (inaudible), [Chato?], you know him.

TOM RIVERA: Yes, yes, yes.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: You know Chato. About 92 years old. He's one of the last guys from World War II, that landed in Normandy. So is [Albert?]. Albert, Albert [Gonzalez?]. [00:31:00] He's still in the hospital, because he had suffered a stroke, but he was also one of the first guys. And to me, I consider that -- I consider myself lucky that I met all these guys, because I grew up with them. Albert Gonzalez lived in South Colton, but he lived on the other side of the street, on Walnut. And I used to hang around with his boy, Albert, Jr., when we were little kids. And in those days, most adults really don't care for little g-- young kids. They chase them away. "Get out of here, you stupid kid," you know. Albert took us in. He took all the kids in to the point -- he went as far as doing this. He built a baseball diamond for us, a little baseball park.

TOM RIVERA: (laughs)

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: En la calle (inaudible) donde vive Sosa, dónde vivía Sosa, remember?

TOM RIVERA: Sí, sí, sí, sí.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: (hits table) All that was empty. We had a little park there. And we played baseball every day. After school. We couldn't wait to get out school. First thing we would do was grab our bat and baseball and gloves, y ahí vamos todos.

TOM RIVERA: Because you were at [San Salvador?].

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: [00:32:00] Exactly. Exactly. You know, I enjoyed those. That's one of the things that I'll never forget. Those guys, that they took us in. And they gave us advice, and I guess -- and taught us how to work. They showed us that you got to work, and you got to have an education, or you're going to grow up to be a mule. (hits table) Just like the song says.

TOM RIVERA: So those are wonderful memories that you have --

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: To me they are.

TOM RIVERA: -- growing up in South Colton.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: To me, yes, they are, because I met some wonderful people there, you know. Outstanding people, that I'll never forget. And of course my friends, you know, that I grew up with. First chance I get, I know where they're at, I go visit them, or, you know, just get together.

TOM RIVERA: Who are still your friends?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Right now? Jamie Reese. [Arnold Cruz?] [Bobby?] Cruz's brother. And Bobby.

TOM RIVERA: The baseball player.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Baseball players. And, let's see. Who else do I -- [00:33:00] oh, [Tony Muto?]. They're from South Colton. But they came later, the late '50s. They came from El Paso, Texas. But they also grew -- part of the group, you know, they grew up with us. So, who else. (inaudible), the one I was telling

you about. He lives in -- Soter lost part of his hand in Vietnam. This much. Soter went in the Marine Corps, my little brother, [Manto?] that passed away. There was three kids from Colton. The same class, Colton High, '60. All three of them joined together and they went to boot camp together. That's what I'm telling you. All from (hits table) the same street. This is just one.

TOM RIVERA: Who were the three soldiers, besides your brother?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Ah, (inaudible), Marine. And [Frankie Moreta?]. They were all from -- they were all went in the corps, and they all went to Vietnam. Let's see, my brother's gone, and so is Frankie. The only one left is Soter, but he's not doing good. Those are my f-- well, Soter is one of my good friends still [00:34:00] that I can s-- I still see, because the other ones I lost track of. I don't know if -- where they're at, or, I don't even have high school reunions anymore. And if they do, they combine, like, five years now. Other than that, you know, there's a few others.

TOM RIVERA: But you had a good time growing up in Colton.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: I did.

TOM RIVERA: Wonderful, fond memories.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: I wish I could go back to those years. But, you know. And I just -- the parties we used to have. In the tendederos.

TOM RIVERA: Tell me about the parties.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: In the tendederos.

TOM RIVERA: I don't know what that is, pero dime.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Where these two hang the clothes in the back of the side of the house in the projects. We used to have a little box like that with 45s, and at school they would get -- hang your little card, "Party at so-and-so."

TOM RIVERA: So there was a communication. (laughs)

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: A communication. And ahí vamos todos. And the kids were bad kids. [¿De dónde eres? ¿De dónde eres?], “Get out of here! (inaudible).”

TOM RIVERA: (laughs) [00:35:00] Well, listen, Taco, thank you so much for taking the time to be with us this morning.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: My pleasure, my pleasure.

TOM RIVERA: Thoroughly enjoy our conversation this morning.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: I hope I was clear, you know, enough, you know, that --

TOM RIVERA: You were. And listen, did I forget anything about -- talking about you and your experiences and growing up in Colton? Did I forget anything?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: No, not really. Not really. I think that's every -- we just about covered most of -- if I remember anything, you know, I'll mention it to you.

TOM RIVERA: Okay.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Remember any more.

TOM RIVERA: Okay. Now, would you have any pictures lying around?

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Maybe, I was telling what's his name over there, [Frank?], that I do have one where we're marching in the Sea Explorer Scouts, I don't if that would (inaudible) maybe.

TOM RIVERA: It would, it would.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: And I'll try to see if I can get ahold of --

TOM RIVERA: Yes. We'll scan it and put it as part of our report.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Let's see, yeah. I might have a (piece?). I'll look it up.

TOM RIVERA: Thank you. Well, Taco, thank you so much.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: No problem.

TOM RIVERA: Helping us out this morning.

EUSTAQUIO QUIÑONEZ: Hey, my pleasure. [00:36:00]

**End of Interview:**

[00:36:01]