

Rosa Linda Román ([00:29](#)):

Hello, and welcome to New Mexi-Castaways. I'm Rosa Linda Román and by the time you are listening to this, hopefully, this podcast is well on its way, and you are already familiar with what New Mexicast and New Mexi-Castaways is. But in case you are new to the channel, I'm Rosa Linda Román. And I go by Rosa Linda, and I live on a 45-foot sailing catamaran with my three kids, my husband, and our German shepherd. I am currently on my way to the Fort Lauderdale Airport to pick up my husband and my daughter Ahava after they went to Dallas for a Packers Dallas game. They were pretty excited. My daughter, we have this chore system where you save up, they get something called Bravo Bucks and they get to save up for special privileges. And usually, it's things like using your iPad and, you know, just the daily privileges that kids like to get.

Rosa Linda Román ([01:32](#)):

But sometimes they save up for something really big. And this time around my husband was able to get tickets to the Packers game against Dallas and they got box seats through his company. And so, it was quite an experience. So, Ahava cashed in all of her Bravo Bucks, which I think was like 1,100. And that's like a lot of weeks of doing the right thing and keeping track of chores and whatnot. So, that was what they did. It was a nice break for them in the middle of a very chaotic time for us as a family. I back up a little bit. My family is... my dad's side of the family lives in Puerto Rico in a place called Lattus in a small town. And that is an area that whole island was just devastated by Hurricane Maria.

Rosa Linda Román ([02:33](#)):

And because of that, it's been a really trying time, just emotionally difficult, but even before the hurricane hit Puerto Rico, we've had a lot of ups and downs. So, I don't know when the last time I actually recorded a full episode straight like this is, because usually what I do, and what I've been doing through the whole summer, I used an app called Anchor to record little five-minute audio journals. So, these snippets of five minutes to share what we're doing... the sounds around us, basically. And hopefully, that's very familiar to you, because my intention as I'm recording this in October of 2017, is to use those segments to create an actual podcast, kind of string them together with the little commentary so you guys know what I'm talking about. So, I usually don't record a long, 30 minutes, or however long segment. I just record the five-minute pieces. Well, this time I'm letting it flow.

Rosa Linda Román ([03:36](#)):

Now, if you're a longtime listener to this channel, you know, I used to call this Rosa Linda's Ramblings because this was kind of how I vented. I used to drive a lot when we lived in New Mexico, hence the name, New Mexicast, because we moved from New Mexico onto the sailboat. And I used to drive a lot. Our home was about 35 to 40 minutes away from my daughter's gymnastics gym and pretty much anything else except for their school. So, there was a lot of drive time and I was able to record quite a bit along the way. Well, the Rosa Linda's Ramblings has evolved into New Mexi-Castaways and I'm trying to keep it a little bit more coherent than just my random ramblings in general.

Rosa Linda Román (04:31):

However, today you get the ramblings. So, let me kind of bring you up to speed. I know it's been months since I've recorded straight through like this, so I'm maybe repeating some things, but I might as well just backtrack a little bit. So in April, mid-April, we came back from The Bahamas, and we did that because there was an immigration officer who basically kicked me out of the country. He did not approve of the fact that my kids were going to the little local school in Georgetown Bahamas. And he gave us, I think it was like two weeks to get out of the country. We managed to get, I think it was like three weeks and all told, but we made a beeline back for Florida and came back. We were told that we were allowed to return to the country, to The Bahamas, but that we had to leave and come back.

Rosa Linda Román (05:29):

So, that was our plan. We were going to come back to the U.S., re-provision, kind of regroup, figure out what the next part of the journey would look like. And then, we thought we would go up the east coast of Florida. I mean, yeah, up the east coast of Florida, and then, all the way up the east coast of the United States for the summer. Well, those plans did not happen partly because my husband was offered a new position within his company to work on a hospital in south Florida or a number of hospitals in south Florida. And so, because of that new opportunity, he ended up being... it was better for him to stay in the Florida area. My oldest daughter, Ahava, the one I'm going to pick up as well is a competitive gymnast. And while we were sailing to The Bahamas, it was not the best for her gymnastics career.

Rosa Linda Román (06:25):

She had to basically take off almost the whole time, except for we were able to connect her with a gym in Nassau, in The Bahamas. And that allowed her to do some training and conditioning, but she was definitely behind her peers when we got back to The Bahamas, I mean to Florida. So, she went back to her old gym, which had been through a major ownership overhaul and lots of changes. And then even after she was there, her coach quit and left in a very undignified unprofessional way. That's a kind of a side issue, but still, she ended up with a coach. The assistant coach became the main coach and it was wonderful, it was wonderful. And she's been working really hard ever since. So, basically, for almost six months, my daughter has been doing her gymnastics training intensely.

Rosa Linda Román (07:24):

And Nathan, my husband has been working on this new opportunity in large part because he's hoping for a promotion within the company. So, that's why it was kind of like, okay, this is going to be a new way of thinking, because I don't know if I ever said this in the recordings. Boy, this is a loud street, huh? I don't know if I ever said this in the recordings back when we were preparing to move on to the boat. But the thought originally was for Nathan to start to kind of semi-retire, which now I look back and laugh because if you know my husband, I don't think there's such a thing. He's always busy and got to work, work, work, but back then we thought he would stay still do his clinical work, which he does once a month, still in New Mexico.

Rosa Linda Román (08:18):

But realistically, and then, he was going to kind of whittle down some of the corporate work that he does cause he's vice-president of integrative medicine for a group of hospitals. So, he was going to whittle down and kind of back off, ease off a little on the workload so that we could sail. Well, that never really happened. He reduced his workload a lot in December, so he could sail with us to The Bahamas. But then after that, he pretty much went back to work as usual and has been working ever since. So, it's taken some major adjustments just in terms of like as a couple trying to figure out what we are going to do or what we really want to do, and what matters enough to spend our time on.

Rosa Linda Román ([09:13](#)):

The whole idea of living on a boat for me was to have the freedom of movement to come and go. Well, for six months, we haven't been going much at all on the boat, at least. Because Nathan and Ahava wanted to stay put and the rest of us, Samuel, Ziva, and I prefer to be on the move. We took an RV trip across country with my brother-in-law and that was a really fun adventure. Hopefully, you've gotten a chance to listen to some of those stories here on New Mexico Castaways, but anyway, while they were kind of hunkered down doing the work they wanted to do, I've been really feeling like I'm at a standstill, not sure where we were going to go, if we were going to go anywhere at all. I knew I still wanted to sail to Puerto Rico, which was always my goal.

Rosa Linda Román ([10:10](#)):

And I had arranged for my daughter to have her bat mitzvah in Puerto Rico. It's coming up in January. So, we were already kind of leaning toward how we were going to get or prepping mentally for how we were going to get to Puerto Rico, sail there. The plan was going to be to be there for December and January. And then, from there we were going to... well and have her bat mitzvah there, right? Connect with family, enjoy. What I really wanted and the main reason I came up with that plan is so let me backtrack again. Again, I told you this was going to be Rosa Linda's ramblings. And I haven't really had a lot of people to talk to about a lot of this stuff, because we've been in so much reaction just because of the circumstances that have been thrown our way that I haven't really talked it out very much.

Rosa Linda Román ([11:01](#)):

So, guess what? You guys get to listen to me talking it out. So, Puerto Rico is more than just a place I visited. My father is from there and my grandparents, my [Spanish] lived there and all my [Spanish] and [Spanish], my aunts, and uncles, and cousins, and my growing up, my dad worked for Eastern Airlines. Because of that flew free, and my oldest sister and I, Becky, and I would fly to Puerto Rico to spend the summer, or the Christmas break, or whatever with my [Spanish], my grandmother. And so, I have very, very many fond memories of the island of Puerto Rico. I could tell you so many stories. In fact, I love that place so much that I wrote a Screenplay about it called Puerto Rican Summers which I think I changed the name later to Puerto Rican [Spanish] because that's something that is super fun and I've always wanted to get my kids to have that experience too. A [Spanish] is like over in the holiday season, they go from house to house, to house with music.

Rosa Linda Román ([12:14](#)):

So, you start at one person's house singing, playing, you know, a [Spanish] throw a little guitar or some instruments. And then, you sing and say, "Come out, come out. We want you to come, let's go find a party." And then, you go to the next house and you go walking from house, to house, to house until you end up at somebody's house. And you never know which house it's going to end up at that night, but you pick up people and instruments along the way. So, before you know it it's like this big moving massive family and friends singing and being joyous and then ending up at someone's house for a party. That's Puerto Rican [Spanish]. And it's just a great experience that I remember so vividly from when I was a little girl and I've always wanted my kids to have that experience and my husband to experience it as well.

Rosa Linda Román ([13:04](#)):

But the truth is once I became a mom, it's been harder for me to find the time to get there to Puerto Rico. And so, I've gone twice since having kids, but the last time was seven years ago when I was pregnant with Samuel. So, I was really excited, because I finally made the commitment to connect with the island and my family, and host my daughter's bat mitzvah there, which took some doing, because you can imagine most of the island is not Jewish. Most of my family is Catholic and it turns out we found a great synagogue that did do destination bat mitzvahs, bar, and bat mitzvahs. And my daughter has been studying with a rabbi. I think he's in New York, but he spends three months every year in Puerto Rico serving that congregation. So, she's been studying diligently to prepare for her bat mitzvah, which is scheduled for our San Juan in January. And so, then this hurricane hit.

Rosa Linda Román ([14:05](#)):

So, that may have shifted everything. I really don't know before I get to Puerto Rico and what the plan is, at least as of right now, let me just kind of finish the story of the chaos that has been our world lately. So, we got back from The Bahamas, we stayed here more, boat stayed in one place at a marina and it's a marina without any kids, without any other families. And it's pretty lonely. And then, my husband being, you know, Nathan and the hardworking person that he is he didn't just stay in south Florida. This job has been added to the jobs that he already was doing. So, he's been basically, I always said he worked three full-time jobs. Well, now he's working four full-time jobs. So, it's been busy.

Rosa Linda Román ([15:06](#)):

And then add to all of that, my kids, two of our kids started in a brick and mortar school, which they had not done. Last year, all my kids were homeschooled. And then, toward the end of that RV trip in July and part of August, my daughter, no, my son Samuel said, "Mommy, can I go to a real school for first grade?" And I was like, "School starts in like 10 days." Or something like that at that point. And I said, "Well, let me see. I don't know." And he really wanted to, and I thought, okay, well, since we're going to be staying put with gymnastics and Nathan's work for a while, let's see what we can come up with. So, we scrambled to find out if we could get them into a school, the school where the marina is, is unfortunately not in the best neighborhood and it's not a high-performing school. In fact, it's a failing school.

Rosa Linda Román ([16:04](#)):

So, we were kind of looking at, well, what other options are there? And Florida apparently doesn't have a lot of options like New Mexico where you can have school choice. And if your local school is failing, you have the right to not go to that local school. I think that's the point, the incentive, so that the school's kind of, you know, come up to speed. And then, the people that the kids end up going to their school, because they improve, right? So anyway, long story short, my kids, we found kind of a workaround, because Ziva is gifted or designated as a gifted student. And she has something called an IEP. An IEP is an Individualized Education Plan or program, I think it is. And it basically gives her the support that she needs.

Rosa Linda Román ([17:02](#)):

It means that the school is supposed to give her the support that she needs in order to succeed in school and be adequately challenged. Well, because she had an IEP, and because the local school doesn't have a gifted program, they let my kids go to another higher-performing school, not too far, at the town nearby, like the next town over. So, they started school mid-August, and it has been an emotional roller coaster ever since. Samuel has been struggling tremendously with, he's not used to having to sit still, that's number one. He is a very huggy, snuggly kind of little boy, and he likes to hug people and not everybody likes that. And he doesn't do anything like inappropriate. He knows about keeping his parts to himself and all of that. And he's very good about that, but he does hug people and a lot in particular little boys don't apparently like other little boys to hug them. So, he's struggling with that, having appropriate boundaries, and learning... the biggest thing is learning to sit, and not move, and not touch your pencils, and not do other things, and just pay attention. That's a really big struggle for him. He feels strongly that nobody likes him and that he has no friend, and he's just really struggled with that. So, that's that

Rosa Linda Román ([18:34](#)):

Ziva's pretty much thriving in the school arena. In fact, they've asked her to be on the safety patrol. She started volleyball again, which is a thing that she loves. She loves beach volleyball, but we couldn't find a beach volleyball team near her, near where we live, so she ended up finding an indoor... We found an indoor team and that has worked out really well. But she's also very, very like emotionally out of control a lot, a lot. She has these outbursts where she's just like really angry and lashing out. And like yesterday she took everything she could reach and threw it at me, because I had changed the plan of where they're going to stay while we're in Puerto Rico which I'll get to still in a minute. So, anyway, that's the school-related rollercoaster.

Rosa Linda Román ([19:34](#)):

And then, just as they were starting to kind of get their groove with the school thing, Hurricane Irma hit and we had to evacuate. The evacuation was chaotic and stressful. We weren't sure what to do, because last time, a year ago when there was a hurricane, Hurricane Matthew, we went to Western Florida and stayed at a hotel, I think, in Fort Myers or something like that. Well, the hurricane was so big that Western Florida didn't seem like it was going to be safe either, so we ended up driving up to Georgia. It's a good thing we didn't go to west Florida, because that is

where the hurricane ended up hitting. But the hurricane actually followed us up to Georgia. Now, Nathan had gone back... We drove up to Georgia to a place called Callaway Gardens in Georgia.

Rosa Linda Román ([20:35](#)):

And It was a lovely place, but we ended up losing power and it was a very stressful time. My husband had gone to work, to fly for a conference in New Jersey. So, the kids, the dog, and I were alone in this place in Georgia with no power, no idea how to feed everybody with no power, because it was an electric stove and, you know, stuff like that. We had many, many challenges or adventures depending on how you want to look at it, but it was nothing. That was nothing compared to what was next. And that was watching Hurricane Maria hit the island of Puerto Rico. It was devastating and they are still largely without power.

Rosa Linda Román ([21:40](#)):

I mean, at the time when it hit, a little over two weeks ago, a hundred percent of the island was without power, 90% of the communications were knocked out, 90% of the water system was out, and many of the roads to take people to and from these small villages up in the mountains were completely washed out by mudslides. So, it just has been awful because we waited and we were trying to get confirmation that our family survived the storm. And it was just devastating. Everybody whose loved ones were on the island at the time were just frantic, trying to find out if they survived the storm, if they were okay, trying to figure out what we could do to help. And still to this day, there are many people who haven't talked to anyone. Now, we were lucky enough that we had a cousin in San Juan and she made it through the storm. And then after several days she was able to go up to Lares, and connect with my family, and see that everybody was okay.

Rosa Linda Román ([22:41](#)):

So, after that, now the rebuilding begins and everybody's trying to figure out how to help. Well, we knew we were in a unique position because Nathan is a doctor and he's quite a good doctor, actually. He sees things, I think, that a lot of people don't, and I don't know if it's because of his engineering background or what, but he just is, if you know Nathan, he's a very unique person, and I know that he will do a lot of good if we go to Puerto Rico. So, we have been scrambling. We were going to buy a ticket and fly there to go see what we could do to help.

Rosa Linda Román ([23:34](#)):

But over time we realized it would be better if we could A, use that money, which was like \$1,500 to buy a ticket, if we could use that money to help people maybe buy insulin, or solar lights, or whatever we need to get rather than spending it on an airfare. Well, one of our daughter's gymnastics friends is in charge of ground operations. Her dad is in charge of ground operations in Ponce in Puerto Rico. He went there like a few days after the hurricane hit and he's been working to try to get us there ever since. He was able to secure a flight for us. And unless something changes, which a lot of times it does, we are supposed to go to Puerto Rico tomorrow morning, early out of Miami. That means that now that Nathan's just coming back and we're leaving so early tomorrow, we've got a lot of work to do, a lot of scrambling around, and getting

what we need, and preparing for tomorrow's trip. I'm going to take a little break just to drive a little carefully, because there's an accident here and I will be right back.

Rosa Linda Román ([24:52](#)):

Okay. I'm back, and I'm just thinking about what next, what we have to do to prepare. A big part of the challenge to get to Puerto Rico is just trying to deal with the logistics of my kids and the childcare that we need to set up. Our babysitter has school. She goes to Keiser University and that the timing isn't great, because she starts before my kids start school in the morning, and she ends before they, I mean, she ends after they get out of school. So, I went to the school this morning to ask about before and after care so that maybe that will help logistically, but we're figuring it out. And my husband has an entire backpack full of medical supplies that he has so he can hike into some of these areas and check on some of the people who need help.

Rosa Linda Román ([25:56](#)):

The reason I'm going to Fort Lauderdale instead of having him take the Tri-Rail up is we are going to go try to get a satellite phone and a number of other things that we can get more easily in Fort Lauderdale than we can in West Palm Beach. So that's what's kind of consuming my mind right now. I know there's a lot of work that we're going to have to do to make it all work just for our family. But the hope is that we go to on this trip for a week, go to the island, kind of connect with family, see what we can do to help, and then, come back with a better idea of how A, Nathan can set up some other there's some other doctors that want to help, but he needs to be able to see where the need is greatest and what they can help with.

Rosa Linda Román ([26:54](#)):

Because there's already FEMA on the ground and all many other organizations are there to try to help. So, we don't want to just keep doing the same thing other people are doing. We're trying to fill the gap where it is needed. But anyway, my hope is when we finish this trip safely, we come back and regroup, kind of wrap things up in the Florida area, and then, sail to Puerto Rico finally. The reports that I'm getting from other cruisers is that there is, the marinas did... Yeah, there were some, there was some damage, but nothing like in Tortola and some of these other places where the marinas were devastated, like the island completely, you know, just wiped out. So, hopefully, there will be a place that... and we can anchor out, that's not the issue. A big part of why we were hesitant to go to Puerto Rico was we didn't want to be a burden to anyone.

Rosa Linda Román ([27:58](#)):

You know, if they're having trouble getting food and water, we didn't want to be, you know, taking food and water from people that need it. So, part of the nice thing about a sailboat is once we get our solar panels installed, we're largely self-sufficient. Well, we have a water maker to make water and with solar panels, we can make power and we can bring our own food supplies and maybe fish here and there, even though we're awful fisher people. But in theory, that's what we can do is... Sorry, I wasn't sure if it was recording, I had a moment glitch. Anyway, so that's why we want to sail there. I would love to sail with several other sailboats and you know, get everybody to go with us with, you know, their holds full of provisions and things that we could

bring to these islands, not just Puerto Rico, but there's a lot of remote islands between Irma and Maria, Hurricanes Irma and Hurricane Maria that are just devastated.

Rosa Linda Román ([29:10](#)):

And if we can help in any way, I really hope to do that. It's interesting listening to the other cruisers on some of the some of the groups that I belong to. They're discussing whether or not to go to these islands and, you know, they're concerned that they don't want to take any of the things that people on the island need and which is a very valid concern. They're also concerned about whether it would be safe for us to go, because of all the boats that were destroyed. They worry that there's underwater debris that could damage our own boat, which would be terrible, of course. But I really hope that we can find a way to go and help and not let the fear of what might be keep us from helping people that we actually could make a difference and help.

Rosa Linda Román ([30:04](#)):

I've long wanted to do service projects and things with my family, but nothing ever resonated. Like, it wasn't that I didn't care about other people and other circumstances, I just didn't know how to help. I didn't know, like, I've never been to Haiti. So, when they have terrible tragedies happen there I didn't know how to help other than, you know, offer to donate some money here or there, but in the case of Puerto Rico, I know this island. This is my family's home. And I feel like I am able to figure it out, whereas everywhere else, I wouldn't even know where to start. And I'm sure that's what a lot of people are feeling. So, I'm hoping once we figure it out it will help me help others to do what they... Because I'm sure there are a lot of people that want to help, but don't know how. So, I'm hoping I can kind of be the bridge that helps them help facilitate other people who want to also contribute in a positive way.

Rosa Linda Román ([31:06](#)):

So, that's what's on my mind as I go down to the airport. I just got a text that they landed, which means that I am late, but that's okay, because I didn't even know this morning that I was picking them up. And I literally was thinking, "Oh, I finally have one day where I have the boat to myself to just get all this stuff done before I have to leave." And then, my husband's like, "Wait, aren't you picking me up?" I'm like, "Ah, no, I wasn't planning on it." So, I'm now shifting gears and it's fine. I mean, you know, it's good. I'm looking forward to seeing them, and then, we can talk about all the things we need to do and maybe even make a trip to Ikea, because I know they have a lot of solar things and I love Ikea, but I probably don't have time for that, so we'll see.

Rosa Linda Román ([31:52](#)):

Anyway, that's what's on my mind in Rosa Linda's Ramblings. I now have a Facebook group. It's a private group called New Mexi-Castaways and you have to be invited to join. And in addition to that group, I have a private photo album, if you will, on Google Photos for New Mexi-Castaways crew. So, if you're interested in joining in, you get a lot more of the content that I don't publish on here. And you also can see the photos, because a lot of times when I'm recording audio, I take pictures along the way. So, I upload those to that private album. So, our crew, I like to call you guys my crew, so the New Mexi-Castaways crew can see some of our adventures. So, if you're interested, just go to my Facebook page, that seems to be the easiest way. That's New

Mexicast on Facebook. And there's a button that says Sign Up, I believe right at the top. And then, you just click that and put in your email, and then, I'll send you the link to both the photo album, and that private group. And that's about it. Thank you so much. Thanks for listening to New Mexi-Castaways I'm Rosa Linda Román.