

"...y la familia?"

Volume 10, Issue 3

Dec '05/Jan '06

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

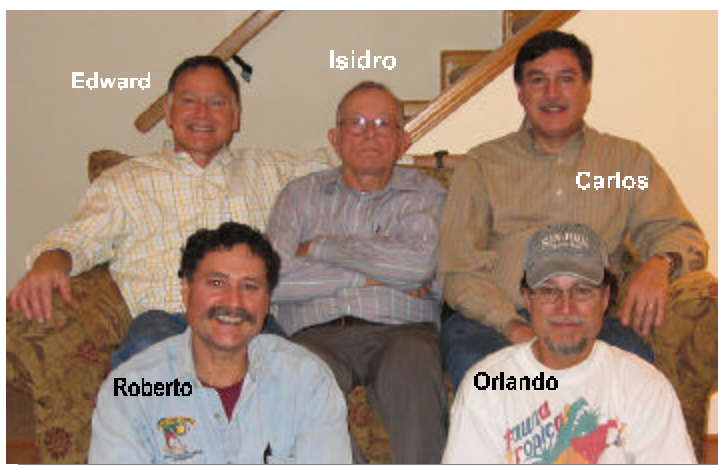
- Nostalgic stories
- Photos and artwork
- Original poetry
- Vignettes on your immediate family
- Favorite family recipes
- Cute things your kids have said
- Funny stories

¡Feliz Navidad!

On the weekend of Dec. 9th through 11th, all the Rivera boys were together for the first time since their mother passed away three years ago. They arranged to meet at their dad's place in Carrollton, Georgia for a mini-Christmas celebration since it is so hard for everyone to get together at Christmas time itself.

Carlos reports, "It was great getting everyone together again. Dad seemed to enjoy himself being surrounded by family. A lot of the cooking on Friday and Saturday fell on him but he took it in stride showing he still had the 'master chef' touches to his cooking. What Puerto Rican meal isn't complete without rice and beans? And Dad did a killer batch. Yummy!

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Family Christmas Party at the Pettit home



Tom Smith



"Olga's here, and it's still daylight!!"

♪ You better watch out,
you better not cry. ♪



Randy's stylish
brother, Fent

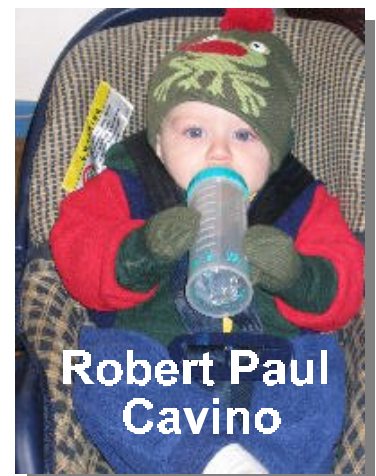
*Mom got here earlier
than she usually
leaves her house!*



The famous "Pink Elephant" game.



This is Marina
wearing....
well, I don't know
what she is wearing.



Robert Paul
Cavino

¡Feliz Navidad!



Continued from page 1

On Sunday, December 11, we went to Orlando's for dinner. Poor Orlando. After working all day at his business installing a commercial kitchen (with a deadline coming up within a couple days), he returns home to cook for the rest of us! Proving he hadn't lost his culinary skills, he whipped up a bunch of dishes, though several of us Rivera boys got in the act helping with some of the side dishes under his watchful eyes. It was a feast to behold! What was really funny is if you took time to take in the scene in the kitchen, you would have seen the guys cooking and the women watching. Wonder who got the clean up duty?

Sunday's dinner included Monica, Orlando's daughter from a previous marriage, her husband, Mike, and their son, Tito. Also present were Orlando and Donna and their daughter Leanna, Roberto from North Carolina and two of his children, sons Nikko and Austin, Edward from California, Carlos and Garnet from Indiana, and of course, the grand patriarch of the family, Isidro Rivera.



¡Feliz Navidad y Próspero Año Nuevo!

From the Pettit Family
to everyone on the
"...¿Y la Familia?"
mailing list.

May God richly bless you
in 2006.

¿...y la familia?

Guess Who This Baby Is?



“Look what I still have!”

My mother, Ana García, crocheted this bedspread. It took her 12 years to complete because she didn't have much spare time to work on it. Every year, for my Christmas party, I put this beautiful heirloom on my bed.
—Norma (García) Pettit



I Remember...my mother working on the bedspread pictured above.

When we were at dentist appointments at UCSF's School of Dentistry (ugh...something I'd rather not remember), Mom wiled away the long hours of waiting by crocheting the “flowers” that she later joined together with the crisscrossed chains.

One of the many things I learned from Mom was to use time wisely. Randy has a different perspective, though. He often asks me, “Don't you ever rest?” The problem is that when I do try to relax in front of the TV...I fall asleep!

That's another thing that I learned from my mother.

At this time in our family history...

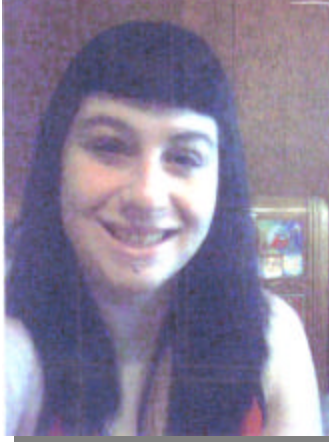
- On December 15th, 1852, María de Jesús García was born. She was a sister of great-grandmother María Engracia García.
- Also, on December 15, but in 1884, Great-uncle Eugenio Cruz García was born.
- Timothy Michael Warren, son of my sister Olga, was born on December 26, 1974. He died at the age of fifteen months.
- Juan M. García, a brother of María Engracia García, was born on January 2, 1858.
- On January 15, 1907, great-Uncle Gilberto Cruz Maldonado was born. He was the son of Máximo Cruz and Genara Maldonado. He was the uncle of Adela, Oscar, María, Elena, Guar, and Elena.
- On January 21, 1820, great-great grandmother, María Inés Vilá de la Cruz (Máximo's mother) was born. María's father, Pedro Vilá, was born in Cataluña, Spain.

The Way We Were



This picture is from Christmas, 1969, and was taken in the living room of the García home at 1718-22nd Avenue in San Francisco. Auntie Helen is in the back. In front of her is Les, Olga's first husband, flanked by Olga (with short hair) and me. On the floor, from left, are Uncle Angelo, Angela Warren, and Edie, Vickie and Laurie Jimenez (Auntie Helen's granddaughters).

Amanda Nicole Knox



*"I am an artist.
I do ink drawings in the
manga art style."*

Student News

Two of Olga's granddaughter's, Amanda Nicole Knox (17) and Alura Grace Barnes (12) recently participated in Nationals, a San Francisco pageant. The pageant provides young ladies with the opportunity to make friends, develop self-confidence, and learn necessary skills to succeed at home, at school, and in the workplace.

Both girls cited the desire to boost self-esteem, and the desire to do something fun with her sister as reasons for participating in the pageant.

While they did not get past the preliminary competition, we are proud of these girls for stepping out of the ordinary and trying something different and challenging. Way to go!



Alura Grace Barnes

*"I participate in school as a
Benicia Middle School
Color Guard."*



Tory Pettit Back From Uganda

After completing her semester of study abroad at Uganda Christian University, Tory is back home.

"I wish I could share all that I've learned, but there is no possibility of summarizing. There are no words good enough to describe my experience...I wish I could go back. I really miss it so much, mostly for my friends that I left behind. But also, I miss the challenges and the way of life there. I miss the lessons that I learned every day. I feel very out of place here, and it will be a long time before I will find my place again."



Other Family News

Family DVDs

By PGR Video Tributes

If you haven't ordered your copies of the two DVDs produced by PGR Video Tributes (Cousin Carlos) you are missing out! The DVD of the 2005 family reunion in Puerto Rico is so professionally done that I showed it in my middle school classroom as a documentary of Puerto Rican culture. And the DVD of family pictures containing rare movie footage of family from the 1950's and 1960's is **priceless**. Yet you can get these DVDs for \$6.00 apiece, plus a nominal amount for shipping. Please see the insert and order your copies today!

A Must
Have!

The baby pictured on page 4 is Meryem Merritt's daughter, Vanessa (Bell) Braddock. Wild hair runs in the family.

¿...y la familia?

Annie's Visit

Annie Meléndez paid a visit to the Pettit home in Placerville, together with her husband, Wilson García, his cousin Vickie Arce, and Vickie's husband, Pedro. I was waiting for them with a lunch consisting of *arroz con gandules*, *empanadillas*, *gaspacho de bacalao*, ham and guava bars. We had a jolly old time around the table, and Randy and I enjoyed their company thoroughly.



Wilson's father, Reynaldo, had passed away and he and Annie came from Puerto Rico for the funeral, which was held in Pittsburg, California, on November 30th. My sister, Olga, was able to stop by the funeral home to pay her respects on the evening before the funeral. She lives in Martinez, which is a neighboring city to Pittsburg. Annie reported that her father-in-law's memorial service was beautiful, and that there were many people there, both family, friends, and acquaintances who had all loved Wilson's father.



And now, on the following Saturday, Annie and the others blessed us with a lovely visit while on their way to Carson City. Although their trip to California was made under sad circumstances, still something good came out of it.



A native of Peñuelas, P.R.
Born July 28, 1908
Died Nov. 22, 2005
at the age of 97..

In Sympathy

Luz Nereida Reyes de Meléndez

If you were at the 2005 Family Reunion in Ponce, Puerto Rico, perhaps you will remember seeing a lady in a wheelchair seated near the front of the room on the left-hand side. She was with the party from Peñuelas, and was Annie's sister-in-law, the wife of Annie's brother, my second cousin Juan (Junior). When my father was alive, Luz Nereida and Juan used to visit him faithfully.

Luz Nereida passed away on October 5th. Those of us who attended the reunion can consider ourselves blessed to have had the opportunity of meeting this lovely lady.

María Mc Manus

Loving mother of
Olga's husband, Tom Smith.
Born 1-23-1919
Died 12-03-2005
from coronary artery disease.



Maria was a warm funny,
caring woman.
Tom was her only child.

Have you missed some or all of the family reunions? Sometimes that can't be helped, but if there is any way that you can make it to the 2006 reunion, you will have an unforgettable experience. All of our reunions have been awesome! There is nothing that compares to family getting together, getting to know one another, bonding, and creating lifelong memories. Joi and I were recently talking about how each reunion was different and had its own flavor. That's because the locations are different and the blend of relatives present creates a unique atmosphere.

Next year's reunion is in Carrollton, Georgia at the home of Cousins Orlando and Donna Rivera from June 23-25. Please mark your calendars, make your vacation bids, and do whatever else you need to do to get to next year's reunion. Look for information regarding lodging and other details in future issues of "¿...y la familia?"

Family
Reunion

Nov. 6, 2005

Dear Norma,

We just got back home following a visit to cousin Joi and her husband Vic in Denver. We had a nice, busy weekend with them.

I stopped in Denver on my way back home from a business trip to Japan. Needless to say, I was a bit jet-lagged from the time changes and long travel times. I went from Osaka, Japan to San Francisco, then to Denver. Garnet flew from Indianapolis to Denver to join us. She arrived about 2 hours after me. It would have been less but there was a security breach at the airport just as her plane pulled up to the gate. No one was allowed off the plane and Joi and I had to stay put inside the terminal until there was an "all clear" signal. Then we were able to get together and head to Joi's home.

I really had two reasons for being in Denver that weekend. A few friends of mine from my military days in the Marine Corps (in North Carolina back in the 70's) wanted to have a reunion. It had been more than 30 years since I had seen them. A couple of them had managed to stay in touch throughout the years. We met on Saturday and spent the day together touring the Rocky Mountains and reminiscing. Then went to dinner that evening. Original plans called for five of us to get together in Denver with our spouses. One who lives in Tennessee couldn't make it. Of the remaining four (two of them live in the Denver area), one spouse had foot surgery and couldn't walk, so she stayed home. Another spouse had to stay home in Ohio with the children. The third wife was in a hospice, terminally ill with cancer and not expected to live much longer. It's a sad story and you would wonder why the husband chose to proceed with reunion while his wife was dying. Fact is, they had been expecting this for about a year. He and his wife are very close to other parishioners at the church they attend and several of them took turns keeping a vigil over the wife. They had talked about the reunion and, if she was unable to participate, she wanted him to go ahead with it. Garnet was the only wife who made it.

Perhaps the most interesting story is about Carl, the one whose wife had foot surgery. Carl [*standing next to Carlos in photo below right*] is a minister, but how he got there is fascinating. In the Corp, he used to do drugs and was an alcoholic. He and his wife had a newborn child who had a congenital problem that caused the child to throw up all food. It was malnourished and the doctors could not fix the problem. The baby was going to die and it was just a matter of time. The mother took the baby to her church where she and the minister and several elders prayed for its health. According to Carl, that evening the baby ate and kept the food down as any normal baby would. When Carl came home, he said he witness this miracle and it changed him that night. He said he had not done drugs or taken a drink since then. Years later through other influencing events, he decided to become a minister.

On Sunday, Garnet and I spent the day with Joi and Vic. Well, ok. That's not quite right. First, Joi and I talked about proposed plans for the website I will develop for her so she can sell her arts and crafts online. Then Joi and Garnet went shopping after breakfast and Vic and I did not see them until late afternoon, almost dinner time. I was having nightmarish visions of having to leave our belongings at Joi's for the sake of bringing back all the things she would purchase. Lucky for her (lucky for me?) she had only a few things and they could be crammed into her suitcase. Yes, hers. Not mine. No sir. I'm not paying the price for buying all that stuff! No, siree. ☺ Meanwhile, Vic and I watched football and I did some work on my laptop while "borrowing" a wireless internet connection from her neighbor. The signal was weak, but useable. I thought about going next door and offering to contribute to the pot for a stronger transmitter. ☺

Sunday night we went to dinner at an Italian buffet restaurant. We've never seen a restaurant like this one with all kinds of foods grouped by type (pasta, antipasti, etc.) and spread out in an area that looked like a piazza in Italy. Needless to say, when we finished dinner, we had to waddle back to car. What a great way to end a wonderful weekend.

Take care. Love, Carlos

Ps. I attached a photo of the reunion buddies. Would you guess that I'm the oldest of the group by nearly 5 years? The other photo is with Joi and Vic following dinner at the Italian buffet.



"¿...y la familia?"

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

Birthday Greetings

Christopher Nicholson (36) - Dec. 4 **Arlene González** (24) - Dec. 22 **David Nicholson** (41) - Jan. 18

Emma Kathleen Thompson
(2) - Dec. 5

Cama Klene (38) - Dec. 25

Sylvia (Atilas) Lovelace (68) -
Jan. 18

Yanelis Alisha González (5)
Dec. 9

Michelle Harrell (39) - Dec. 30

Amber Nicholson (10) - Jan.
24

William A. González (13) -
Dec. 14

Vanessa Braddock (33) -
Dec. 31

Larry Wright (57) - Jan. 30

Ryan Rivera (26) - Dec. 17

Oscar González (46) - Jan. 1

William Roig (73) - Jan. 31

Jonathan F. Segarra (8) -
Dec. 17

Robert Paul Cavino (1) -
Jan. 9

Raúl Rivera Sevilla (64) -
Dec. 20

Ada (Pacheco) Rivera (51) -
Jan 10

Kelsy Pombo (16) - Dec. 21

Martin R. Barnes (10) -
Jan. 10

Edward Rivera (57) - Jan. 11

Bélgica González (25) -
Jan. 13

Oops!

I missed **Orlando Rivera's**
50th birthday. It was on
November 6th.
Hope you had a great
celebration, Cuz!!

Anniversaries

Ada (Pacheco)
and **Heriberto Rivera** (26)
Dec. 10

Felicita (Soto)
and **Edwin Rivera** (22)
Dec. 24

Joi (De Nardo)
and **Vic Stenroos** (25)
Dec. 26

Lisa (Wilson)
and **Ruben Quiñones** (5)
Jan. 6

Stephanie (Krause)
and **Scott Thompson** (5)
Jan. 6

Helen (Correa)
and **Rafael González** (14)
Jan. 18