

# "...y la familia?"

VOLUME 15, ISSUE 3

DEC '10/JAN '11

*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 im-  
mediate family  
Favorite family  
recipes  
Cute things your  
kids have  
said  
Funny stories*

*This is **your**  
family news-  
letter. Fill it  
with things  
about your  
family!*

## *¡Feliz Navidad!*

From the Pettit household to all of you, we extend our warmest wishes for a happy Christmas season to each and every family member. May God richly bless every home in our huge family, may these festive days be filled with the love, joy, and wonder of the birth of our Savior, and may the warmth and fragrance of family dinners, glittering Christmas trees, and freshly baked cookies. Please consider this our "Christmas card" to you and yours.

With all of our love, Randy, Norma and family

*Desde nuestro hogar a todos ustedes, extendemos nuestros más cálidos deseos para una temporada Navideña feliz para cada miembro de la familia. Que Dios bendiga ricamente a cada hogar en nuestra enorme familia, que estos días festivos sean llenos del amor, gozo, y maravilla del nacimiento de nuestro Salvador, tanto como el calor y la fragancia de cenas Navideñas (¡con pasteles!), parrandas, y turrón. Favor de considerar este mensaje nuestra "postal de Navidad" para toda la familia.*

*Con todo nuestro cariño, Randy, Norma y familia*

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¿...y la familia?

## A Page Out of Our Family History

From a special census taken in Peñuelas, P.R. in 1822...

*De un censo especial tomado en Peñuelas, P.R. en 1822...*

These people are our ancestors. *Estas personas son nuestros antepasados.*

Don Pedro Vilá owned 22 acres of land, one small house or cabin, a coffee crop, one cow, one horse, a mare, and a turkey.

*Don Pedro Vilá era dueño de 22 cuerdas de terreno, un bohío, una cosecha de café, una vaca, un caballo, una yegua, y un pavo.*

Don Higinio Arroyo had two acres of land, one small house or cabin, an acre of sweet potatoes, twelve hundred coffee plants, four avocado trees and eight pigs.

*Don Higinio Arroyo tenía dos cuerdas de terreno, un bohío una cuerda de batatas, 1,200 plantas de café, cuatro palos de aguacate, y ocho credos.*

Don Lázaro González owned six acres of pasture, one small house or cabin, a coffee crop, one cow, one horse, one mare and one turkey.

*Don Lázaro González era dueño de seis cuerdas de pasto, un bohío, una cosecha de café, una vaca, un caballo, una yegua, y un pavo.*

Don Ygnacio Feliciano had two acres of pasture land, one small house or cabin, 2,000 tobacco plants, 400 coffee plants, twelve avocado trees, two oxen, one horse, six hens, twelve chicks, and six turkeys.

*Don Ygnacio Feliciano tenía dos cuerdas de pasto, un bohío, 2,000 plantas de tabaco, 400 plantas de café, doce palos de aguacate, dos bueyes, un caballo, seis gallinas, doce pollitos, y seis pavos.*

Don Hilario García had a large house, thirteen acres of pasture, fourteen "other" acres, an acre of corn, a large coffee crop, three coconut trees, twelve avocado trees, two cows, two calves, one horse, four mares, and one colt.

*Don Hilario García tenía una casa, trece cuerdas de pasto, catorce "otras" cuerdas, una cuerda sembrada con maíz, una cosecha grande de café, tres palmas de coco, doce palos de aguacate, dos vacas, dos becerros, un caballo, cuatro yeguas, y un potro.*

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

- On December 15th, 1852, María de Jesús García was born. She was a sister of my great-grandmother María Engracia García.
- Also on December 15th, but in 1884, my 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 the above-mentioned Maria Engracia García, was born on January 2, 1858.
- On January 15, 1907, my 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 Anita.
- On January 21, 1820, my 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 in 1988

Eric Ryan Stenroos, age 5, on Christmas morning in his home in Denver, Colorado. Ana Victoria Pettit, age 3-1/2, was not too happy to be sitting on Santa (her cousin R.C.).





# A Change of Seasons

By Norma (García) Pettit

For the December 2004 issue of "¿...y la familia?" I wrote the following article for the "I Remember" column:

I Remember 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 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.

Because of those memories, beginning in 1989 I started hosting family Christmas parties so that my children, my nieces and nephews, and their families, and Joi's son, Eric, could experience the joy of extended family members gathering for the holidays. I cooked traditional Puerto Rican dishes, we danced to *salsa*, *merengue* and *guaracha* music, and laughed uproariously at the ridiculous items that surfaced during our "Pink Elephant Gift Exchange" game.

My eyes mist over with the bittersweet images of people no longer with us. Things happen, children grow up, and families move away. The season of the Pettit Christmas parties has ended, although for the last few years I tried to cling to the tradition, like the last brown leaves of Autumn clung to the shedding oak trees on our property. Feeling as barren as the gray branches of the now naked trees, I wondered if my mother had felt sad when I moved to Puerto Rico to attend college, and the Riveras moved to Guaynabo that same year. With my generation of cousins grown up and gone, the family parties as we knew them in California came to a screeching halt.

For me, the transition was softened this year by Joi's visit this past weekend ("I'm coming anyway," she had said) along with my 2-1/2 year old grandson's excitement when he entered my house and saw our Christmas tree. Each in their own way reminded me that after the winter season ends, bare branches give way to green buds and new life sprouts from the earth.

A new season begins.



Olga (García) Smith and George Nicholson sharing a jolly moment in 1995.



*“¿...y la familia?”*

## San Francisco Trip by Alicia (Rivera) Tokar

Mike and I had a wedding to attend in Yosemite National Park this past October and we decided to make a vacation out of it. We'd never been to San Francisco and thought what better way to travel around a new city than with our own tour guide! Dad (a.k.a. Carlos) and Garnet came with us so he could show us his old stomping grounds and provide us with good company.



Dad and Garnet arrived the night before on October 5<sup>th</sup> while Mike and I joined them the following morning. After a quick settling in the room, we went out to explore the touristy side of San Francisco. Dad knew exactly where to take us and the best routes to get to Fisherman's Wharf which somehow included the famous crooked Lombard Street. We had lunch at a great little restaurant on the ocean, each of us enjoying our clam chowder soup and crab sandwiches.

After lunch, we took a boat tour that circled Alcatraz island and went under the Golden Gate Bridge. What fascinating history and beautiful scenery! After Fisherman's Wharf, Dad navigated us around the city. We drove by Rivera Street to visit one of the houses he grew up in with Grandma Rosita and Grandpa Isidro and heard stories of when he lived there as a child. Later that night, we enjoyed a nice dinner at Dad and Garnet's favorite restaurant Scoma's.



The following day we planned a winery tour that took us through Sonoma and Napa Valley. It was a long day but we got to see a lot of different wineries and taste some good, and some not so good, wine. Uncle Ed was able to join us for dinner that night at a restaurant south of San Francisco over good Italian Food. Unfortunately, Aunt Chris or the kids couldn't make it, but it is always a pleasure to visit with Uncle Ed.

Overall, the short trip was a lot of fun with Dad and Garnet. We had a wonderful time in San Francisco and took away many great memories.





# Iowa Escapades

Vanessa spent a week in October visiting her mother, Meryem Merritt in Des Moines, Iowa. Joí and her friend, Shona, happened to plan a two day trip to Des Moines to hit some quilt shops. The four of them had a blast visiting the Amana Colonies and touring shops filled with antiques, gift items, quilts, and fabric. Joí and Vanessa sent the pictures on this page, and Joí wrote the following account of her trip.



Two unique religious groups were attracted to the fertile agricultural soil of southeast Iowa in the mid-1800's: The Old Order Amish in 1846 and the Community of True Inspiration in 1855, from [Germany](#). The two groups are not related at all. The area which encompasses 26,000 acres has seven "villages" which are: [South Amana](#), West Amana, High Amana, Middle Amana, Amana, East Amana and Homestead. The streets of these villages are lined with historic brick, stone and clapboard homes, flower and [vegetable gardens](#), lanterns and walkways which recall the Amana's of the past. Breathtaking area!

We only spent time in this area, but didn't get to every "village." To see the more "true" Amish culture, we would have had to go to Kolona, farther east. Next trip for sure!

In Amana, after the quilt shop, we started walking down the street to check out all the other shops. Along the way, we saw this little chair and bench in an outside seating area. Meryem and I -- the children at heart that we are -- decided to sit down in them! HA! Grownup butts do NOT fit in children's chairs! I was laughing SO hard! We switched and Meryem said the only way she could sit in the chair was with one "cheek."

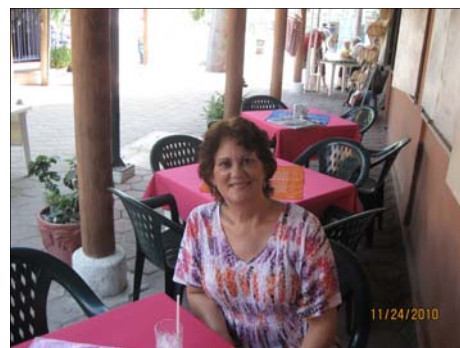




“¿...y la familia?”  
*Cruise to Acapulco, Mexico* by Norma (García) Pettit



*Randy and I took an eight day cruise to Mexico on Carnival's Spirit during Thanksgiving week. After two "fun days" at sea, we arrived at Acapulco, where we went on a land excursion to ancient ruins of the Yope Indians. I loved learning a bit about Mexico's history.*



*The next day, we docked at Ixtapa, where Randy and I strolled through the shops and stopped for a light lunch. Later we returned to the ship to drop off our purchases and change into our bathing suits. Going back to Ixtapa, we enjoyed some time on the beach.*



*The third stop was at the port of Manzanillo. Here again, we took a land excursion, this time to some small towns about two hours inland. We loved this chance to see the quaint towns, like the one at left, that seemed untouched by the modern world.*

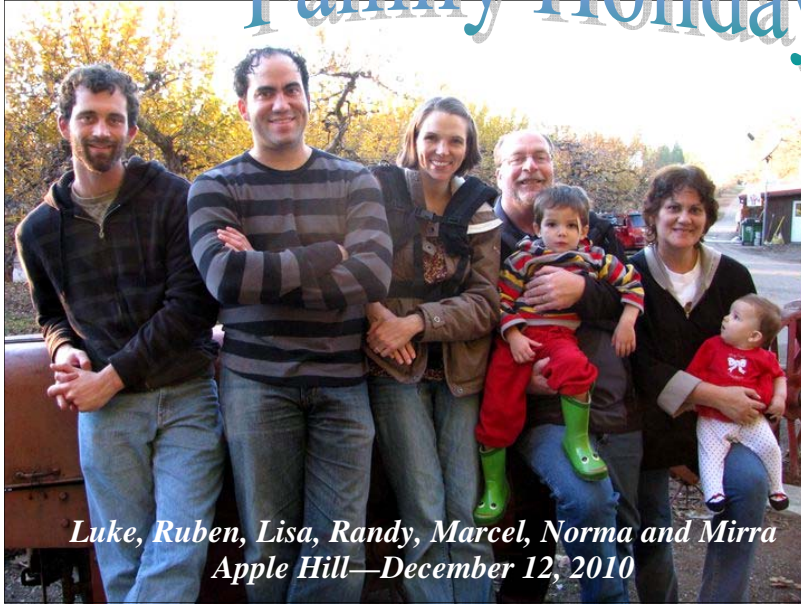
*Cruising is a great way to vacation because it's an all-in-one deal as far as lodging, meals, entertainment,*

*and transportation to foreign ports goes. This was only our second cruise, but we are looking forward to more of them while we are healthy enough to enjoy them. Both times we have gone we've seen groups of families on board, and we've been thinking about how neat it would be to have a family reunion cruise—maybe in 2014, embarking and disembarking in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Just a thought!*

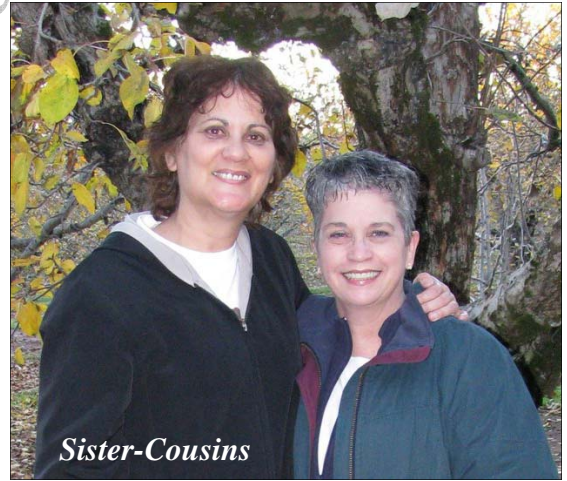




“...y la familia”  
**Family Holiday Pictures**



*Luke, Ruben, Lisa, Randy, Marcel, Norma and Mirra  
 Apple Hill—December 12, 2010*



*Sister-Cousins*



*The grandchildren of George & Barbara Nicholson.*



*Robert Paul Cavino  
 Age 5, Kindergarten*



*Raymond Lee Cavino  
 Age 11; 6th grade*

*Olga's grandchildren—Teena's two youngest boys.*



## *“¿...y la familia?”*

c/o Norma I. Pettit

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

## *Birthday Greetings*



*Christopher Nicholson (41) -  
Dec. 4*

*Emma Kathleen Thompson  
- (7) Dec. 5*

*Yanelis Aisha González (8)  
Dec. 9*

*William A. González (18)-  
Dec. 14*

*Ryan Rivera (31) -  
Dec. 16*

*Jonathan F. Segarra (13) -  
Dec. 17*

*Kelsey Pombo (21) - Dec. 21*

*Arlene González (29) -  
Dec. 22*

*Joshua Omar Cabán (5) -  
Dec. 22*

*Cama Klene (43) - Dec. 25*

*Michelle Harrell (44) -  
Dec. 30*

*Vanessa Braddock (38) -  
Dec. 31*

*Oscar González (51) -  
Jan. 1*

*Mary Lillian Pérez (47)  
Jan. 6*

*Robert Paul Cavino (6) -  
Jan. 9*

*Ada (Pacheco) Rivera (56)  
- Jan. 10*

*Marlin R. Barnes (15) -  
Jan. 10*

*Edward Rivera (62) -  
Jan. 11*

*Bélgica González (30) -  
Jan. 12*

*David Nicholson (47) -  
Jan. 18*

*Sylvia (Atiles) Lovelace  
(73) - Jan. 18*

*Amber Nicholson (15) -  
Jan. 24*

*Zachary David  
Nicholson (4) - Jan. 30*

*Larry Wright (62) -  
Jan. 30*

*William Roig (78) -  
Jan. 31*



*Happy New  
Year,  
Everybody!!!*

### *Anniversaries*

*Ada (Pacheco) and  
Heriberto Rivera (31)  
- Dec. 10*

*Felicita (Soto) and  
Edwin Rivera (27) -  
Dec. 23*

*Joi (De Nardo) and  
Vic Stenroos (30) -  
Dec. 26*

*Michelle (Rivera) and  
Jason Su'a (4) -  
Dec. 30*

*Ruben and Lisa  
Quinones (10) - Jan. 6*

*Sephania (Krause)  
and Scott Thompson  
(10) - Jan. 6*

