

# "...y la familia?"

Volume 10, Issue 4

Feb/Mar '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

## Silver Anniversary Celebration

Vic and Joi Stenroos celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary with an elegant party in their home on December 17th. It was a wonderful gathering of family and friends eager to congratulate them for their successful marriage of a quarter of a century and counting.

Joi arranged for Olga and I to fly out to Colorado to be with her and Vic on their special day. Of course, the three of us always jump at the chance to bet together, so it was "party time" from the moment we converged at the airport on Friday evening. (Olga flew in from Oakland and I flew in from Sacramento.) Joi gave us each a welcome gift of a beautiful scarf—something we'd need as the temperature hovered around 10 degrees!!

On Saturday morning we got up early and got to work. We helped Joi clean, decorate, put together a collage of photos, cook, arrange platters, and set food out on tables.

Everything was ready and the house was a sparkling showroom of party-planning-perfection that would have made our 7th grade Homemaking teachers proud. About 35 guests eventually arrived and filled the house with additional warmth and cheer. It was a lovely celebration.



Vic and Joi had special surprise gifts for each other: a gorgeous diamond bracelet from him to her and a stunning ring from her to him.

The lovely and delicious wedding cake was a gift from Joi's best friend, Sue, and her husband, Gene.

For Olga and me the best fun at the party was visiting with Cousins Sasha, Laurie, Vickie, and Julian. Sasha and Laurie live in the southern part of Colorado and Vickie lives near Denver. Sasha and Laurie hadn't know ahead of time that Olga and I were going to be there—she just found out when they were about two blocks away. What a joyful reunion it was for all of us! *Cont. on page 3*

### Inside this issue:

Silver Anniversary Celebration.....	1
Needed for Future Issues.....	1
At This Time in Our Family History.....	2
I Remember.....	2
The Way We Were.....	2
"Look What I Still Have!".....	2
Silver Anniversary Photo Album.....	3
Student News: Julian the Hero.....	4
Other Family News.....	4
Relatives Write.....	5
Your Prayers are Requested.....	6
Family Reunion 2006.....	6
Let's Preserve Our Family's History.....	7
Birthday and Anniversary Greetings.....	8

# I Remember... *"¿...y la familia?"*

*Some recent e-mails between Cousin Meryem Merritt and me stirred up memories of when Olga lived with the Merritts in Iowa for a year (1963-64).*

Meryem: I have to say having the opportunity to have Olga live with us was a good one. Many many great memories while I was growing up. We even got in trouble a couple of times, but what's the sense in being a kid if you don't cause some mischief. Eh?

Norma: Your memories of Olga's time in Iowa are precious. I know that she bonded with all of you Merritts and it was a very special time in her life. Recently she was talking about how you guys used to all use the big mirror in the bathroom at the same time in the morning to get ready for school, and she remembers Jimmy singing while he combed his hair.

Meryem: Ahhh! The good old days. Those days of standing in the bathroom at the old house do bring back a lot of memories. Not only the mirror but I remember us going to the pool in the summer. I was pretty impressionable at that time and when Olga went to the pool with us, there were more guys that hung out around our towels than I can say. I thought I was pretty special to have such a hot cousin. I sure wish I could relive a few of those days now.



*The Garcias went to Iowa to spend Christmas vacation with the Merritts the year that Olga was living with them. From l to r: Uncle Bob, Auntie Anita, Kathy, Marlynn, Olga, Ruben, Norma, Meryem, and Jimmy.*

## LOOK WHAT I STILL HAVE!



"These are my skates from the late 1950's, probably 1957 or 1958," says Cousin Joi Stenroos. "There was nothing better than skating out on a newly-paved Cutler Street. It was like having our very own private "rink" since traffic was nearly nil. I can remember skating up and down the street till it was dark. Oh, those were the days! Really do need to thank Mom for saving such a treasure of memories for me."

## The Way We Were



José Medina, Jr. (Cousin Josy) sent in this precious photo of his older sister, Pepa (Joann McLaughlin) and himself. I'm guessing that this picture is from about 1953.

## At this time in our family history...

- Hilario García Jr. and Juliana Pérez were married on Feb. 1, 1861. Hilario's brother, José de la Cruz García, became the maternal grandfather of my grandmother Ana Cruz García.
- Florencio Rivera Maldonado and Ana Cruz García were married on Feb. 12, 1914.
- Auntie Marie and Achilles G. Nicholson were married on Feb. 15, 1937.
- Dionicio 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 February 23, 1845. He was a brother of Manuel Alejo Rivera Maldonado (my father's paternal grandfather).
- Juan Julian Rivera Maldonado was born 128 years ago, on Feb. 28th. He was five years younger than his brother, Florencio (my father's father), and died on New Year's Eve at the age of nine-and-a-half.
- One of Florencio's paternal uncles, Pedro Alcántara Rivera Maldonado, was born on March 21, 1844. He was the sixth child born to José de los Santos Rivera and Cipriana Maldonado.



# Silver Anniversary Photo Album



The "Golden Girls" gather again.



This is just **part** of the food—there were three tables full!



It was a mini reunion. The gal next to Olga is a friend of Vickie's.



The cake was a gift from friends Sue and Gene.



This collage displayed highlights of Vic and Joi's life together.



Sasha's laughter was echoed by all.

# Student News...Julian the Hero!

Hi all, do I have a tale to tell all of you!

On Monday I went to the hospital with Vickie where she had an outpatient procedure that was supposed to take two hours. She hemorrhaged and had to be taken in a second time to stop the bleeding. We were a little anxious for a while but she came thru it OK. We didn't leave the hospital until 9:30 pm and we had arrived at 1 pm. Vickie was put to bed and told not to move around too much. Laura, Julian & I were supposed to leave the next day, Tuesday, however Vickie wanted us to stay. It was this decision that was life-saving to Julian's Grandmother.

On Tuesday, Laura and I needed to buy some skirting to fix the back of Vickie's mobile home so we took Julian to his other grandmother's home to be baby sat while we went shopping. While he was there his grandmother Norma went unconscious. He tried to pick her up from the floor but as he said she was sooooooo heavy, so he went to the phone and dialed 911. The dispatcher talked to him for a while and in a few minutes the police, firemen and ambulance were charging thru the door. They again spoke to him and he showed them where the body lay. After they put Norma on a dolly in the ambulance, they put Julian in the front seat of the ambulance and took him along with grandma to the hospital.

At Boulder Community Hospital they again questioned Julian because Norma was out of it and after that they allowed him to sit with Norma thru all her examinations and even allowed him to see her taking a Cat scan. He especially liked the brain pictures and the heart parts. Grandma Norma is 75 years old, has emphysema and is on an oxygen tank like mom was. Without knowing it she had a 105 degree temperature and pneumonia. We had all stayed with her Friday and Saturday night and she seemed fine to us. Julian was at the hospital for an hour and a half before we became informed. All that time he sat with Grandma Norma and was a complete gentleman.

Now this child is hyperactive as you may have already guessed, but two doctors, two policemen and the Fire Chief said he stayed calm and cool and called him a HERO! They were so impressed with his behavior during a crisis and the fact that he is only seven years old that they told Channel 4 news, and today on Channel 4 at 4 pm Julian, Grandma Norma and Laura were on TV in a 30 second spot they call "The Christmas Miracle"! My grandson is now called a HERO! How's them cookies?

If we had not stayed that extra day or taken Julian to Norma's home, she would not be alive now. Since she does not get phone calls or visitors, no one would have known and she could have laid on that floor indefinitely.



*Julian the Hero, with Olga in Denver, on the night of Vic and Joi's anniversary party. This was just three days before he became a hero!*



## Taelyn

Born Aug. 31st  
6.4# and 19"  
Mom & Dad:  
Christina & Stan  
Darnell

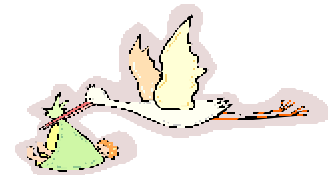


## Matthew

Born Nov. 7th  
9.1# and 21"  
Mom & Dad:  
Stephanie & Scott  
Thompson

## Other Family News...new arrivals!

The two babies at left are the new grandchildren of Marlynn (Merritt) and Paul Krause.



Cousin Kathy Rivera, daughter of Cousin Raúl and granddaughter of Tío Guar, has a new baby son, **Joseph**, born September 29th. Joseph is the second child of Eric and Kathy Montalvo, who live in Gainesville, Florida.

# Relatives Write

## *From Vickie Jimenez:*

I want to tell you about my Christmas angel. I cannot say enough about how wonderful this person is.

The day after Christmas this year, on the 26th of December, Robin's niece died. She was 6 years old with a very rare form of cancer that took her young life. As you can imagine there was a lot of sorrow, tears and feelings of loss as well as arranging travel plans. However, to arrange those things one day after the Christmas holiday was absolutely impossible. After listening to busy signals for hours on phone lines and burning through all the resources that we knew, after attempting to find out how we could fly on such short notice from a very busy airport with nothing but full flights, I called the Christmas angel at 11:30 at night and I awoke my aunt Joi Stenroos for help. I told her what had happened and that we needed to have Robin out on a flight by the next day sometime and could she help us as she works for United Airlines. Without a moment of hesitation she jumped up out of bed, started her computer, got on the United Airlines employee sight and had Robin on a flight 6 hours later.

This is not the first time that my Aunt Joi has done something like this. As I think back to the many times that she has volunteered her time and stepped in for emergencies within our family. Every time that someone is in the hospital, she is there, anytime there is a surgery, she is there comforting us, she is there when there is a death of a loved one or just helping someone move their stuff. She helped me graduate college and even bought a few flights to school and home for me so that I could graduate. She took care of Grandma Helen and the estate when no one else could. Never once has she asked anything in return. I don't come from a family where there are lots of aunts, uncles and cousins. I have one blood aunt and one blood uncle. Thank God they are both married as that gives me another aunt and uncle. However the one blood aunt that I have I would not trade for anything. And I want her to know that I love her so very much and I think she is an incredible person. I don't see her as often as I could and I don't always get to tell her how wonderful she is to the family and how important she is to me. I haven't told her that I look up to her and have for many years now. So I was hoping that you would be willing to put this in the family news letter as I would like everyone to know that angels do things for us when we don't see them do it. They comfort us and remind us that we are loved in times of pain or stress. Angels do this quietly without ever asking for anything. They do it because they love. They do it because they want to help ease your pain and make things easier when they can. And when we see an example of an angel on Earth we should acknowledge them. So I would like to change her name from Aunt Joi to....the family angel Joi.

## *From Cousin Nellie Feliciano:*

My niece, Serena Campos, is a 3rd grade student at Indiana Harbor Catholic. Her class is collecting postcards from anywhere in the world. Would you be kind enough to send a postcard to her class? She is very fascinated by the different parts of the world. I will do anything to encourage her love of learning. Thanks so much.

Indiana Harbor Catholic School  
c/o Sally Oram and Serena Campos, Grade 3  
3916 Pulaski Street  
East Chicago, IN 46312

You may include a note if you like, letting them know who you are and where you're from.

Thanks again,  
Nellie





¿...y la familia?

# Your Prayers are Requested

My sister, **Olga (Garcia) Smith** has been diagnosed with bladder cancer and will be undergoing surgery on February 10th to have her bladder and uterus removed.

**Please pray for the following:**

- For God to guide the surgeons' hands and for a successful surgery
- That the cancer be contained within the bladder
- That Olga have a speedy recovery
- For there to be no complications
- For complete healing for Olga and for her to be cancer-free

Mi hermana, **Olga (García) Smith** ha sido diagnosticada con cancer de la vejiga y va a ser operada el 10 de febrero para mover la vejiga y el útero.

**reFavor de orar por lo siguiente:**

- Para que Dios guie las manos de los cirujanos y por una cirugía exitosa
- Que el cancer esté contenido en la vejiga
- Que Olga re reponga pronto
- Que no hayan complicaciones
- Para sanidad completa para Olga y que la declaren libre del cancer

Olga's address: 760 Kelly Ave., Martinez, CA 94553  
Telephone #: (925) 228-4020

## 2006 Rivera Family Reunion

**Location:** Carrollton, GA  
**Dates:** June 23-25

### **Who is coming so far?**

Edwin & Felita and their children and their spouses—a group of about 15! Olga, Norma and Joi, Carlos and Garnet, Uncle Isidro and Orlando — (they are all co-hosting the event), Mary Lillian, possibly Cousin Papo and some of the Merritts and Nicholsons. Yippee!!! If you are planning to go, let me know so that I can list your name in the next issue.

Below is a list of Carrollton area hotels. Carlos put an asterisk next to the ones that are grouped together and are nearest to the center of everything.

Best Western Inn  
1111 Bankhead Hwy, Carrollton, GA  
(770) 830-1000

Crossroads Days Inn \*  
180 Centennial Rd, Carrollton, GA  
(770) 214-0037

Budget Inn of Carrollton  
405 Columbia Dr, Carrollton, GA  
(770) 832-1171

Holiday Inn Express Carrollton \*  
104 Cottage Hill Rd, Carrollton, GA  
(770) 838-0508

Ramada Inn \*  
1202 S Park St, Carrollton, GA  
(770) 832-2611

Quality Inn & Suites  
160 Centennial Rd, Carrollton, GA  
(770) 832-2611

[Strange that Quality Inn and Ramada have the same phone number.  
Probably part of the same parent company??]

Hampton Inn \*  
102 S Cottage Hill Rd, Carrollton, GA  
(770) 838-7862

*I think it would be fun if we tried to stay in the same place like we did in South Carolina. I checked into the price of the Holiday Inn Express and it is \$70 a night. Is anyone interested in staying there?*

# LET'S PRESERVE OUR FAMILY'S HISTORY

Dear Family Members,

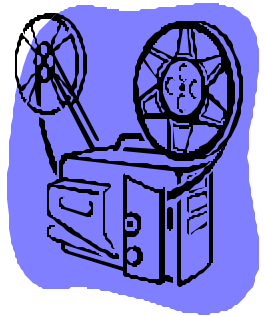
In the interest of preserving our family's rich history as it was captured on Super 8 film long ago, I am purchasing a rather expensive (\$725) high quality projector to use in converting the film to DVD. Unfortunately, the projector will not work with regular 8mm film, but if there is sufficient interest, I will investigate converting that film as well.

The old films will not last forever. They are already 30, 40 even 50 years old. Depending on how they have been stored, the film is becoming brittle. As with photographs, time affects the quality of color, thus deteriorating the picture. There are numerous professional companies that offer to convert your film to DVD. Some are better than others. The cost runs anywhere from \$8 to as high as \$20 or more for a 50' reel of film. It can end up costing you a lot of money!

## ARE YOU INTERESTED IN SAVING YOUR OLD FILMS?

If you have Super 8 films that you would like to have preserved on DVD format, I am happy to do it for you. It is a lot of work, but it is for a worthwhile purpose. Additionally, with your permission, I would like to use edited clips from some of the films to produce one or more family history DVDs for everyone to enjoy.

If you send me your reels, I will convert them to DVD format, package the DVDs in a case complete with disk and case labels. It will look very professional, similar to what you buy in the store. I have professional software that gives me the ability to enhance the video. If the film needs to be color corrected, or improved contrast, etc., I will do my best to enhance it. All that I ask for in return is a donation of \$3.00 per 50' reel of film to help me with the cost of the projector and \$5.00 per DVD to help pay for the cost of the materials (disks, cases, insert and printing costs). If you are interested in preserving your films and your family's history, please send your Super 8 films to:



Carlos Rivera  
3760 W Smokey Row Road  
Bargersville, IN 46106-8890

Do not send money with the film. I will contact you with an estimate based on the number of 50' reels you send me. If you have regular 8 mm films that you want preserved, do not mail them to me at this time. I cannot convert them yet. Simply tell me how many reels you have. I will investigate the best and cheapest way to get them converted.

## WHAT ABOUT OLD PHOTOS?

Also as part of the project to preserve our family's history, I would be very happy if you send me your old photos (the older the better) so that I may digitize them. In return I will send them back to you along with a disk of your photos digitized. They will be viewable as a slide show on your computer or TV. I will enhance the photos as much as possible to improve them. I will do this for FREE because of the desire to create a central repository of photos representing our family's history.

If you send me photos, please label them. I know this is a lot of work for you, but it is important that we know who is in the picture. You can write on the back of the photo or use a Post-It note or number the photo and write the information down on a piece of paper. English or Spanish is acceptable. If you think I know the people, then it is not necessary to label the photo. Send your photos to the same address above.

If you wish to donate to this cause, I am pleased to accept your donation. You can do it online at [www.ylafamilia.org/donate.php](http://www.ylafamilia.org/donate.php) if you wish. The costs for doing the photos are not as great as it is with film, but I do have to purchase large hard drives for storage, create back up systems and catalog the disks. The data that is collected will be made available to all family members. As much as time, money and resources permit, I will try to make as many photos as possible available to you via the internet but it is too costly to upload all of them.

I hope you are as interested as I am in establishing a centralized "warehouse" of our family's history. I will try to do with film and photos what Norma has done for capturing the genealogy of our family and the wonderful stories as told by family members. This is only possible with your help.



Love, Carlos  
[support@pgrcreations.com](mailto:support@pgrcreations.com)

## "...y la familia?

c/o Norma I. Pettit  
2426 Meadow Lane  
Placerville, CA 95667  
Phone: (530) 642-8960  
E-Mail: [mamanony@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mamanony@sbcglobal.net)

Visit us on the Web at [www.ylafamilia.org](http://www.ylafamilia.org).



## Birthday Greetings

<b>Eduardo Medero</b> (18) - Feb. 2	<b>Dustin Yager</b> (21) - March 3	<b>Raynell H. Díaz</b> (25) - March 19
<b>Juan González</b> (45) - Feb. 2	<b>Miguel González</b> (12) - March 3	<b>Veronica Nicholson</b> (8) - March 21
<b>Katherine García</b> (42) - Feb. 4	<b>Matthew William Hargraves</b> (6) - March 3	<b>Michael Rivera</b> (7) - March 22
<b>Brook Rivera</b> (27) - Feb. 5	<b>Stephen Nicholson</b> (9) - March 11	<b>Mackenzie Eddy</b> (13) - March 24
<b>Angela Nicholson</b> (39) - Feb. 6	<b>Rafael González</b> (37) - March 13	<b>Todd Anthony</b> (4) - March 24
<b>Maritza Rivera</b> (43) - Feb. 11	<b>Karen Rivera</b> (27) - March 15	<b>Sonia (Quiñones) Rambo</b> (28) - March 26
<b>Melissa González</b> (20) - Feb. 15	<b>James Caffey</b> (64) - March 15	<b>Barbara Nicholson</b> (60) - March 26
<b>Nicole García</b> (10) - Feb. 16	<b>Jenny (Nicholson) Reinke</b> (68) - March 17	<b>Milagros Rivera</b> (63) - March 28
<b>Ruben J. García</b> (57) - Feb. 21	<b>Joi Stenroos</b> (56) - March 18	<b>Lisa (Finch) Warner</b> (40) March 28
<b>Heriberto Rivera</b> (54) - Feb. 24		
<b>Gwendolyn Rivera</b> (4) - Feb. 27		

## Anniversaries



**Tom and Olga Smith** (22) -  
Feb. 19

**Sheila Andujar and  
Edwin Rivera** (9)  
Feb. 15

**Frankie and Amy Valentín**  
(3) - March 29

**Sonia (Quiñones)  
and Jake Rambo** (4)  
March 30

**OOPS!**  
In the last issue I missed Mary  
Lillian's 43rd birthday which  
was on Jan. 6th..