

"...y la familia?"

Volume 11, Issue 2

Oct/Nov '06

Needed for Future Issues:

"Stuff" about you and yours...

Announcements

- New Baby
- Engagement
- Graduations
- Promotion
- New address

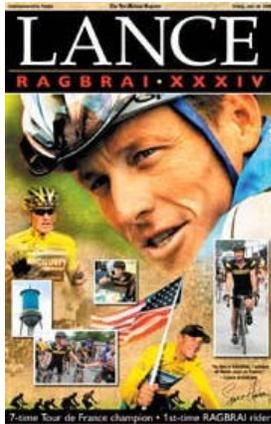
Upcoming Events

- 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

Cousin Josy Again Does RAGBRAI



For the 17th time, Cousin José Medina (Josy) rode his bicycle across Iowa in RAGBRAI—Registers Annual Great Bike Ride Across Iowa. RAGBRAI (pronounced "RAG-brye") is a 400-500 mile week-long bicycle ride across Iowa that began in 1973 and now is well known throughout the U.S. and the world. This year's ride was 444 miles long (see map above for the route) and had approximately 15,000 participants.

"I had Olga in my heart."

Lance Armstrong, seven-time Tour de France champion, rode for a couple of days in this year's ride to promote cancer research. Cousin Josy wore his yellow "Livestrong" bracelet and dedicated the ride to his cousin Olga's memory. He wrote to me ahead of time and said he'd have Olga in his heart during the ride.

Fittingly, this year's RAGBRAI began on July 22nd, which was Olga's birthday.

Thank you, Josy.



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I Remember . . . by Gladys Hernández

I want to share a memory with you that I have of Olga. Out of the many, this one stands out the most to me because it showed her character at an early age. Not sure you remember, but Olga and I spent a few summers together during our teens and we would explore Playland at the Beach and Golden Gate Park.

On one summer day Olga, Ruben and I went to Playland at the Beach. We were there sometime in the morning, and there was not a lot of people around. Anyway we went into this small building that had several arcade games. There was another young boy inside, about 12 years old, and the manager was keeping a suspicious eye on him. Olga and Ruben went to look at a nearby game and I was sort of looking around at the different machines. Well, Olga and Ruben started goofing around, and at one point she grabbed Ruben and pushed him against one of the games. I don't remember him slamming into the machine, just kind of bumping into it, but the machine toppled over with a very loud bang. The 12-year old boy who had been loitering nearby made a bolt for the door when the machine hit the floor and the manager ran after him and stopped him from leaving. He was yelling at the boy accusing him of trying to vandalize the game machine. I wanted to get out of the place, too, as quickly as my feet could carry me, but when I urged Olga and Ruben to leave with me, she just stayed put. She told me she had to let the manager know what really happened. And she did just that. She went up to the man and told him the boy was not to blame, that it was her fault the machine fell because she had pushed her brother into it. She was ready to take the consequence for her action even though it was an accident. However, the manager did not believe her, he kept accusing the boy, but Olga again repeated that it was her fault, not the boy's. Because of Olga's honesty, the manager let the boy go and he also invited us to leave, too. And we did just that.

She was only about 13 or 14 when this occurred. It made a strong impression on me and I can vividly recall the incident. It's amazing to me that she had such strength of character at this age and was ready to do the right thing.

Gladys and Olga in the García's back yard in San Francisco, on Olga's 14th birthday, July 22, 1961. This photo may have been taken during the visit that Gladys remembers in the above memory.



A Page Out of Our Family History

After Olga passed away, her daughter Angela gave me my dad's Merchant Marine papers. Out of curiosity of what he was doing sixty years ago, I looked through his meticulously saved maritime records and discovered that on November 19th, 1946 he shipped out of San Francisco on the SS Howell E. Jackson, returning to Seattle Washington on January 15, 1947.

The Liberty ship SS Howell E. Jackson was launched for the first time on September 6, 1943 and scrapped in 1962. According to Wikipedia.com:

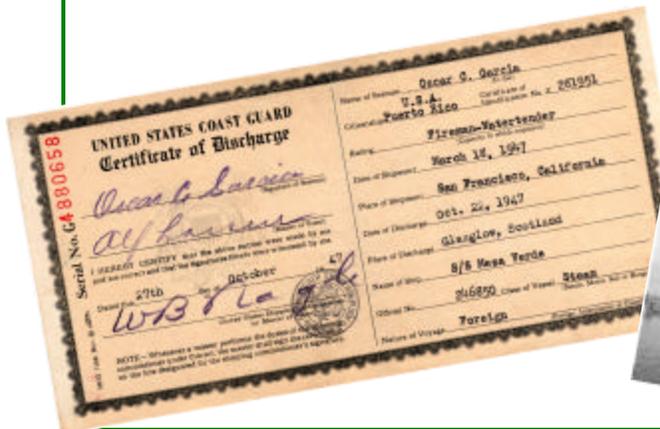
“The **Liberty ships** were cargo ships built in the United States during World War II. They were cheap and quick to build, and came to symbolize U.S. wartime industrial output. Based on vessels ordered by Britain to replace ships torpedoed by German U-boats, they were purchased for the U.S. fleet and for lend-lease provision to Britain. Sixteen American shipyards built 2,751 Liberties between 1941 and 1945, easily the largest number of ships produced to a single design.”

The ship at right, while not the SS Howell E. Jackson, was very similar to it.



I remember Dad telling me that he wasn't home for Olga and Ruben's births, so he was determined to be home for mine. His maritime records confirm this. This is the Certificate of Discharge from the voyage he was on during the time when Olga was born. Dad was in the Merchant Marines for 25 years, through WWII, the Korean War, and the Vietnam Conflict.

Photos of Dad and "his" ship (in 1946) from Mom's photo album .



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, 1946.**
- **On Oct. 10th, 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.**
- **Achilles George Nicholson was born in Elias, Greece 114 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.**
- **Oscar Cruz García, second child of Florencio Rivera and Ana Cruz García, was born on Oct. 30, 1910.**
- **Máximo Cruz Vilá was born on Nov. 18, 1853. He and María Engracia García were married on Nov. 3, 1877. Their daughter, Ana, was the mother of Adela, Oscar, María, Elena, Guar, and Anita.**

The Way We Were

Thumbing through old photos to find one to accompany Gladys's memory (p.2), I found this other great snapshot of Gladys, Olga and Neida, taken in front of the Hernández home in San Jose, on July 20, 1961.

The Hernández kids, first cousins to Carlos, Edward, Roberto and Orlando, were not related to the Garcías by blood, but we spent so much time with them while growing up and enjoyed one another's company so much, that we just called each other "cousins". The older cousins gave themselves nicknames—Olga was Yogi, Carlos was Boo Boo, Gladys and Neida were Pixie and Dixie... (or was it Neida and Nancy?). I can't recall the others. I was declared "too young" at the time to participate in the nicknaming. Waaah! Olga continued to use her nickname for years, long after she was married and had children of her own, signing her letters to me with, "Your loving sister, Yogi."



A Promise Fulfilled ...By Bill Roig, Guaynabo, P.R.

As promised, I'm enclosing pictures taken during the ceremony at the Ponce Civil Cemetery to lay to rest Elena's ashes alongside her twin brother, our dear uncle Guar. It had been her wish that she be put to rest by his side and I felt it my duty to see her last wish fulfilled. I had been planning it with our cousins in Ponce and were only waiting for Wilmi to come home for her summer vacation so that she could also accompany her grandmother to her final resting place.

Finally, on Saturday, July 29 in the afternoon, we arrived at Cousin René's place in Ponce. That evening we celebrated a Mass in Elena's honor at the Parroquia de Santa Teresita. The ashes were placed on a little table in front of the altar, with a picture of Elena and a beautiful flower arrangement. The priest was very generous with his words to Elena and the family and we all felt impacted by them, deep in our hearts.

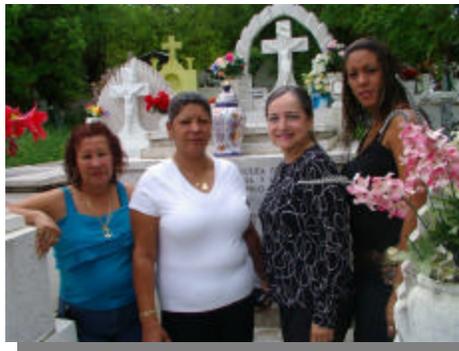
On Sunday morning we took Elena to her last resting place and we all gathered in prayer for her and Guar, and also for abuelo Flor, who rests right close to where his seed is laid. We spent the rest of the day with René and Titi and later came back to Guaynabo.

Many thoughts raced thru my mind both at church and at the cemetery. Elena died in November of 1999. Soon after the ashes were sent to me by Sasha and Joi, to see that Elena's wish to be with Guar would come to be. But for some unexplicable reason, I couldn't move to

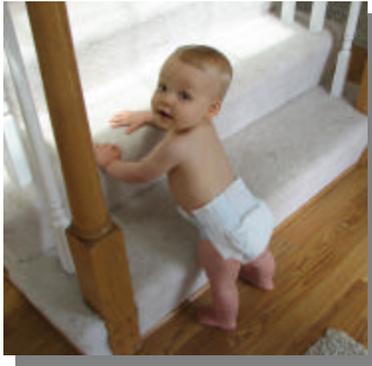
make the necessary arrangements. So, for a few years, until this past July, Elena was with me, in a special place, where I had to pass by her every morning, on my way to my second floor studio and back. Every time I passed by I would say hello, I love you Elena, be with me. I was trying to make up for all those years that we had been separated by the forces of destiny. I know that for many years, every day, even as I didn't even know that she existed, she would say in her heart hello Bill, I love you, I wish that you were with me. I was trying to make up for all those years!

But finally, I came to realize that having Elena in my heart was like having Elena with me. Elena was right, she had said to me that when she thought of me, so far away, and when she said to me hello and I love you, she could feel my presence, it was like I was there with her.

Her final wish to me was that she spend eternity alongside tío Guar. My final wish to her is that she spend eternity deep within my heart. She is no longer with me, but still, when I go by where she used to be, every morning, on my way to my studio and back, I say hello, I love you Elena, be with me.



Other Family News



Adorable Anita Braddock celebrated her second birthday on August 3rd with a beautiful party given to her by her parents, Ken and Vanessa, replete with cake, princess decorations, and wonderful gifts. ➡

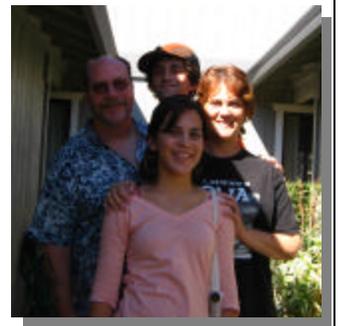


⬅ Little Logan is also growing fast...and learning to explore his world.

During the first week of August, Cousin Joi took a much needed vacation to Maine to visit her good friend, Dona, who lives on a farm. Here, Joi relaxes at the Maine coast.



Luke Pettit came home to Placerville for a month long visit that flew by all too quickly. While home he worked around the house and property, accomplishing many projects that had been on his dad's "Honey Do" list, and all the while enthralling his mother (me!) with his emerging skills in speaking Spanish. He spent time with family and friends and even went out in the semi truck with his dad for a couple of days. One of the highlights was our trip to Redding to see Tory, who is in her senior year at Simpson University and who now is living in an apartment with two other girls. We had a great time visiting Tory.



Luke also brought home with him a great DVD of his church in Costa Rica, called *Agua Viva* (Living Water). This church ministers to the surfing community as well as to the locals that live in Dominical. Please keep Luke and *Agua Viva* church in your prayers.

Kitchen Remodel

Yay! The Pettits have a "new" kitchen, and what a difference it makes! The smaller pictures are "before" photos taken from the same end of the kitchen as the larger pictures below. Randy and I did all the work ourselves. Okay, so it was mostly Randy, but I did the painting and decorating, right down to the retro glass knobs I found online.



¿...y la familia?

Your Prayers Are Requested

- For Cousin Roberto Rivera Sevilla, who has been diagnosed with prostate and stomach cancer and who has undergone emergency surgery.



- For Hilda López, shown here with Olga at the 2005 Puerto Rico Reunion. Hilda suffered a stroke in August, and is now staying with her son, Ricky, in New York and receiving physical therapy. Her sister, Martita, who calls Hilda every day from Puerto Rico, reports that Hilda's speech and movement is improving daily.



- For Cousin Raúl, who has been hospitalized after his rheumatoid arthritis kept him bedridden for two weeks.

- For René's wife, Carmen, whose arm came out of its socket! She is recuperating at home now.



Relatives Respond

Boo-boo pointed out to me by Cousin Vanessa: The name of the girl pictured with Cousin Meryem on page 3 (lower left hand corner) is Francesca Rivera.

What a beautiful newsletter! You managed to bring me to tears ... again! Thank you so much for all of your hard work and dedication! You are so loved and appreciated! — Vanessa Braddock

W O W!!!!!! What a wonderful issue! Beautifully done! You captured every moment of the Family Reunion and Olga's tribute! Both Vic and I cried when we were reading every page. I'm so glad I took so many pictures and that you were able to use them. Ours came in the mail on Saturday. I didn't check the mail until real late because it had been raining hard most of the day. I was REAL tired and had laid down for a snooze. Vic was gone all day to the Super Chevy Show. When I opened the mailbox and saw the brown envelope, my heart started to race. Couldn't wait to tear it open and start reading -- which I did, of course, as soon as I got in the house.

All the memories of the Reunion engulfed me again and warmed my heart as a reminder of what a wonderful time it was for all of us; and especially for us Golden Girls! How thankful I am that we had those extra two days together and our "pajama party." Seeing that "last" picture of the three of us together was a jolt -- but we know we were sharing the best of the best together. That's what Olga had wanted. I thank God every day that we had that time together. THANK YOU for working so hard on this Special Edition of the Newsletter. It had to be very difficult for you. It shows you put your heart and soul in every word and every page. Loving you for everything you do! joi



Hey, here are a few pictures if can put them in the next edition. Hey, you see Tío Isidro with my friend, Shelly? Tio Isidro me dijo, "Mira, por qué no me dejas esa mejicanita conmigo." smile ja.ja.ja. —Awilda
Foto at left: Alex, Lillian, and Erick Center: Edwin, Awilda, Raúl and Shelly

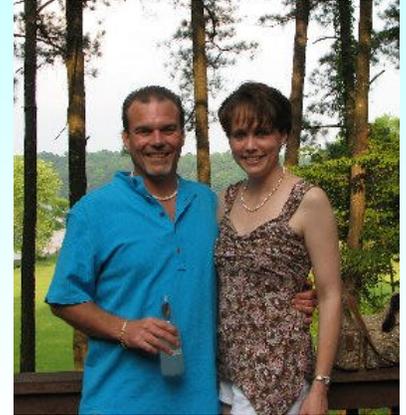
2007 Rivera Family Reunion

**Mark your calendars!
Set aside your vacation days!!**

June 22-24, 2007

in Des Moines, Iowa

**Cousins Vanessa and Ken Braddock (pictured at right)
Have graciously offered to host our next family reunion.
They have already reserved a wonderful recreational facility
for our fabulous annual event.
More details to follow in upcoming issues of ¿...y la familia?**



The 2006 Family Reunion in Georgia was a huge success! Relive the moments that were captured on film and in photos by ordering the **2006 Family Reunion DVD**.

Interested in seeing some old movie footage depicting relatives in San Francisco Bay Area in California beginning in the early 1950's and some early films taken of family in Puerto Rico? Order **The Old Family Movies Vol. 1 DVD** today. A sample of this DVD was shown at the 2006 reunion, and was a smash hit.

In addition, you can order the beautiful tribute to Olga that Carlos created for Olga's "Celebration of Life" service. This is a must-have for anyone who knew and loved my sister!

Finally, you can still order keepsake DVDs of the 2004 and 2005 family reunions (in South Carolina and Puerto Rico, respectively).



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ORDER FORM

DVD	Qty	Total
2006 Family Reunion DVD—\$5.00 ea	_____	_____
2005 Family Reunion DVD— \$5.00 ea	_____	_____
2004 Family Reunion DVD— \$5.00 ea	_____	_____
Old Family Movies Vol. 1 — \$5.00 ea	_____	_____
DVD Tribute to Olga — \$5.00 ea	_____	_____
Subtotal		_____
Shipping		\$3.00
Total		_____

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State (Country): _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone #: (in case we have a question): _____ Email Address: _____

"¿...y la familia?"

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

Birthday Greetings

<i>Teena Warren (35) - Oct. 3</i>	<i>Vickie (Rivera) Cabán (42) - Oct. 23</i>	<i>Austin Miller (12) - Nov. 8</i>
<i>Christina Rivera (10) - Oct. 3</i>	<i>Brandi Klene (37) - Oct. 24</i>	<i>Neysa Rivera (16) - Nov. 12</i>
<i>Roxanna Rivera (36) - Oct. 6</i>	<i>Randy Pettit (51) - Oct. 27</i>	<i>Juan Meléndez (61) - Nov. 12</i>
<i>Eric J. Montalvo (29) - Oct. 7</i>	<i>Victoria Nicholson (67) - Oct. 28</i>	<i>Lilliana Charice Cruz (4) - Nov. 15</i>
<i>Ruben A. Quiñones (30) - Oct. 12</i>	<i>Madeline Rivera (40) - Oct. 28</i>	<i>Joseph T. Springer (10) - Nov. 15</i>
<i>Mike Shenker (30) - Oct. 12</i>	<i>Joanne McLaughlin (59) - Oct. 29</i>	<i>Esmeralda Rivera Delgado (2) - Nov. 16</i>
<i>Felipe René Rivera (23) - Oct. 13</i>	<i>Joshua Rambo (4) - Nov. 1</i>	<i>Carol (Medina) Wright (54) - Nov. 17</i>
<i>Lourdes Rivera (33) - Oct. 13</i>	<i>Julie Rivera (14) - Nov. 2</i>	<i>Michelle Cabán (18) - Nov. 17</i>
<i>Edwin J. Rivera (9) - Oct. 14</i>	<i>Alex Joel Rivera (11) - Nov. 2</i>	<i>Amanda Knox (18) - Nov. 22</i>
<i>Jackie (Correa) Eddy (42) - Oct. 15</i>	<i>Lisa Quiñones (30) - Nov. 3</i>	<i>John Feliciano (44) - Nov. 22</i>
<i>Sonia Rivera (32) - Oct. 15</i>	<i>Adalberto Rivera (23) - Nov. 5</i>	<i>Rose A. Segarra (6) - Nov. 23</i>
<i>Austin Rivera (12) - Oct. 17</i>	<i>Orlando Rivera (51) - Nov. 6</i>	<i>Hector L. Feliciano (57) - Nov. 26</i>
<i>Annalise L. Nicholson (4) - Oct. 17</i>	<i>Stephanie Feliciano (17) - Nov. 6</i>	<i>Edwin Rivera (52) - Nov. 27</i>
<i>Virginia T. Feliciano (17) - Oct. 21</i>	<i>Matthew Thompson (1) - Nov. 7</i>	<i>Carol Lee Rivera (46) - Nov. 27</i>
<i>Javier Rivera (35) - Oct. 18</i>	<i>Lydia N. Carrasquillo (27) - Nov. 7</i>	<i>Solimar Delgado (20) - Nov. 28</i>
<i>Sierra Campos (10) - Oct. 21</i>	<i>Rosa M. Rivera (83) - Nov. 8</i>	
<i>Tito Shenker (9) - Oct. 22</i>	<i>Joannie García (26) - Nov. 9</i>	

Anniversaries



*Kimm and
Scott Hargraves (10) -
Oct. 18*

*Delia (Rivera) and
David L. Finch (46) -
Nov. 26*