

"...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 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!*

RAÚL RIVERA

1941-2009

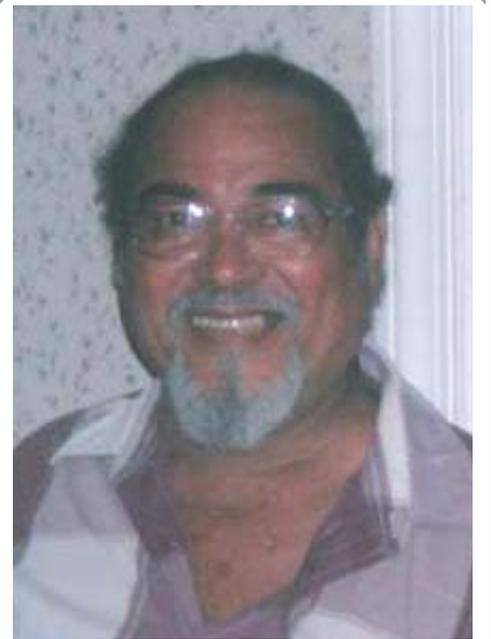
After years of battling with debilitating arthritis and then kidney disease which resulted from the strong pain and anti-inflammatory medications he had to take, our dear cousin Raúl Rivera Sevilla passed away on July 27, 2009 in Gainesville, Florida.

Born in Ponce, Puerto Rico, on December 20, 1941, Raúl was the third child of Sinforiano (Guar) Rivera Cruz and Elena Sevilla. He married Julia Vázquez and they had three children—Raulito, Madeline and Catherine. Later on he also had daughter Vanessa from his union with Jackeline González.

Sweet and shy, and with a heart of gold, Raúl was a favorite brother, cousin, uncle, and friend to many of us in the extended Rivera clan. He often put aside his own physical problems to care for his ailing Tío Oscar, with a quiet sense of duty and love that was his trademark characteristic.

The picture on this page was from the 2006 family reunion in Carrollton, Georgia. Cousin Mary Lillian Pérez said that he loved that reunion and had such a good time there because there were so many relatives there and everyone was extra warm and affectionate. It was Olga's farewell reunion, and our heartstrings were pulled taut, so we were all seeking more bonding and closeness. Raúl loved nothing more than being surrounded by his family. He was a wonderful man, and we all miss him.

(See more pictures on page 3)



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I Remember... ¿...y la familia?

By Norma I. Pettit

I just got through booking a flight to Nebraska. I'm going to visit cousin Kathy (Merritt) Caffey for a few days from October 30th to November 2nd. I'm really looking forward to the visit and a chance to see Seward in a different light. The last time I was there (which was also the first time) was when Auntie Anita Merritt passed away in June of 1998 and Joi and I flew out for the funeral. This will be for a fun get-together this time, and during a different season of the year. Kathy says that Seward is a Halloween town and that there will be a lot of things going on.

So that got me to thinking about the time that Olga and I met at Lyon's Restaurant in Davis, halfway between her Martinez home and my Placerville home, to reminisce and collaborate on one of the first "I Remember" columns. We laughed so hard as we remembered this story; I'm sure we drew attention to ourselves from the other patrons in the restaurant. It was printed in the October 1997 issue of "...y la familia?" and I am going to reprint it here. That was twelve whole years ago, and I think after a dozen years I am entitled to repeat a story. ☺ It was such a family favorite in the García household when we were growing up!

René's Initiation to Halloween

By Olga Smith and Norma Pettit



Cousin René Rivera, who came to live with us for a year when he was seventeen, hadn't been in San Francisco long and wasn't familiar with the Halloween tradition of dressing up and going trick-or-treating...

It was early in the evening on a mid-October night of 1957, and Mom had been looking through an old trunk in the "cuartito" in the basement of our house on 22nd Avenue. In the trunk she kept old dresses, shawls, scarves, and other articles that could be used for Halloween costumes. Olga was with her. René, Ruben and Norma were upstairs.

She found an old gorilla mask that Ruben had used when he was very small—probably for his first time out trick-or-treating. There was also an old fur coat hanging up in the *cuartito*, like the kind the college students used to wear back in the 1920's. Mom put on the coat and mask, and on a sudden whim, went out the garage door, and up the stairs to the front door, instructing Olga to stay below and out of sight. She rang the doorbell, and René opened the door without first looking through the little window as he was supposed to. As he opened the door, Mom started pushing against it. Frightened, René pushed back on the door in an effort to close it again. But Mom pushed harder, trying to get in, and René cried out in alarm, "*Mira, que hay una vieja que quiere entrar y no la quiero dejar!*" ("There's an old lady trying to get in and I won't let her!") Mom didn't say a word, but she was laughing silently, almost convulsed with mirth.

After a while, René realized that it was his fun-loving aunt playing a trick on him. We all had a good laugh at poor René's expense!

Payback Time!

Some days later, René wanted to go downtown, and Mom told him to take Olga with him. When they returned to the house, René was inspired with a sudden scheme of retaliation. Before ringing the doorbell, he picked up Olga in his arms. With his young cousin lying limply in his arms, he stood waiting for Mom to answer the door. When Mom saw them like that on the doorstep, her first thought was that something had happened to Olga and that René, not knowing how to speak enough English to ask for help, had carried the unconscious girl all the way home in his arms. While she was still standing there in shock, registering the scene before her with unbelieving eyes, René laughed and Olga jumped down from his arms.

"¡Esto es para pagarte por la que me hiciste!" ("This is to pay you back for the trick you played on me!")

It may have taken Mom a while to get over her fright, and she probably didn't like the joke, but she admitted that he had gotten her good, and had indeed paid her back for the trick she had played on him. As we were growing up, she loved to recount this story. It became a family favorite.



Family members rallied around Raúl's as the end drew near for him. In the photo on the left, his wife, Julia, and son, Raulito, are at his bedside.



These three pictures were taken at Raúl's funeral. In the photo at top left, Raúl's daughter, Kathy is in the orange shirt, and in the second picture, his daughter, Madeline is in the blue blouse. Raúl's brothers brought his favorite yellow maracas from Puerto Rico and sang to him during the funeral as a tribute to his love of music.

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 two years 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.
- Achilles George Nicholson was born in Elias, Greece 117 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 two years ago and was laid to rest on October 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 Encracia 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



Uncle Isidro Rivera was a paratrooper in World War II, and he and Auntie Rosita waited a total of nine years after meeting before they finally tied the knot. Auntie Rosita traveled to San Francisco and stayed with Auntie Marie until the war ended and he came home at the end of September of 1945. He had promised her that they would marry within three days of his return, and they did, on October 2nd.

¿...y la familia?

Student News

*With great happiness,
Evelyn and William M. Roig
are proud to announce
the graduation of their daughter*

Wilma E Roig
with a
Bachelor's Degree in Architecture
from
Carnegie Mellon University

*in a ceremony held on
May 16, 2009
in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania*



Other Family News

The "I Remember" book is coming out soon! It will be filled with stories from years gone by, many of which have been previously published in this newsletter. It's not too late to get your favorite family stories and memories written down and sent to me by e-mail or by "snail mail", in English or in Spanish. I am going to compile these into a hardbound book and also use them in upcoming issues of the newsletter.

You're going to be sorry if you miss this opportunity to get your name in print! Send my your story today.

El libro "Yo Me Recuerdo" va a salir pronto! Estará lleno de cuentos de años pasados, muchos de los cuales ya han sido publicados en este periódico. Todavía estás a tiempo si quieres que tu cuento de familia favorito esté incluido en este libro. Me pueden mandar sus cuentos por e-mail o por correo regular, en inglés o en español. Yo voy a juntar estos cuentos en un libro de carátula dura, y también los usaré en futuras ediciones del periódico.

¡Se van a arrepentir si pierden esta oportunidad de ser publicados en un libro! Envíenme sus cuentos hoy.

¿...y la familia?



Wedding News

Congratulations to Rosanie García and José Jasad Santiago on the celebration of their marriage on July 11, 2009.

Rosanie is the eldest daughter of Cousin Annie Meléndez and her husband, Wilson García, of Peñuelas, Puerto Rico.

On behalf of the entire Rivera family, we extend exuberant congratulations to the happy couple, along with sincere wishes for a lifetime of love and joy.



Cousin Meryem Merritt and her grandson, Austin Miller, took a trip to see her sister, Marlynn at Bailey's Harbor on Lake Michigan, where Marlynn and Paul regularly vacation. All Austin wanted to do was go fishing, so Meryem made his wish come true. She chartered a boat so that he could experience something he had never done before—deep fresh water fishing on Lake Michigan. As you can see from the photos, the expedition was a success. Says



Meryem of Austin: "He is a gem in my heart and couldn't be a better person. He keeps his grandma entertained and laughing all the time."

The trip took place in July, and besides fishing, the group enjoyed cherry picking, bike riding in a national park, and general sightseeing in that gorgeous, scenic area. The only downside of their trip was that Meryem and Marlynn's sister, Kathy, was unable to make the trip due to her health.



Circa Vintage Store Opens in Florida



Cousin Carol (Medina) Wright's new store had its opening on September 1st. Carol's sister, Rosa Meddaugh, reports that the store had a huge attendance on opening day and a steady pace of clientele since then.

Located in Village Square Shops, 243 US Hwy 1, Suite B, Tequesta, Florida, Circa Vintage sells vintage apparel, plus upscale current consignments of clothing, home décor and accessories. They will also be hosting monthly wine and cheese events. The store manager is Carol's own niece, Angelica Stickle, newly graduated from college. She can be seen in the picture below left.

Here is an excerpt from the store's website:

"The emphasis of our shoppe is on upscale consignments of high-end designer contemporary apparel as well as vintage apparel. We want to cater to the woman who wants to express herself and break away from the ordinary. We will offer consignments of classic styling with fresh, contemporary collections from all over the world. Our shoppe is chic and swanky and is an eclectic blend of old and new treasures for your shopping pleasure. We believe in going "Green". We're encouraging all of our clients to bring their high-end designer items to us and while we put green in their pockets, we're going green by reselling some amazing designer fashions. We have a gentleman's corner that is getting some buzz."



Here is an updated photo of Joi's flamboyán "forest", as she calls it. While in Puerto Rico this past June for the family reunion, we stopped at an oceanside restaurant at the western end of Ponce. There were many fallen seed pods underneath a beautiful flamboyán tree next to the restaurant, and Joi and I each took a few pods home. Mine never germinated, but Joi's seeds apparently love the Colorado climate!

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A beautiful stained glass bathroom window that was designed and created by our talented cousin Meryem Merritt.



¿...y la familia?

Meet Your Relative

Francheska Marie Rivera López

Francheska was born on February 4, 1991 in Ponce, Puerto Rico, to Joshua Rivera and Marisol López. Francheska, known by the nickname, “Cheska”, lost her father at the young age of five, and that was a very difficult loss since she was so small and did not understand what happened. Her message to her father is, “Daddy, I love you. I know that you are better now with my dear God in Heaven.”



After that great loss she began to battle with epilepsy, which was diagnosed when she was nine years old. There were some gas leaks in her school which triggered chronic epileptic attacks. Despite all this, from a young age, Cheska has excelled in sports, especially basketball, and also has been an outstanding student. She was in the honor roll in grades six, nine and twelve. With her basketball team, *Las Ponceñas*, she has won many championships, and has had the opportunity to represent Puerto Rico in a competition in Orlando, Florida.

Francheska gives God the glory for her academic and sports achievements and for protecting and helping her. She praises God that she was accepted at the Catholic University in Ponce, and because of her grade point average, she was awarded five academic scholarships in addition to an athletic scholarship. She also is grateful to God for the love and support given to her by her family. She has a stepfather that she says is like her dad, and he has taken loving care of her and has been there for her no matter the time of day or the type of problem that she has had. “He has been with me in the hospital for days, and he has

a lot of faith that I am going to make my dreams come true. I love him!!!” Of her grandparents, René and Titi Rivera, Cheska says, “They are wonderful! Really, Grandma is always there for me and Grandpa, too. He taught me to play the congas and a lot of instruments. He makes the best *domplines* in the world and Grandma makes the best *habichuelas*. I love them—they are the best grandparents in the world!”



Top right: Francheska with her parents on her third birthday.

Above left: Cheska is in Florida with her mom for a basketball competition.

Left: Francheska and her family at her brother's graduation last May.

Right: At her class night.



“¿...y la familia?”

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

Birthday Greetings

Teena Warren (38) - Oct. 3

Christine Rivera (13) - Oct. 3

Roxanna Rivera (39) - Oct. 6

Eric J. Montalvo (32) - Oct. 7

Ruben A. Quiñones (33) -
Oct. 12

Mike Shenker (33) - Oct. 12

Felipe René Rivera (26) -
Oct. 13

Lourdes Rivera (36) - Oct. 13

Edwin Joel Rivera (12) - Oct. 14

Jackie (Correa) Eddy (45) -
Oct. 15

Sonia Rivera (35) - Oct. 15

Austin Rivera (15) - Oct. 17

Annalise L. Nicholson (7) -
Oct. 17

Javier Rivera (38) - Oct. 18

Virginia T. Feliciano (20) -
Oct. 21

Sierra Campos (13) - Oct. 21

Tito Shenker (12) - Oct. 22

Vicky (Rivera) Cabán (45) -
Oct. 23

Brandi Klene (40) - Oct. 24

Randy Pettit (54) - Oct. 27

Victoria Nicholson (70) -
Oct. 28

Madeline Rivera (43) -
Oct. 28

Joanne McLaughlin (62) -
Oct. 29

Julie Rivera (17) - Nov. 2

Alex Joel Rivera (14) - Nov. 2

Lisa Quiñones (33) - Nov. 3

Adalberto Rivera (26) - Nov. 5

Orlando Rivera (54) - Nov. 6

Stephanie Feliciano (20) -
Nov. 6

Matthew Thompson (4) -
Nov. 7

Lydia N. Carrasquillo (30) -
Nov. 7

Rosa M. Rivera (86) - Nov. 8

Austin Miller (15) - Nov. 8

Joannie García (29) - Nov. 9

Neysa Rivera (19) - Nov. 12

Juan Meléndez (64) - Nov. 12

Lilliana Charice Cruz (7) -
Nov. 15

Joseph T. Springer (13) -
Nov. 15

Esmeralda Rivera Delgado (5) -
Nov. 16

Carol (Medina) Wright (57) -
Nov. 17

Michelle (Cabán) Su'a (21) -
Nov. 17

Amanda Knox (22) - Nov. 22

John Feliciano (47) - Nov. 22

Rose A. Segarra (9) - Nov. 23

Marcantonio Williams Jr. (2) -
Nov. 25

Kaylee Noemí Valentín (1)
Nov. 25

Hector L. Feliciano (59) -
Nov. 26

Edwin Rivera (55) - Nov.
27

Solimar Delgado (22) -
Nov. 28

Anniversaries

Kimm and Scott
Hargraves (13) -
Oct. 18

Yamil and Bianca
Williams (2) -
Oct. 20

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

Alicia (Rivera) and
Mike Tokar (2) -
Oct. 27