

"...y la familia?"

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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

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

Rivera-Maskell Wedding in Greece

Rachel Rivera, daughter of cousin Roberto Rivera and granddaughter of Uncle Isidro and Auntie Rosita, was married to longtime beau, James Maskell, in a beautiful ceremony in picturesque Greece.

The wedding was in June, around the same time as the family reunion, which was why Roberto and his family were unable to come to California. They had an amazing time in Greece, and as Roberto put it, "It was the trip of a lifetime" for them.

Rachel and James made a stunning bride and groom, and their joyful countenances reflected the happiness of all who were able to witness their marriage. Please turn to page four to see photos snagged from an online photo album of their wedding.

On behalf of the entire Rivera family, we wish to extend our most sincere wishes for wedded bliss and an eternal honeymoon.



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I Remember...



¿...y la familia?

Autumn Days



by Norma I. (García) Pettit

We just had our first rain since May. The fresh scent of water-soaked soil, the unaccustomed coolness of the air, and the visual delight of golden leaves cavorting over the driveway tantalized my senses. Memories crowded my mind as I made peanut butter cookies and listened to the soft “shhh shhh shhh” of the light rain slapping the kitchen windows.

When I was a kid, school didn't start until after Labor Day, so in my childhood memories, the arrival of fall signified the start of a new school year. Who can forget the nerves and excitement that came with the first day of school, meeting your new teacher and seeing friends again that you hadn't seen all summer? I would be sporting a new outfit, which I had carefully laid out the night before, and carried with me brand new school supplies. I can remember arranging my new pens, pencils, eraser, and pencil sharpener tidily in a shiny zippered pencil pouch which would eventually get pen-marked and foggy with fingerprint smudges. How neatly I printed out my subjects to put in the colored tabs of the subject dividers! Then came the sights and smells of the classroom. Ahhh, the distinctive smells of Magic Markers, brand-new books, and mimeographed papers are still fresh in my memory. Do you remember taking a whiff before passing the stack of mimeographed papers to the students behind you?

As a high school student, fall meant football games. I attended every single football game during my years at Abraham Lincoln High School. (A quarter of a century later I again had perfect attendance at my kids' football games. Ruben played football, and Sonia was the drum major for the marching band).

The years passed, and in the fall of 1981, I found myself the mother of a little boy, not yet five years old, beginning his first day of kindergarten at Hayward Christian School. His teacher later related what happened when she started to read a story to the class. She held up the book to read, and Ruben read the title out loud. This from a child who had been born in Puerto Rico and had only been in California for five months. His English vocabulary still needed development and his comprehension was limited, but he could read just fine. I had taught him to read when he was three years old, and it was just natural for him to blurt out the title of the book. The teacher said, “Hey! That's my job!” After that first day, Ruben was sent to the first grade classroom during reading time.

I have a picture of Sonia on her first day of kindergarten. She was so excited and looked so cute in her new first-day-of-school dress, clutching her lunch pail! Ruben, as a big second-grader, was all poise and confidence at her side.

Three years later we moved to Placerville from the Bay Area. What a big change! We now lived (where Randy, Luke and I still live) on an acre of land outside the city limits, and the children had to ride a school bus to school. On that first morning, I drove them there to sign them up. We were getting out of the car and loading the babies into the stroller (Vickie was seventeen months old, and Luke was three months old), when a pretty, young woman greeted us as she passed us. Sonia turned to me and whispered hopefully, “That might be my new teacher!” I told her not to count on it. That afternoon, when the bus let the kids out at the end of Meadow Lane, they ran all the way to the house, excitedly chattering about their day. Sonia was elated that the pretty lady did turn out to be her teacher!



For Vickie (as we called Tory when she was little) and Luke, most of their schooling was done at home. Some of my favorite memories are of the coziness of staying in on rainy fall days, reading, working on projects, or “doing math” by tripling the recipe for peanut butter cookies. Every fall for several years we celebrated “Pioneer Day”, going an entire day without using electricity, working on handcrafts and cooking on the fireplace insert (which we no longer have). Randy and Luke would chop wood for the winter supply of firewood, and in the evening we would play old-fashioned family games like charades. It was so much fun, but the next day we'd be glad to be able to turn on the lights again.

Today when I made peanut butter cookies, I didn't have to triple the recipe. The kids are all grown, but the good memories of autumn days of my childhood and theirs still remain with me.

HELP US TO REDUCE OUR COSTS

Publishing the newsletter costs me more than \$1,200 per year in supplies and postage. If receiving this newsletter via computer is an acceptable option for you, please sign up at www.ylafamilia.org. You will receive an e-mail notification when the latest issue is posted on the website. Of course, if you prefer to receive your copies by regular mail, I am happy to continue mailing them to you. On the other hand, if you don't want to continue receiving the newsletter at all, please let me know and I will take you off the mailing list, thereby saving me money and maybe in the long run, saving a tree. ☺ Thank you!

Please e-mail your requests to mamanony@sbcglobal.net or send me a note via the postal service to:

Norma Pettit
2426 Meadow Lane
Placerville, CA 95667

Also, if you move, as a courtesy, please provide me with your new address. With every issue I always get at least two newsletters returned to me. ☺

At this time in our family history...

- *Elena and Sinforiano (Guar) Rivera were born on October 1, 1913, according to their baptismal records.*
- *Rosita Hernández and Isidro Rivera were married on October 2, 1945.*
- *My niece, Angela (Warren) Barnes, passed away a year ago on October 8th.*
- *On October 10, 1815, José Santa Ana de la Cruz married Lorenza de Santiago in Peñuelas, Puerto Rico. José Santa Ana was a great-uncle of Máximo Cruz Vilá. (See last entry for a reminder on who Máximo was.)*
- *Achilles George Nicholson was born in Elias, Greece 116 years ago on October 10th. He was the husband of Auntie Marie, and the father of Jenny, Victoria, and George. He died on November 3, 1953.*
- *David Finch, husband of Aunt Delia, and father of Bryan Finch and Lisa (Finch) Warner, passed away last October and was laid to rest on the 31st.*
- *Oscar Cruz García, second child of Florencio Rivera and Ana Cruz García, was born on October 30, 1910. He was my father.*
- *Máximo Cruz Vilá was born on November 18, 1853. He and María Engracia García were married on November 3, 1877. Their daughter, Ana, was the mother of Adela, Oscar, María, Elena, Guar, and Anita.*

The Way We Were



These pictures are from Thanksgiving Day, 1979, twenty-nine years ago!

I was living in Puerto Rico at the time and was so jealous that Olga, Ruben and Joi were together for Thanksgiving, and I wasn't there with them.

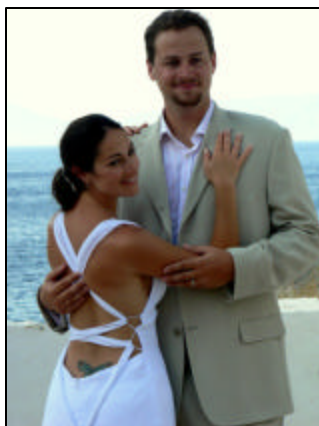
I believe these pictures were taken at Ruben's house on Washington Street in Daly City.

Ruben looks mischievous as he's touching the turkey. Look, at that beard! And he had hair on top of his head, too.

Olga and Joi look sweet. I love Joi's haircut.



"¿...y la familia?"



To view all of the wedding photos, please go to <http://picasaweb.google.com/lightningwolfe/MaskellWeddingAndSuch2008#>

Family Travels

Marina Ramos took her first trip to Hawaii recently. It was exciting for her to go to the place where her mother, Olga, had lived when married to her first husband, and also where her sister, Michelle, was born. Marina sent me the following blurb to accompany her photo:

About my trip- every day I did something different. I spent the entire time in Oahu but there were plenty of things for me to do. The picture I sent is of me atop Diamond Head Crater. My friend Gregg and I hiked to the top and got some wonderful pictures of Waikiki. In total, it was a very relaxing trip and that was exactly what I was looking for- a restful peace of mind before school. :)



We were planning to visit my father and brothers in Georgia this fall and were trying to find some dates to schedule the trip when we suddenly found ourselves with a free weekend late in September after an engagement with friends had to be postponed. So, on a whim, we packed our bags and drove down to Georgia. With gas prices on the brink of \$4.00 a gallon, it was not a cheap drive, but well worth it. We arrived in Carrollton around dinner time as dad expected. He had the rice and beans ready for us as we walked in the door. Ok, I will admit it. I pre-ordered the meal. I know, it was shameless of me. The childhood memories came flooding in as I devoured my third helping of this Puerto Rican delicacy along with tasty samples of fried platanos. Dad talked me into some of his homemade hot sauce and instantly my sweat glands were hard at work! Mmmmmm. I was in heaven.

Dad is doing great. I hope I can be as active and alert when I am 89. I hope the genes are in me somewhere and will kick in when I need them. I figure they must be dormant right now considering my lack of energy and forgetfulness. Dad is troubled by a bad knee, however, and told us he will see a doctor soon to see what could be done about it.

The next day Garnet and I hung out with dad all morning and that afternoon we went and visited my brother, Orlando, who was working on his latest fixer-up home purchase that he thought he might turn for a profit or rent out (those comments were pre-Wall St. bailout). We made plans to get together later that evening. Meanwhile, late afternoon saw the arrival of my other brother, Roberto, and we had a nice visit with him as well. Then we all decided to go to a restaurant for dinner (my tastebuds will have to wait until another day for more Puerto Rican food!).

After dinner we returned to dad's home and Orlando and his wife, Jana, came over as did his daughter, Monica, her husband, Mike, and their son, Tito. At last, all the pieces of the Rivera Quartet were assembled: Dad on his quattrò, Roberto on sax, Orlando and Tito on guitars. Those of you who have experienced it know the harmonious sounds that can emanate from such a gathering, especially when dad graced us with his vocals. The amazing part of this "concert" was the talented Tito, probably qualified to be the next finalist on America's Most Talented. It was a fun evening.

Garnet and I were supposed to go to North Carolina the next day (furniture hunting), but had to change our plans when it was determined we needed to shorten our trip by one day. So we stayed in Carrollton and had dinner that evening at Orlando's. My tastebuds were in heaven again!

The next day, we bid our goodbyes and set sail for home with one last small detour: Sevierville, TN, to visit Cousin Victoria, Auntie Marie's daughter. Victoria insisted that we spend the night in one of her cottages. She runs a Bed 'n Breakfast business in the heart of Gatlinburg tourist country. We had a grand time visiting with her and reminiscing about the past. She cooked us a delicious dinner and breakfast the next morning. Staying at her place was wonderfully relaxing and seeing her again was also great. I believe it had been several years since we last saw her. We would have liked to have spent another day there but unfortunately we had to get home. We vowed we would try to stop by another time perhaps during another trip to Georgia. —Carlos Rivera



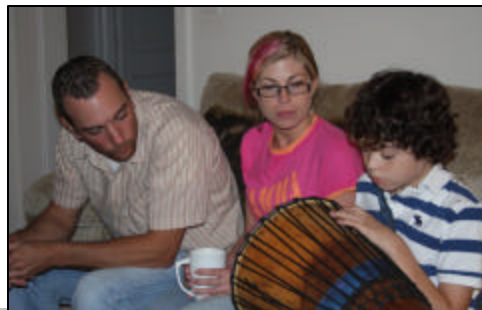
*At left:
Three
generation
Rivera band*



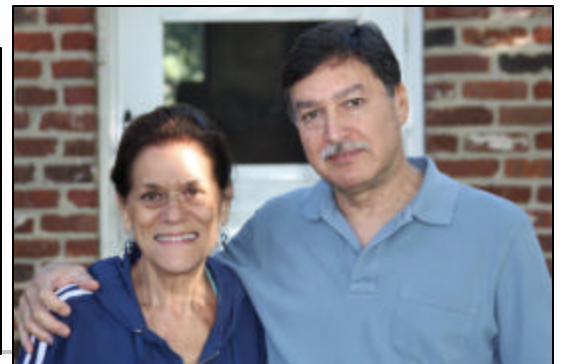
*At right:
Watching TV
through their
eyelids?*



*At left: Garnet and Jana
Below: Mike, Monica and Tito*



Below: Victoria Nicholson and Carlos Rivera



¿...y la familia?

During the family reunion here at my house, I was handed an envelope containing photos and a nice letter from cousin Karen Rivera, daughter of Edwin and Felita. She wanted me to “meet” her baby and for the entire family to see the most beautiful thing that she has in this world—her son, **Erick Joel**.



3 months old



7 months old



10½ months old



1st Birthday Party



Cousins Raúl (in wheelchair),
René (in shades), Luz and Lillian



1 year old

Want to Meet More Relatives?

Plans are already underway for the 2009 Rivera Family Reunion, to be held in Puerto Rico. If you made it to the 2005 reunion, you'll remember what a great time you had, and if you didn't attend that one, you won't want to miss next year's reunion. Attendance is guaranteed to be high since we have many family members living in Ponce and surrounding towns, and many of us stateside relatives are eager to jump on a plane and head over to the island paradise of our heritage.

Randy and I went on a cruise to the Mexican Riviera from July 20– 27th, visiting Puerto Vallarta, Mazatlan, and Cabo San Lucas. We had a blast! We are planning to go on another cruise next year, this time to the Southern Caribbean, tying that in with the family reunion in Puerto Rico. Want to come along with us?



October 8th marks the one year anniversary of the passing of my niece, Angela (Warren) Barnes, just fifteen months after the death of her mother—my sister, Olga. My heart still constricts with pain when I think of all that my nieces have endured with such heavy losses, one after the other.

Some months ago, I went to an Imagination Theatre Presentation of “Little Women” with a group of women and girls from my church. I had organized the outing and procured the tickets because I thought it would be a fun and wholesome form of fellowship for the ladies, several of which were mother and daughter teams. Also, the girl that played Beth was a former middle school student of mine (she is now in high school). It was neat to see her act and sing (I never knew she had such a pretty voice).

During one of the final scenes, after “Beth” dies, “Jo” sings a song to “Marmee” , and I sobbed through the whole thing because I knew what it was like to lose a sister, and I was thinking of my nieces with their double sorrow. Here, in memory of both Olga and Angela, I am typing out the lyrics to that heartfelt song.



Days of Plenty

Music by Jason Howland

Lyrics by Mindi Dickstein

I never dreamed of this sorrow. I never thought I'd have reason to lament.

I hoped I'd never know heartbreak.

How I wish I could change the way things went.

I wanted nothing but goodness. I wanted reason to prevail.

Not this bare emptiness. I wanted days of plenty.

But I refuse to feel tragic. I am aching for more than pain and grief.

There has got to be meaning. Most of all when a life has been so brief.

I have got to learn something. How can I give her any less?

I want life to go on. I want days of plenty.

You have to believe there is reason for hope.

You have to believe that the answers will come.

You can't let this defeat you. I won't let this defeat you.

You must fight to keep her within you.

So believe that she mattered and believe that she always will.

She will always be with you. She'll be part of the days you've yet to fill.

She will live in your bounty. She will live as you carry on your life.

So carry on full of hope. She'll be there for all your days of plenty.

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

Birthday Greetings

Teena Warren (37) - Oct. 3

Christine Rivera (12) - Oct. 3

Roxanna Rivera (38) - Oct. 6

Eric J. Montalvo (31) - Oct. 7

Ruben A. Quiñones (32) -
Oct. 12

Mike Shenker (32) - Oct. 12

Felipe René Rivera (25) -
Oct. 13

Lourdes Rivera (35) - Oct. 13

Edwin Joel Rivera (11) - Oct. 14

Jackie (Correa) Eddy (44) -
Oct. 15

Sonia Rivera (34) - Oct. 15

Austin Rivera (14) - Oct. 17

Annalise L. Nicholson (6) -
Oct. 17

Javier Rivera (37) - Oct. 18

Virginia T. Feliciano (19) -
Oct. 21

Sierra Campos (12) - Oct. 21

Tito Shenker (11) - Oct. 22

Vicky (Rivera) Cabán (44) -
Oct. 23

Brandi Klene (39) - Oct. 24

Randy Pettit (53) - Oct. 27

Victoria Nicholson (69) -
Oct. 28

Madeline Rivera (42) -
Oct. 28

Joanne McLaughlin (61) -
Oct. 29

Julie Rivera (16) - Nov. 2

Alex Joel Rivera (13) - Nov. 2

Lisa Quiñones (32) - Nov. 3

Adalberto Rivera (25) - Nov. 5

Orlando Rivera (53) - Nov. 6

Stephanie Feliciano (19) -
Nov. 6

Matthew Thompson (3)-
Nov. 7

Lydia N. Carrasquillo (29) -
Nov. 7

Rosa M. Rivera (85) - Nov. 8

Austin Miller (14) - Nov. 8

Joannie García (28) - Nov. 9

Neysa Rivera (18) - Nov. 12

Juan Meléndez (63) - Nov. 12

Lilliana Charice Cruz (6) -
Nov. 15

Joseph T. Springer (12) -
Nov. 15

Esmeralda Rivera Delgado (4) -
Nov. 16

Carol (Medina) Wright (56) -
Nov. 17

Michelle (Cabán) Su'a (20) -
Nov. 17

Amanda Knox (21) - Nov. 22

John Feliciano (46) - Nov. 22

Rose A. Segarra (8) - Nov. 23

Marcantonio Williams Jr. (1) -
Nov. 25

Hector L. Feliciano (58) - Nov. 26

Edwin Rivera (54) - Nov. 27

Solimar Delgado (21) - Nov. 28

Anniversaries

**Kimm and Scott
Hargraves** (12) -
Oct. 18

**Yamil and Bianca
Williams** (1) -
Oct. 20

**Muñeca (Osorio)
and
David Simon-Baker**
(2) - Oct. 21

**Alicia (Rivera) and
Mike Tokar** (1) -
Oct. 27

