

"...y la familia?"

Volume 12, Issue 3

Dec '07/Jan.'08

Needed for Future Issues:

"Stuff" about you and yours...

Announcements

New baby
Engagement
Graduations
Promotion
New address

Upcoming Events

family parties
Reunions
Weddings

Article, 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

Alicia Rivera and Mike Tokar Wed



It was an incredibly beautiful wedding and an extravaganza which lasted for days. Every part of the celebration was planned with attention to detail and with the intent that the guests thoroughly enjoy themselves (which we did!). In many ways, the wedding was a gift from the bride and groom to all the people that came to witness their wedding and celebrate the occasion with them.

Joi and I arrived in Chicago on Friday, October 26th, and stayed at the Holiday Inn Express in Arlington Heights, where the Mike and Alicia had reserved a block of rooms for the out of town guests. Upon checking in, we were given a gift bag of goodies from Mike and Alicia! It was great fun to be in the same motel as Carlos and Garnet, Edward, Roberto and his sons (Nico and Austin), Uncle Isidro, and Orlando and Jana (his fiancé).

All of us were invited to attend the rehearsal dinner, which was a lavish affair at an upscale place. During dessert, a CD tribute to the couple was shown. It had been lovingly prepared by Carlos, and was very touching.

The next day, we were all taken to the church in a limousine, and after the church ceremony we were again transported by limousine to the reception hall at the Old Orchard Country Club. The wedding ceremony at St. Raymond de Penafort Catholic Church was beautiful, and included singing by one of Mike's cousins. Alicia was stunning in her gorgeous wedding gown, and Mike looked very handsome. Several of their relatives had a part in the ceremony, be it reading scriptures from the Bible or carrying up the Communion chalice and dish. Gwendolyn Rivera and Jade Klene were flower girls, while Justice Klene was a Jr. Bridesmaid and Jett Klene was the ring bearer—all four of them are Carlos and Garnet's grandchildren.

Everyone had a fabulous time at the reception. The food was excellent and the music and dancing topped it off. We danced our socks off. Well, maybe not our socks, but I did lose one of my shoes while doing some fancy footwork, landing flat on my bottom as a result.

It was great to get to meet Mike's wonderful parents and other relatives of his, and in general, just to be able to share in this momentous occasion in the lives of two very special young people. May God richly bless them with much love, health and happiness for the next 75 years or so. ♥

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Pettit Family Christmas Party



As is our custom, we had our annual Christmas party on the second Saturday In December, with about 30 persons present. We served the usual Puerto Rican food—pasteles, arroz con gandules, empanadillas, and gazpacho de bacalao—in addition to lots of other goodies, like Joi's now-famous mini apple turnovers.

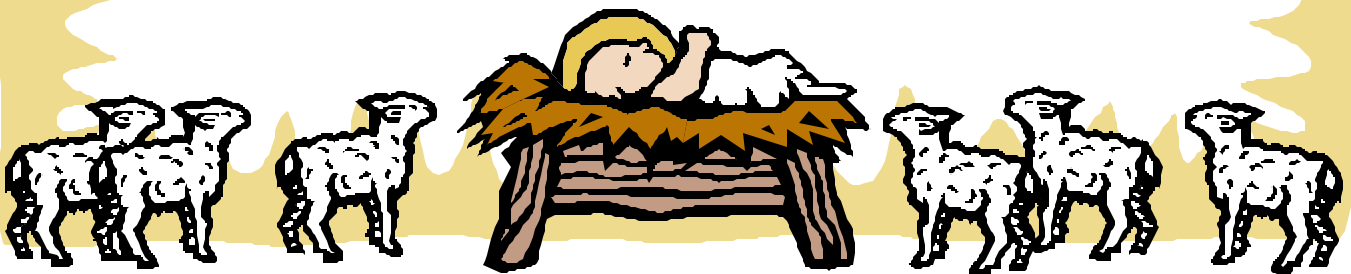
This picture is of Tory Pettit with the Pink Elephant gift she received—a 38 foot sailboat. Lucky girl! We will probably see that gift again next year!

Photo by Joi Stenroos



Sending warmest blessings your way
and praying that the peace and joy of the
Christmas Season stay with you and your
family throughout the coming year.

With love,
the Pettit Family





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Clockwise, starting with upper left hand corner:

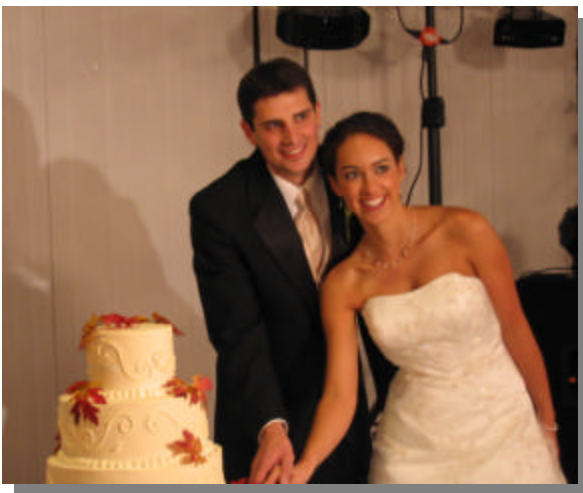
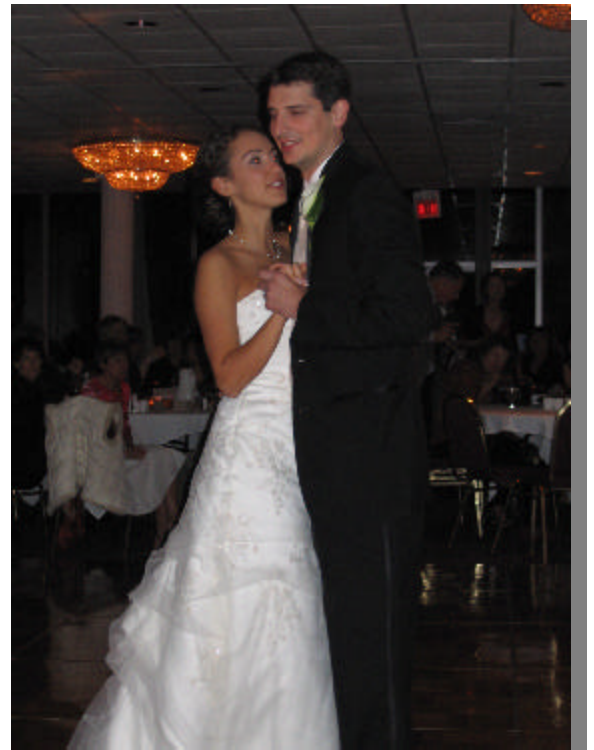
- ♥ *Uncle Isidro and his sons, Carlos, Edward, Roberto, and Orlando*
- ♥ *Joi and Roberto in the limousine.*
- ♥ *The rest of the Riveras during the limousine ride to the church*
- ♥ *Carlos and Garnet*
- ♥ *Two of Carlos and Garnet's granddaughters, Justice and Jade Klene*
- ♥ *Part of the bridal party*
- ♥ *Nico Rivera, Michael and Alicia Tokar, Norma Pettit, and Austin Rivera*
- ♥ *Alicia and Michael at the altar during the church ceremony.*



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Clockwise, starting from upper left corner:



- ♥ *Carlos Rivera gives a toast*
- ♥ *Kama and her mom, Garnet Rivera*
- ♥ *The first dance*
- ♥ *The bride and groom with Garnet and Carlos*
- ♥ *Alicia's nieces - flower girls Gwen Rivera and Jade Klene, and junior bridesmaid Justice Klene.*
- ♥ *Alicia with her mom and sisters.*
- ♥ *Cutting the cake.*



¿...y la familia?

Angela Warren-Barnes Dies at 38

My niece, Angela Warren-Barnes, succumbed to cancer on October 8th, just weeks after being diagnosed with stage four lymphoma. After returning from a trip to California (Joi and I visited her in Martinez on September 29th), she declined rapidly and passed away in a hospital in Oklahoma with her sister, Teena and her daughter, Amanda, by her side. The shock of her early departure is still reverberating through our family as Angela left behind a grieving husband and four children. Her death came just 15 months after that of her mother, Olga, for whom we are still mourning.

Angela was born on July 15, 1969, in San Francisco, California, to Lester Raymond and Olga María. For most of her childhood she lived in the Los Angeles area. Even as a young child, her nurturing nature, leadership abilities, and artistic talents were evident.

Following her graduation from high school, she attended Diablo Valley College, taking courses in horticulture, spirituality, and art. (The background of her memorial service program is one of her original drawings.) She also took courses in Early Childhood Education. Angela was an avid writer, documenting her life through journals.

Angela was married to Michael Barnes. Their children are Timothy Teal, Alura Grace, and Marlin Raine. Daughter Amanda Knox is from a previous marriage.



A service was held at St. Dominic's Catholic church, in Benicia, CA



The picture above was taken just nine days before she died.



Michelle and family provided the lunch



*Teena Warren and Alura Grace Barnes
Alura showed great poise as she spoke at her mother's memorial service.*



*Two other children of Angela's:
Teal (above) and Amanda (below).*



Angela's artwork was on display at the reception following the memorial service.



Angie's sister, Marina Ramos, and her cousin, Tory Pettit



Husband, Michael, is in front row, in suit



One of two huge collages lovingly prepared by Angela's family

¿...y la familia?

A Heartbroken Family Bids Farewell to David L. Finch

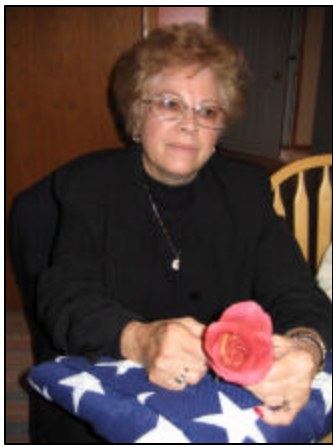
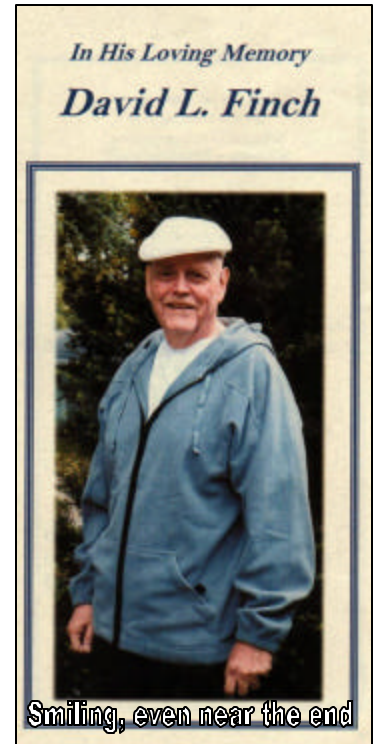
Family and friends gathered in Sioux City, Iowa on October 31st for the funeral service of Aunt Delia's husband, Dave, to whom she had been married for almost 47 years. Uncle Dave was diagnosed with cancer less than three months earlier.

David was born in Des Moines, Iowa on August 15, 1939. He graduated from North High School, attended classes at Drake University in Des Moines, and served in the National Guard. He was a photojournalist with the Des Moines Register until 1982, then with the Colorado Springs Gazette (CO), and finally the Stockton Record (CA). He retired in 2006.

David was an avid singer and performed with the Stockton Choral, the Stockton Symphony and various church choirs. He was best known for his caring nature and his sense of humor. He will be greatly missed by family and friends.

Aunt Delia writes, "It was a beautiful funeral, and the response from all the people that came was unbelievable." Classmates from high school came, as well as journalism acquaintances, co-workers, family, friends and neighbors they knew from "way back when. It was amazing seeing all the people we used to know from years ago."

Photos on this page show a broken-hearted Aunt Delia, Bryan having a final moment with his dad at the gravesite, picture collages of Dave's life, and some of the relatives who came to lend their support to the Finch family. Standing in the group picture are Kathy (Merritt) Caffey, Joi (De Nardo) Stenroos, Lisa (Finch) Warner, Bryan Finch, Carol (Medina) Wright, Carlos Rivera, and Meryem Merritt. Seated are Aunt Delia, Tía Tita, and Uncle Isidro.



*Above and below: a toast to Uncle Dave.
Carlos, Meryem, Carol, and Angie
(Tita and José Medina's granddaughter.)*



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A note from Cousin Helen Correa-González (pictured with the newlyweds at left):

"Just sent you a few pictures of my son's wedding. Yamil and Bianca Williams were married on October 20, 2007 in Lugoff, South Carolina. I performed the civil ceremony in the front of the house, then after the pictures were taken we went to the back of the house to have the baby shower reception.

The picture with the three girls is my little sister Waleska Ivette Román and her husband, Rafael. The oldest daughter is Sharivette, the middle child is Leynalie, and the baby is Kayla."

Marcantonio Williams Jr., aka MarcAntonio, was born on November 25th, 2007 at 6:54 p.m. He weighed 8 lbs, 14.9 oz. In the picture at right he is being held by his great-grandmother, Milagros (Rivera) Curet. MarcAntonio is Cousin Helen's first grandchild. *Congratulations to all!!*



Since Joi and I were going to be in Chicago, I made arrangements for us to meet a cousin that I had been communicating with for a couple of years but had never met in person. Nellie Feliciano is a second cousin to Joi and me, and to the other children of Oscar, María, Elena, Guar, and Anita. Nellie's grandmother was my father's Tía Carmela, the sister of our grandmother Ana Cruz García, who died when Anita (Rivera) Merritt was a week old. Nellie is a first cousin of Annie Melendez, the pharmacist cousin who lives in Peñuelas. It was through Annie that Nellie and I first began to correspond.

What a thrill it was to finally meet Nellie. I was so excited that I could hardly stand it! Nellie came accompanied by her sister, Myriam, her brother, Hector, and her husband, David—all of them fantastic and *fun* people! Nellie and her siblings all live near each other and they have a huge family network in East Chicago. They drove 1-1/2 hours to come meet us. Joi and I had a blast with them. We went out to breakfast and had a great time talking, talking, talking, and getting to know each other. After our time together we felt that we'd known each other forever. After all...*somos familia*.



Nellie, Hector, Myriam, Norma, Isidro, Joi, Edward



I gave them each a copy of the portion of the family history that we have in common.



Nellie's husband is sitting to Joi's right



One last picture!



Remember to request time off from your job, make plane reservations, etc. for the 2008 Family Reunion here in Placerville, California. Randy and I are getting our house ready, and Joi and I will be scouting out area lodging when she comes back to California in February. I hope to give you information on lodging in the February newsletter. As a family, we Riveras have had a difficult time these past two years with the loss of loved ones, and others facing serious/life threatening illnesses. Let's gather together to celebrate our heritage and each other, and to continue to instill Rivera pride in our younger generation.

Mark the date: June 20-22, 2008, and begin to make plans for your family to attend.

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c/o Norma I. Pettit
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Birthday Greetings



Christopher Nicholson (38) –
Dec. 4

Emma Kathleen Thompson
– (4) Dec. 5

Yanelis Aisha González (7)
Dec. 9

William A. González (11)–
Dec. 14

Ryan Rivera (23) –
Dec. 16

Jonathan F. Segarra (10) –
Dec. 17

Raúl Rivera (66) –
Dec. 20

Kelsey Pombo (18) – Dec. 21

Arlene González (26) –
Dec. 22

Cama Klene (40) – Dec. 25

Michelle Harrell (41) –
Dec. 30

Vanessa Braddock (35) –
Dec. 31

Oscar González (48) –
Jan. 1

Robert Paul Cavino (3) –
Jan. 9

Ada (Pacheco) Rivera (53) –
Jan. 10

Marlin R. Barnes (12) –
Jan. 10

Edward Rivera (59) –
Jan. 11

Bélgica González (27) –
Jan. 12

David Nicholson (43) –
Jan. 18

Sylvia (Atilas) Lovelace
(70) – Jan. 18

Amber Nicholson (12) –
Jan. 24

Larry Wright (59) –
Jan. 30

William Roig (75) –
Jan. 31

Happy New Year,
Everybody!!!



Anniversaries

**Ada (Pacheco) and
Heriberto Rivera** (28)
- Dec. 10

**Felicita (Soto) and
Edwin Rivera** (24) –
Dec. 23

**Joi (De Nardo) and
Vic Stenroos** (27) –
Dec. 26

**Ruben and Lisa
Quiñones** (7) – Jan. 6

**Sephania (Krause)
and Scott Thompson**
(7) – Jan. 6

**Helen (Correa) and
Rafael González** (16) –
Jan. 18