

"...y la familia?"

Volume 9, Issue 3

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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

A Very Merry Christmas



Cousin José Medina of Des Moines, Iowa, has once again "outdone himself in decorating the outside of the house for the holidays," according to his fiancé, Donna Bridges, and evidenced by the above photo. "Just the one big tree in the front yard has 1,950 lights on it. We have so many people stop by that we welcome a lot of them into our home to see my collection of Santas.

Our local TV station called and wanted to put us on the 6 and 10 o'clock news a few weeks ago. That was fun. The neighbors all came out to watch and now they are decorating their houses. We have 19th century Victorian music box music playing so people roll down their windows in their cars or even get out and listen to the music. Everyone loves it. We give everyone candy canes as they drive or walk by. We have so much fun watching the kids as they come by to see all the lights."

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Family Christmas Party at the Pettit's home

...or as Raymie Cavino, 5, pictured at right with his brother Dustin, 13, put it as he arrived for the party with his parents, Teena and Rich, "It's the *Pink Elephant* house!" Raymie and Dustin are two of Olga's grandkids.



This year's party really went to the dogs... literally. Between Olga's dog, DeeDee (at right), Teena's dog, Sancho, (at left), her other dog, Peanut, Angie's dog, Diva, and her puppies, there were nine dogs here. *Little dogs. Little dogs with big mouths. Little dogs with big mouths that hated Randy and our dog, Dodger!* We had to keep reminding them (the dogs) that Randy and Dodger live here, while *they* were just guests for the day. ☺

Sisters often share a lot of things, but sharing a toilet seat??? Come **on!** Olga and I were posing in the new master bathroom that Randy and I added on to our house. See the sponge painting that I did on the walls? It turned out pretty good, if I do say so myself. I'm tickled pink to have a master bathroom after 18 years in this house. I feel like a queen!

Speaking of sisters, Olga and I are going to see the musical, *White Christmas*, in San Francisco on December 23rd. We plan to have dinner at a Puerto Rican restaurant in the City before going to the play...as if we didn't eat enough Puerto Rican food at the Christmas party! Guess we were just getting our taste buds warmed up.



The Roig family (**Bill, Evy, and Wilmi**) have arrived safely in Denver, where they will spend Christmas with the Stenroos family. **Sasha** and family will drive up from Crestone, so they are planning a Christmas reunion that would make Auntie Helen proud!

The Roigs will be going to Avon for some skiing from Jan. 1-8. Bill and Evy will return to P.R. on Jan. 11th, while Wilmi returns to Pittsburgh on the 9th.



Bro and Sis



Merry Christmas from the Pettit household to yours.
Wishing you health, happiness, love and prosperity in 2005.



I Remember . . . by Norma I. Pettit

...how special Christmas was when I was growing up in San Francisco back in the 50's and 60's. Mom didn't put up a zillion lights like people do nowadays, but the fat bulbs around the three living room windows and the lighted tree framed by the big picture window looked spectacular to us from the street. We always braved the chilly night air to go down to the sidewalk and view the results of our decorating efforts from the passerby's perspective.

Everything about Christmas spelled excitement, from the obvious presents under the tree to the donning of brand spanking new dress clothes for Christmas Mass. I particularly remember one Christmas—perhaps it was in 1961—when I had new velvety black suede shoes that made a sharp contrast with the sunny yellow wall to wall rug that Mom had laid down in the bathroom. Boy did that rug look and feel luxurious! The smell of new leather shoes mingled with the aroma of Mom's "papas rellenas"—stuffed potatoes. Mmmmm. Golden brown on the outside, with crispy ridges, fluffy underneath, and when you broke into them, aromatic steam burst from the seasoned meat inside. You had to eat the stuffed potatoes slowly. One, because they were hot, but also because when you savored every morsel, they lasted longer.

Most of the excitement came from the anticipation of getting together with other family members, often at the home of Uncle Isidro and Auntie Rosita. I remember their aluminum Christmas tree, with the wondrous rotating lights that changed the tree from red to green to blue. I was mesmerized by it, and thought that the Rivera family must be very rich to own such a tree and their beautiful modern house. They **were** rich, and so were the rest of us—and we kids were given the greatest inheritance: family values, traditions, love of family and holiday get-togethers, and sweet, golden memories.

The Way We Were



I know that many of you received this picture in your Christmas card from Kathleen (Merritt) and Jim Caffey, but Olga, Joi and I just flipped over it when we received our cards. Inside the card for my family Kathy wrote: "Thought you might enjoy the picture. I remember the Christmas well. My Mom made the outfits and the smell of caps was everywhere. We were more like wild Indians."

Doesn't this picture and Kathy's memory just bring a lump to your throat?

"Look what I still have!"



My mother made this bowl out of old Christmas cards in the early 60's by cutting them to a pattern, covering the pieces with plastic, punching holes evenly around the edges, and crocheting it together with glittery thread. She enjoyed making it and was quite proud of how it turned out. She would be pleased to know that after 40 years her bowl is still being used to hold the cards I've received this year. What do **you** still have? Send me a picture and a caption. I'd like to include this feature in every issue.

Guess
Who
This
Baby
Is?

The answer
is found on
page 7.

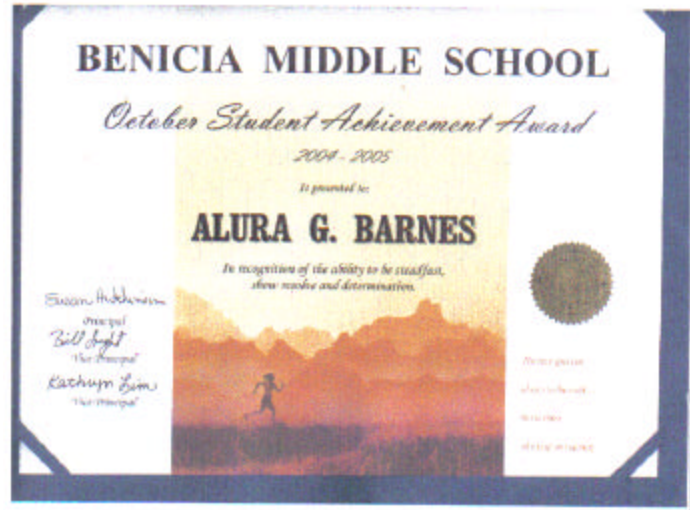


Folks, I have long since run out of baby pictures to include in this feature. Please scan and e-mail me baby pictures of family members. If you don't have a computer and scanner, then please send me the picture by mail and I will scan it and return it to you. Thank you!

*Hace tiempo que he terminado de usar
mi colección de fotos infantiles.
Favor de enviarme fotos de bebé de miembros
de la familia. Si no me los pueden mandar
por computadora, envíenlos por correo.
Yo los usaré y se los devolveré. ¡Gracias!*

Student News

Amanda, daughter of Angela Barnes, is taking Creative Writing and Introduction to College Writing at Diablo Valley College for the Spring 2005 semester. She is only a Junior in High School, and thus will be earning high school and college credits at the same time.



I know that there must be more students excelling in their studies...why don't you send me some information about your child or grandchild's achievements? I'd love to be able to put some Student News articles into every issue.

Alura Barnes, daughter of Michael and Angela Barnes, received the above achievement award for her efforts during the month of October. The award commends Alura for "the ability to be steadfast, show resolve and determination."

Other Family News

Plans for the 2005 Rivera Family Reunion are already underway! **Cousin René Rivera** announced that the planning committee held its first meeting recently and is developing ideas to make this upcoming family reunion an unforgettable tropical experience. Rumor has it that the theme is going to be "Christmas in June", since many of the stateside cousins have never had the opportunity to experience the typical Puerto Rican festivities that abound during the Christmas season.

I think that this is one reunion that no one should miss!



A View of...

Perhaps you will recall that several issues ago I printed a picture of my back yard all torn up. These pictures show the results of our landscaping frenzy.

My brother, **Ruben García**, just returned from a business trip to Korea. He was there for over a week, resolving computer networking problems in Suwon for the company he works for, Therman-wave. This trip was the reason why Ruben and family were unable to attend this year's family Christmas party in Placerville.

In April of this year Ruben spent a week in Taiwan, but he worked such long hours (even over the weekend) that he was unable to take in any sightseeing.

Of his travels, Ruben says, "I enjoy the excitement of traveling and experiencing different cultures. I don't, however, like being away from the family. I started missing them when I was on my way to the airport."

In her Christmas newsletter, **Barbara Nicholson** reports that as of last August she has joined her husband, George, in retirement. They are looking forward to traveling and spending time with the family.

Congratulations and best wishes to both George and Barbara!

This article was sent to me by my mother-in-law, Carol Pettit.

The year is 1904... one hundred years ago.

What a difference a century makes!

Here are some of the U.S. statistics for 1904:

The average life expectancy in the U.S. was 47 years.

Only 14 percent of the homes in the U.S. had a bathtub.

Only 8 percent of the homes had a telephone.

A three-minute call from Denver to New York City cost eleven dollars.

There were only 8,000 cars in the U.S., and only 144 miles of paved roads.

The maximum speed limit in most cities was 10 mph.

Alabama, Mississippi, Iowa, and Tennessee were each more heavily populated than California. With a mere 1.4 million residents, California was only the 21st most populous state in the Union.

The tallest structure in the world was the Eiffel Tower.

The average wage in the U.S. was 22 cents an hour.

The average U.S. worker made between \$200 and \$400 per year.

A competent accountant could expect to earn \$2000 per year, a dentist \$2,500 per year, a veterinarian between \$1,500 and \$4,000 per year, and a mechanical engineer about \$5,000 per year.

More than 95 percent of all births in the U.S. took place at home.

Ninety percent of all U.S. physicians had no college education. Instead, they attended medical schools, many of which were condemned in the press and by the government as "substandard."

Sugar cost four cents a pound. Eggs were fourteen cents a dozen.

Coffee was fifteen cents a pound.

Most women only washed their hair once a month, and used borax or egg yolks for shampoo.

Canada passed a law prohibiting poor people from entering the country for any reason.

The five leading causes of death in the U.S. were:

1. Pneumonia and influenza
2. Tuberculosis
3. Diarrhea
4. Heart disease
5. Stroke

The American flag had 45 stars. Arizona, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Hawaii, and Alaska hadn't been admitted to the Union yet.

The population of Las Vegas, Nevada, was 30!!!

Crossword puzzles, canned beer, and iced tea hadn't been invented.

There was no Mother's Day or Father's Day.

Two of 10 U.S. adults couldn't read or write. Only 6 percent of all Americans had graduated high school.

Marijuana, heroin, and morphine were all available over the counter at corner drugstores. According to one pharmacist, "Heroin clears the complexion, gives buoyancy to the mind, regulates the stomach and bowels, and is, in fact, a perfect guardian of health." (Shocking!)

Eighteen percent of households in the U.S. had at least one full-time servant or domestic.

There were only about 230 reported murders in the entire U.S.

100 years ... it staggers the mind.

Relatives Respond

Well, actually, this wasn't a response to the last issue of the newsletter, but rather a note that Angela Nicholson wrote on her Christmas letter. She penned, "Our long, overdue update for 'Y la Familia.'" with an arrow pointing to the first paragraph which reads as follows:

"It has been a huge year for us, and we are grateful for your friendships, both near and far. Although we moved in May, we still have projects around the house. Regardless, our door is always open! There's a chance you'll see our home in a movie, "Out of the Woods," on the Hallmark channel soon. It was filmed at the home across the street from us and included some view of our neighborhood by Folsom Lake."

Their new address is **David and Angela Nicholson**
1384 Promontory Point Drive
El Dorado Hills, CA 95762

Phone: (916) 941-8331 e-mail addresses: DaveN007@yahoo.com AngN007@aol.com

This here is a bona fide response from a relative—Cousin Joi. It's an excerpt from an e-mail that I received from her on October 17th.

OH, I had a delightful surprise waiting for me when I woke up from my 2-hr. nap! The mail had come and the Newsletter was on the table! I grabbed it right away and went out on the deck (it was a beautiful afternoon) and sat and read it. Loved all the pics, especially seeing Victoria! Wow, she has a lovely B&B area and she looks so beautiful! We really need to try and get over to her place for a Golden Girls retreat; wouldn't that just be wonderful? Just something to think about and keep in the back of our minds. Know that the reunion next year will be the major trip of the year, but who knows what we might be able to do the following year.

Thank you for sending my issue quickly. You always make me feel so special! :-)) Am so glad it came yesterday and not in Monday's mail! Every issue is like a story book and you never get tired of reading it over and over again. Am sure when Sasha, Laurie and Vickie get here, we will spend time looking at all the issues again.

Have to decide and tell you which is my "favorite" pic in that section. Just love Mari Lillian's face and joyous smile! Tom is a hoot sleeping, "no comment" on Olga and my behind shot.... Loved how you placed all the pics and especially the "awards". Those turned out great! Another issue to remind us how much fun we had being with one another and sharing our family union!

*Thank you to David and Angela Nicholson for their contribution of stamps for the newsletter.
It is very much appreciated!*

*The baby pictured on page 4 is Carlos Rivera, firstborn son of Isidro and Rosita.
The photo was taken in the backyard of the García home in San Francisco, where they were living at the time.*

A HUGE thank you to Cousin José Medina for his generous donation of \$100 for the newsletter. That helps SO much!

"¿...y la familia?

c/o Norma I. Pettit
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Visit us on the Web at www.ylafamilia.org.

Birthday Greetings

Christopher Nicholson (35) - Dec. 4 **Arlene González** (23) - Dec. 22 **David Nicholson** (40) - Jan. 18

Emma Kathleen Thompson
(1) - Dec. 5

Cama Klene (37) - Dec. 25

Sylvia (Atilas) Lovelace (67) -
Jan. 18

Michelle Harrell (38) - Dec. 30

Amber Nicholson (9) - Jan. 24

Yanelis Alisha González (4)
Dec. 9

Vanessa Braddock (32) -
Dec. 31

William Roig (72) - Jan. 31

William A. González (12) -
Dec. 14

Oscar González (45) - Jan. 1

Ryan Rivera (25) - Dec. 17

Ada (Pacheco) Rivera (50) -
Jan 10

Jonathan F. Segarra (7) -
Dec. 17

Martin R. Barnes (9) - Jan. 10

Raúl Rivera Sevilla (63) -
Dec. 20

Edward Rivera (56) - Jan. 11

Bélgica González (24) -
Jan. 13

Kelsy Pombo (15) - Dec. 21

*Did I omit
anyone's birthday
or anniversary?
Please let me know so
that I can print
a correction and
make sure you are
not left out next time.*

Anniversaries

Ada (Pacheco)
and **Heriberto Rivera** (25)
Dec. 10

Felicita (Soto)
and **Edwin Rivera** (21)
Dec. 24

Joi (De Nardo)
and **Vic Stenroos** (24)
Dec. 26

Lisa (Wilson)
and **Ruben Quiñones** (4)
Jan. 6

Stephanie (Krause)
and **Scott Thompson** (4)
Jan. 6

Helen (Correa)
and **Rafael González** (13)
Jan. 18