

"...y la familia?"

Volume 8, Issue 4

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Needed for
Future Issues:

"Stuff" about you
and yours...

Announcements

- New Baby
- Engagement
- Graduations
- Promotion
- New address

Upcoming
Events

- Family parties
- Reunions
- Weddings

Articles, Photos
and Fillers

- Nostalgic stories
- Photos and artwork
- Original poetry
- Vignettes on your immediate family
- Favorite family recipes
- Cute things your kids have said
- Funny stories

She's

Back in the U.S.A.!

Marina Ramos, youngest daughter of my sister, Olga, returned safely from her tour of duty in Kuwait, for which we praise the Lord!

Now stationed in Texas, Marina was joined by her mom and Cousin Joi for a weekend reunion on January 23rd. Joi was only able to be there for 24 hours, but squeezed every drop out of the time she had. The threesome enjoyed taking in the sights around San Antonio, including the River Walk and the Alamo.

For more on this story and pictures of their reunion weekend, please turn to page 3.



This photo was taken by Joi on the Avis shuttle bus going to get their car after they finally met up with Marina at the San Antonio airport on Friday, Jan. 23rd. Says Joi, "You can see how delighted Olga is to see her daughter! Isn't a mother's joy wonderful to see? We are blessed to have Marina back on US land, that's for sure!"

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I Remember...by Norma I. Pettit

This month my brother, Ruben, turned 55. As always happens when Ruben, Olga and I get together, though, the years melt away and in our minds we are still teenagers. I mentioned on page 3 that the three of us were reunited at Olga's house for Marina's welcome home party on Feb. 14th, and that it had been almost two years since Olga and I had seen Ruben. Well, if visits are few and far between, letters are even scarcer. In fact, I can only remember receiving one letter from my brother in my entire lifetime (but it was a good one), and it was so special to me that I have saved it for over 31 years! So here, without Ruben's permission is a reprint of the ONE letter that I have ever received from him.

1731 Moraga Street
San Francisco, Ca. 94122
September 20, 1972

Srita. Norma I. Garcia
B 911 El Monte Apts.
Hato Rey, Puerto Rico, 00918

Dear Norma;

Surprise, surprise, surprise!!! I finally answered one of your letters. I guess that you have to scratch a bottle or something, Right?

How are you? I am fine. (this is known as the classic beginning) Everything over here is ok. How is everything over there? OK? Good.

Your apartment sure sounds neat-o-beat-o, but somehow, your other apartment with the smelly ol' stinky garbage, the big black cockroaches, the hairy, smelly, dirty rats, the noise, and a bunch of silly girls, sounds more exciting.

Well, Norma, I'm glad to see that you are really studying hard. You know, I was really surprised to learn that chickens lay only one egg at a time. I also thought (as you did) that chickens laid 3 or four eggs at a time like cats do. I was also pleased to learn that you are practicing your aim in the outhouse. Now I can tell all my friends, "My sister, the one that goes to the UNIVERSITY, is studying OUTHOUSE." Keep up the good work.

I'm tired today. I just came back from a three day trip. In the car, Norma, I went in the car. I went to Sacramento, Stockton, Fresno, Dos Palos, and (are you ready for this) LOS BAÑOS. You may ask, "Why did you go to Los Baños?" Well, Norma, when you gotta go, you gotta go.

These business trips are really tiring because I usually work from about 11 AM to 9 or 10 PM. But I really like it because I can sort of 'get away from it all'. I can see different sights, eat different eats, and sleep in a different town every night. It's really quite exciting.

My work is kind of slowing down. This is due to the poor sales that we have had so far this year. I'm not worried though because if they finally decide to close down the sales division here in San Francisco, I should still have work for at least four months and maybe as much as one year. This I think because our New York office closed several months ago but they still have a credit and collection office there. Anyway, when I do finally lose my job I don't think it will take me too long to find a job. I am constantly seeing ads in the newspaper for collectors and for people with experience in credit.

I got stopped by the Highway Patrol today. Over here in California the Highway Patrol set up road blocks sometimes for vehicle inspections. This is what they found: 1. Right wiper blade defective. 2. Headlamps out of adjustment. 3. Defective dimmer switch. 4. Right front turn signal lens broken. 5. Right rear tail light burned out. 6. Four defective tires.

Well now, let me see, what else has happened lately. How is the weather over there? Here in California it has been nice the past few days. Yeah...well...um...let me see...I cut my toe nails today...Have you cut yours lately?...I'm hungry...excuse me a minute.....O.K. I'm back—I'm cooking Mexican food—Hot Dogs and Chile con Carne...did you know that chile con carne makes a funny slurping sound when you shake it out of the can?...excuse me while I serve myself. Are you sure that you don't want any? Oh, I see, you don't like my cooking. Well let me tell you, I wasn't going to give you any anyhow.....hot...hot.....So your lamb chops grew in the pan. Yeah, sure....they looked so teeny-weeny in the package? Yeah—sure. You were probably just eating with your eyes.

I have been thinking about going back to school next year. I'm not sure yet because I have to see if I could continue working. I am really interested in taking some business courses and I am also interested in Real Estate. It is funny because when I was in High School I never thought of taking any business classes. Too dull I thought. Since I got this job I have really gotten to like business. I am interested in Real Estate as a possible source of income for me in the future. A lot of money could be made in Real Estate. Also a lot of money could be lost.

How is your job? What kind of work do you do in Sears? Do you like it?

Olga is in Los Angeles now. I think that she will be back here in San Francisco next month. Olga told me that she would like to go to Puerto Rico again.

Well Norma, it's time for me to go to sleep.

Good night—Love you
Ruben

Olga, Marina and Joi in Texas



This is an excerpt from Joi's e-mail about their trip:

"Marina looks great and is very happy to be back on US ground. Last night walked along the River Walk [see photo at left] and then had dinner. We stayed up talking until Olga started nodding off. Yawn!

This morning we had the continental breakfast the hotel provided and then headed toward The Alamo. Weather was OK; cloudy but 56 degrees was very warm for me. The sun even peeked out now and then. We spent over an hour at the Alamo; very interesting and a reminder of the historic event in the state's quest for independence.

We had lunch at The Hard Rock Café. I called O & M when I landed back in Denver, and they were headed out with Marina's girlfriend."

Valentine's Day Welcome Home Party

On February 14th, Tom and Olga Smith hosted a "Welcome Home Valentine's Day party" for Marina, who was on a two week leave in California. The party was very festive and well-attended. Olga and I even got to see our long-lost brother, Ruben, his wife, Katherine, and their two beautiful children, Michael and Nicole. It had been almost two years since we had last seen each other, which is *incredible* because we all live here in Northern California. (In fact, Olga and Ruben live only about 15 minutes away from each other!!)

Vic and Joi flew in from California, and then with Olga's daughters and their families and some close friends, we had a full house. Olga had a wonderful spread of yummy food, and we played the "Pink Elephant" gift exchange game, a favorite of ours. It all turned out great!

I questioned Marina about her future plans. She has extended her enlistment in the Air Force for another year so that she can do some cross-training. She also told me that she may decide to go back to Kuwait for another year. I asked, "You'd really go back?!" and she replied, "Oh, yeah, I'd go back! It really wasn't that bad." Apparently the added benefits she'd reap from going back to the Middle East for another year are alluring. At this point, though, she has not made definite plans to go back.

No matter what she decides to do, we are already all so proud of Marina that we could just *burst!*





At this time in our family history...

- Hilario García Jr and Juliana Pérez were married on Feb. 1, 1861. He was a great-uncle of my paternal grandmother, Ana Cruz García.
- Florencio Rivera Maldonado and Ana Cruz Garcia were married on Feb. 12, 1914.
- Auntie Marie and Achilees G. Nicholson were married on Feb. 15, 1937.
- Dionicia del Carmen Rivera Maldonado (a sister of our family patriarch, Papa Flor) was born on Feb. 20, 1867.
- Victoriano Rivera Maldonado (my father's great-uncle) was born on Feb. 23, 1845. He was a brother of Manuel Alejo Rivera Maldonado (my father's paternal grandfather).
- Juan Julian Rivera Maldonado was born 127 years ago, on Feb. 28th. He was five years younger than his brother, Florencio (my father's father). Juan Julian died on New Year's Eve at the age of nine-and-a-half.

More Family Pics from Valentine's Day Party:

1. Michael, Nicole, Katherine & Ruben Garcia
2. Raymond Cavino proudly giving his grandma a Valentine.
3. Olga's Valentine's Day gift to me— "See No Evil, Hear No Evil, Speak No Evil" hens.
4. Angela Barnes and her dog, Diva.
5. Tom Smith and D.D.



Guess Who This Baby Is?

The answer is found on page 7.



The Way We Were

The photo below is of Victoria, George and Jenny Nicholson. The date was not written on the back of the picture, but I am guessing c. 1964. This photo was taken in the Nicholson's backyard in San Francisco and sent to my father.



A Labor of Love



The tomb of Florencio Rivera—the family patriarch.

November 2, 2003

DIA DE LOS MUERTOS

Hello! My dear cousin Norma:

Surprise! Well, yes but it does not mean that we do not think about you all, every minute of the day. You all represent to us the strength from the past, the present and the future. You are one of the links that hold this long and lasting chain together. God bless your soul.

Today is time again for me to go to pay my respect to those who gave us the opportunity along with the almighty God to be here. At the cemetery I went to see Tía Anita and Uncle Oscar's tomb. I did some maintenance and a face-lift, some painting but I still have to go to clean the top to get rid of the mildew. That was a month ago; today, Día de los Muertos, I went again for some prayers for Uncle & Tía Anita. At the same time a month ago I finished the major work repair to Abuelo Flor Rivera's grave. It was in very bad shape and I committed myself to do some work to it. I told Tía Tita about my promise and we together achieved the task.

I'm very grateful to her for helping out on this accomplishment.

Well! Today, I went to see my father and mother's, Joshua's, Abuela Ignacia's, Tía Anita & Tío Oscar's, and Granpa Flor's tombs. Tío Nery I do not know where he rests, so I have to go see if by any chance I can find Nanny [Nery's stepdaughter] to inquire about it.

On behalf of Oscalito, Olga, Ruben and Norma, THANK YOU RENE AND CARMEN for fixing up the tomb of Oscar and Anita García. You are awesome!!!

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Hats off to my nephew **René, Carmen and family**, who out of their good heart took the task of repairing and beautifying our father's grave. Also, as René said, they gave a face lift to Oscar's and Also Guar's graves.

On behalf of myself and the Rivera family, I want to thank them for their thoughtfulness and love. We really appreciate it.

René, Carmen and family, bless your loving hearts! Our heartfelt thanks for being such a darling!

Love,

Tía Tita & José



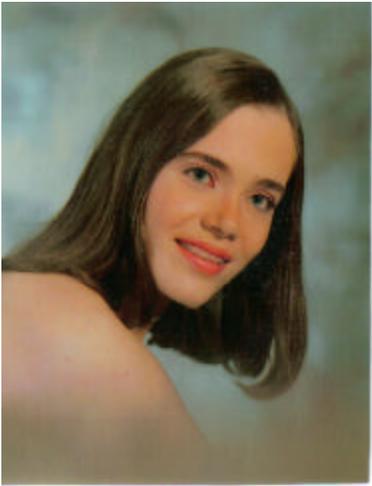
The tomb of Oscar and Anita Garcia

On this day our prayers for

<i>Tía Anita Merritt</i>	<i>Abuela Otilia Pacheco</i>
<i>Tío Angelo De Nardo</i>	<i>Abuela Ignacia Sevilla</i>
<i>Adela Jimenez</i>	<i>Abuela Ana Cruz</i>
<i>Papi Guar</i>	<i>Tío Bob Merritt</i>
<i>Tía Anita García</i>	<i>Mami Elena Sevilla</i>
<i>Tío "Nick" Nicholson</i>	<i>Abuelo Flor Rivera</i>
<i>Tío Oscar Garcia</i>	<i>Tío Nery Rivera</i>
<i>Tía Elena De Nardo</i>	<i>Tía Rosita Rivera</i>

...and all those in la Familia that I cannot remember their names at the moment, please Familia, accept my apology. With great love for those already gone and great love for those that are still around, René and Carmen Rivera.

Student News



Some of you may have received this lovely picture of Wilma with your Christmas card from the Roig family. Wilma, 18, is a freshman at Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Wilma is studying to be an architect.

Two days younger than her cousin, Wilma, my daughter, **Ana Victoria**, is a freshman at Simpson College in Redding, California.

Vickie (or Tory, as her friends call her) will be majoring in Cross Cultural Studies (World Missions) with a minor in Communications.



Other Family News

Cousin Carlos reports that Roberto and Orlando are selling [or by this time have already sold] their restaurant, The Lazy Donkey. They sold the Bradley Street Fish House restaurant last year. With the sale of The Lazy Donkey, they will be out of the restaurant business.

Says Carlos, "I think both of them are ready for a change in their life. They have both developed other interests. Orlando has been growing another business dealing with used and new equipment. It is doing extremely well and he seems to be enjoying it very much. It gives him more time with his family and the profit from the business is better than the restaurants.

Roberto and his family have joined a community in Dahlonega in northeast Georgia dedicated to applied ontology. According to their website (<http://www.applied-ontology.com/index2.htm>) "...The Institute of Applied Ontology is a non-profit international organization dedicated to the spiritual regeneration of the human race. The Institute's approach is non-sectarian and designed to draw forth an inherent understanding of what is real and true, setting a context for creative and successful living on all levels."

Dahlonega is approximately 2 hours away from Carrollton. They sold their house last fall and as of Christmastime were in the market to purchase a place in Dahlonega.

"You will need to correspond with Roberto to get the full details," adds Carlos. "As I understand it, everyone in the community works for the good of the community. It is a big life change for Roberto and his family but they seem very happy. We got to see them for a couple hours at Orlando's while we visited there a couple days ago [during Christmas]. They were passing through on their way home after spending Christmas with Carol's parents in southern Georgia."

Abut **Uncle Isidro**, Carlos says, "Dad is doing great. At 84 he hasn't slowed down a bit. He drove to Miami, Florida to spend Christmas with Auntie Tita and Cousin Carol. Then, after a few days, he drove all night to return home. As he tells the story, he played a tape of himself playing the mandolin (or *cuatro*—I'm not sure which) and sang out loud in the car to keep himself awake. He said he kept the windows rolled up so people wouldn't hear him and think he was crazy! It was a least a 19 hour drive. Unbelievable. For Christmas, Garnet and I gave him a plane ticket to the destination of his choice. He wanted to go to California near the end of February. So I went ahead and booked his flight. He will fly out on February 22."

And in fact, Uncle Isidro did come out to California. I think it was on Monday, Feb. 23rd that I came home from my teaching job to find a note on my desk that read (translated from Spanish), "Norma, I entered your house. I made a phone call to Delia in Stockton and I played a waltz to the dog. Then I left. I left you a few dollars for the phone call." I was disappointed to realize that I had missed Uncle's visit, but I was really touched and honored that he took the time to stop in to try to see me when I know how those slot machines in Lake Tahoe must have been beckoning to him! We've had some storms hit us since then. I wonder if Uncle Isidro got snowed in over there and is still stuck in a casino?!!

Relatives Respond

Well, actually, sometimes they don't.
I don't have anything to put in this section for this issue since I already put letters from Tía Tita, Cousin René, and Cousin Carlos on other pages.
So instead I'd like to share
A View of...the Colorado Rockies,
sent to me by Cousin Joi. She took this photo from the airplane as she and Vic were returning to Colorado after Marina's Valentine's Day welcome home party.



2004 Rivera Family Reunion

Where: In Lugoff, South Carolina

Part of the time it will be at the home of Cousin Mari Lillian Pérez and her family—

190A Leaning Tree Road
Lugoff, South Carolina
Phone #: (803) 438-4214

And the rest of the time it will be at the home of Awilda Rivera (Mari Lillian's sister) and her family—

1824 Baughman Rd. Lot 4
Lugoff, South Carolina

Both sisters live near each other in double wide mobile homes surrounded by lots of property. There is room to stay in their homes (your spot reserved on a first come, first serve basis), or you can reserve a room at a nearby motel.

There is a Ramada Ltd Camden in Lugoff with rates that begin at \$56.00 per night. (phone #1-800-272-6232)



and a Best Western Camden West in Lugoff, with rates starting at \$62.10 per night. (phone #1-800-528-1234)

When: July 24 & 25, 2004

Personally, my family is flying out on Thursday evening, so that we can have an extra day to visit with Mari and Awilda and their families, and to be there to greet all the rest of you as you arrive.

Make your reservations early!!!



The baby pictured on page 4 is newborn **Ada Elena Rivera**, daughter of Cousin Heriberto and his wife, Ada. The date on the birth announcement says 10/5/80.

"¿...y la familia?"

C/o Norma I. Pettit
2426 Meadow Lane
Placerville, CA 95667
Phone: (530) 642-8960
E-Mail: mamanony@juno.com

Visit us on the Web at www.ylafamilia.org.

Birthday Greetings

Eduardo Medero (16) - Feb. 2	Miguel González (10) - March 3	Raynell H. Díaz (23) - March 19
Juan González (43) - Feb. 2	Matthew William Hargraves (4) - March 3	Veronica Nicholson (6) - March 21
Brook Rivera (25) - Feb. 5	Stephen Nicholson (7) - March 11	Michael Rivera (5) - March 24
Angela Nicholson (37) - Feb. 6	Thomas Smith (66) - March 13	Mackenzie Eddy (11) - March 24
Maritza Rivera (41) - Feb. 11	Rafael González (35) - March 13	Sonia (Quiñones) Rambo (26) - March 26
Melissa González (18) - Feb. 15	Karen Rivera (25) - March 15	Barbara Nicholson (58) - March 26
Nicole Garcá (8) Feb. 16	James Caffey (62) - March 15	Milagros Rivera (41) - March 28
Ruben J. Garcá (55) - Feb. 21	Jenny (Nicholson) Reinke (66) - March 17	Todd Anthony Springer (1) - March 29
Heriberto Rivera (52) - Feb. 24	Joi Stenroos (54) - March 18	
Gwendolyn Rivera (1) - Feb. 27		
Dustin Yager (19) - March 3		

Anniversaries



Tom and Olga Smith (20)
Feb. 19

**Sheila Andujar and
Edwin Rivera**
Feb. 15

If you know of anyone in the family who is not receiving the newsletter, please send me their address.

Please let me know if I omitted your birthday or anniversary.