

"...y la familia?"

VOLUME 15, ISSUE 5

APR./MAY '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 art-
work*

*Original poetry
Vignettes on
your imme-
diate family*

*Favorite family
recipes*

*Cute things your
kids have
said*

*Funny stories
Prayer Requests*

Edwin Rivera Sevilla, 1953-2011

On February 19th, after a courageous battle against cancer, 57-year-old Edwin Rivera Sevilla passed away.

Born on November 27, 1953, in Ponce, Puerto Rico, Edwin was the youngest son of Sinfioriano (Guar) Rivera and Elena Sevilla. He was preceded in death by two of his brothers, Roberto and Raúl in 2009, and is survived by siblings René, Milagros, Lilliam, Luz, and Heriberto (Papo).

He also leaves his wife of 27 years, Felcita Soto, four children—Edwin Rivera Ramos, George Rivera Ramos, Edwin Rivera Soto, and Karen Rivera Soto—and six grandchildren.

A loving family man, Edwin also had a passion for Puerto Rican salsa music and loved playing the congas. This photo of him was used on the T-shirts printed up for the "rumba" held for him and also for his funeral.

See more photos on page 3.



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¿...y la familia?

Messages of Love

..just a few, although a great many expressed their sorrow in e-mails and on Facebook.

Mi Tío Querido

(A song written by Awilda Rivera)

Tú te vas sin decir nada
Tú me dejas, me abandonas
Yo que iba a confesarlo
Iba serte sincera
Y ya no puedo hacerlo

Tú no sabes que te pienso
Yo sé solo lo que siento
Y, ahora me arrepiento
No haber dicho te quiero
Decirlo ya no puedo

Y el corazón se me destroza de nada
Con la razón de que te vas, tío amado,
Lástima que no te quedaras
Para decirte cuanto te amaba

(Coro)

... *Y el corazón se me destroza de nada*

Al saber que te marchabas y me dejabas
Lástima que no te quedaras
Para decirte cuanto te amaba

(Coro)

A partir de hoy te extrañaré
Y en mi recuerdo te llevaré

(Coro)

Al saber que te marchabas
Y me dejabas tu mi tío amado

(Coro)

A partir de hoy te extrañaré
Y en mis recuerdos te llevaré

(Coro)

Mi tío Edwin, mi tío querido
Cuando viajaba tú me esperabas

(Coro)

Lástima que no te quedaras para decirte
Que eres tú mi tío amado

(Coro)

Mi tío querido, ya te me fuiste
Nunca te dije cuanto te adoraba
Hasta siempre mi tío amado

The last *bembé*, for my kid brother, Edwin, as he wanted, *la última rumba*, will be tonight at the funeral parlor.

It is well known That Christ is the last answer to your problems, just extend your hands and He will extend His, just as simple as that—the truth that we always look for, the real thing.

Marina Ramos: I am very sorry to hear about cousin Edwin. He was a great spirit. Myself and the Barnes family will always remember the kindness he showed us during our family visits. Edwin's presence will be missed.



At René's house in June of 2009

Papi, tantas imágenes me llegan a la cabeza cuando digo tu nombre. Parece que sin ti en mi vida las cosas nunca serán igual. Que pasa ahora con esos días en que tú me llenabas de tus caricias, tus abrazos y amor. Recuerdos que vivirán siempre en mi corazón. ¿A quien le pido consejos cuando necesite guía en mi vida? Si pudiera virar las manecillas del reloj, lo haría aunque fuera solamente para oír tu voz.

La muerte es parte de la vida, nadie se escapa, pero Dios necesitaba otro ángel y ya tú tenías la experiencia. Todo lo que hago, y todo lo que haré, lo realizaré como la persona que tú formaste. Sé que te sentiré cuando me levante en la mañana y tus consejos

estarán conmigo siempre que tenga que tomar una decisión. Tu has estado en mi vida desde mi primer respiro y ahora voy solo sin ti. Amor yo no tengo que buscar porque mucho tú me has dado. Querido padre, ahora es tu momento de gozar tu merecido premio al estar con Dios. Siéntete en paz ya que tu amor continuará y lo que me enseñaste será enseñado a los míos y tu amor y tus consejos vivirán por siempre.

Tu hijo, Edwincito



Hoy es domingo, 4, y sólo fue ayer, o más que eso, algunos días, y lloroso no puedo dejar de pensar en mi hermano, Edwin. Pasó a otro nivel; no sé si es cierto o una falacia, pero aún yo estando presente en su último adiós, es para mi un dream que no puedo despertar y no quiero ni pensar que esto es una realidad que tarde o temprano tengo que aceptar. Sólo la fe y la esperanza de que está en un mejor lugar, me hace recordar esos grandes momentos que siempre pasamos juntos, momentos inolvidables para siempre. Son tantos los momentos de alegría que los puedo recordar todos y cada uno de ellos, siempre de mucha risa y aventuras en diversos lugares de este planeta, como por ejemplo, Boston, Saint Croix, New York, Saint Thomas, Mississippi, Alabama, y Florida. Trabajamos juntos en muchos proyectos y éramos inseparables. Es por eso que es muy notable el vacío en mi alma. Edwin, hermano mío te extraño mucho.

With great love, René

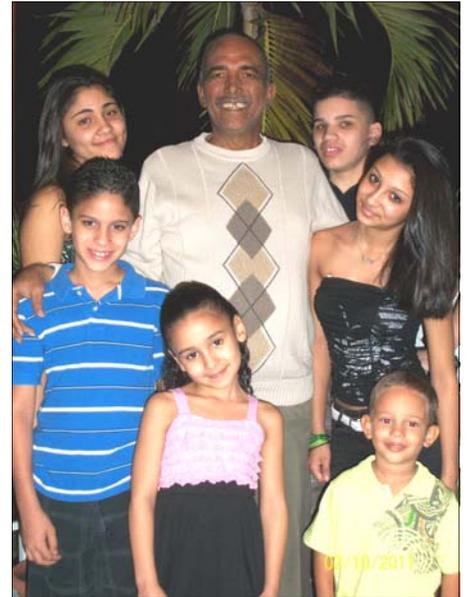
“¿...y la familia?”

Edwin Rivera Sevilla with the loves of his life



← Standing: Edwin Rivera Soto, George Rivera Ramos, Edwin Rivera Ramos, Karen Rivera Soto. Seated, of course, are Edwin and Felita.

Edwin with his six grandchildren. → This was taken about a week before he passed.



*“Yo soy Sevilla de Ponce,
Salsero de corazón,
Se los dije a todos,
El 19, mi último rumbón.”*



The Rivera Sevilla siblings from youngest to oldest: Edwin, Papo (Heriberto), Luz, Lilliam, Milagros, Raúl, Roberto, and René



When it became evident that the end was drawing near, Edwin requested a “rumbón” and one was scheduled for Feb. 19th with a big group of local musicians. As he weakened, the date was pushed up a week with a smaller group of musicians. Edwin passed away on the 19th and received “el rumbón grande” in Heaven.

¿...y la familia?

Meet Your Relative

Greetings of peace to all known and unknown family members who share the blood traits which unite us.

Unbeknownst to most, I am but one leaf in the many branches of our family tree. Fortunately for me, I've been blessed with the knowledge of this tree by our beautiful relative Mrs. Norma Pettit, who in her search and interest into our genealogy, has found her way into my world, bringing me much joy in this lonely life of mine.

Allow me the honor and privilege to introduce myself. I, Juan González, am the grandson of Oscar Cruz García. Grandpa and Grandma Paula Rivera begot my father, Oscar [Oscalito]. My father was adopted by Paula's second husband, Papa Nano, hence the last name González. However, I've been made aware of my ancestry through Aunt Norma (Oscar's sister) and embrace this opportunity to acknowledge and learn more about family who've been absent in my life.

Aunt Norma has been and continues to be an angel. Her work and efforts to reach all corners of the globe seeking family ties is commendable. I applaud her immensely! Few would take the time or initiative to bear such a task, which is why she stands out amongst us all as a savior, one who, in her persistence, accepts this challenge, connecting the pieces of this puzzle that makes up our family. With her newsletter, she reaches out to us and links us together, giving us the opportunity to share life's experiences. So much so, that in sharing not only my blood with my relatives, I've learned to share the pains as well. Allow me to send my condolences to all those who still grieve for Raul, Roberto, Francheska and Edwin. Although I've never met them, I too grieve because I never had the privilege of meeting them. I, too, feel the loss. May God bless their souls and allow them an honored place by His throne!

So, mi familia! At first I felt reluctant to write and express myself in this newsletter for fear that I might be rejected or pitied because of my present circumstances. You see, I am a prisoner in the State of New York. I sat and thought of all those family members whom I would never meet if I refused to share my experience and honestly, I felt selfish and ashamed. So in light of my tribulations, with the urge and need to reach out, so I could become aware and familiar with familia, I set aside my insecurities and send this introduction in hopes that it would arouse your curiosity and instill a need or an urge to learn about me. I've traveled a long journey. At one point I questioned and doubted God. I used these prisons as Universities where I sought education and learned to feed my mind. I used my conviction as my salvation. I've found answers to my questions and have extinguished my doubts about God. Physically confined, I can say that I'm spiritually free. Free of the misconceptions and the indoctrinations. Free of the ignorance which shackles us to the chains of hopelessness. God has blessed me with health and with a beautiful, supportive family that stands by me even after two decades of sorrow. Included in my blessings is Aunt Norma, who has found her way into my dark world, an angel in the midst of this Hell, to bring me the Good News, that I'm not alone. That I am part of a big family that extends itself like a tree with roots, bearing fruit each and every day. She has given me, us, a means which can be used to correspond and intertwine. This newsletter gives us a voice. Can you hear me? I'd like to hear your voice echoing its way into the pages of future newsletters so we could become acquainted, be family. If permitted, I will continue to write and share my experiences. I'd like some feedback from those silent voices that need to be acknowledged. I know all about loneliness and the need to speak out. Here's your chance, let's use it!

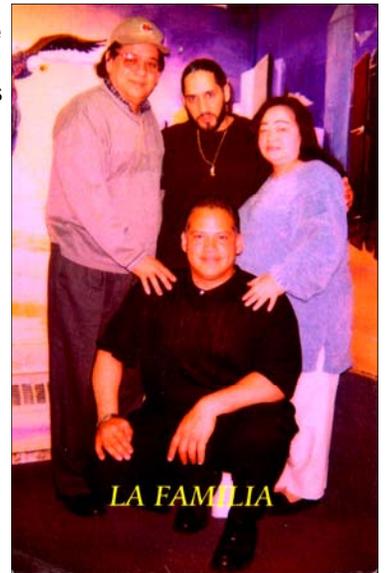
Le pido la bendición a todos los ancianos de la familia y que Dios me los bendiga a todos.

I leave you with this poem as food for thought so you could ponder and relate.

Journey

As I passed through strong rains and windy nights
Crossed through storms of ice and snow
Climbed rocky mountains and treaded forked roads and crooked paths
I've been pushed back by fierce winds
Drenched and thrown around like a leaf in the turbulence of life's turmoil.
Yes, I've fallen along the way
Have been caged like an animal, living in darkness, forgotten!
I've carried my hidden scars in the recesses of my soul for too long.
But throughout my pains, throughout my hardships and tribulations
I've managed to hold on, to get back up,
As life reminded me over and over again
That I'm on a journey to find myself and find God!

—Taino



Top pic: Oscalito y Myrna, 1966
Bottom: Oscalito, Myrna and Oscar Jr. with Juan on 2-2-03.

A Page Out of Our Family History...

Los Maldonados de Guayanilla

By Norma I. (García) Pettit

Florencio Rivera Maldonado, of Guayanilla, Puerto Rico, was the father of Adela, Oscar, María, Sinfioriano (“Guar”), Elena, Anita, Nery, Isidro, Angélica (“Tita”), and Delia. Florencio’s father was Manuel Alejo Rivera Maldonado and his mother was María Dominga Maldonado Rivera. As you know, the first surname is the paternal one and the second surname is the maternal one. The inversion of Manuel and María Dominga’s Maldonado surname is owed to the fact that they were cousins; he was the son of Cipriana Maldonado and she was the daughter of Felipe Maldonado. Cipriana and Felipe were siblings, two of the 16 children of Antonio Maldonado Caraballo and Juana Santiago Rivera. There are several other documented marriages between cousins in the Maldonado family, examples of endogamy (the practice of marrying within a certain ethnic group, class or social group) that kept the Maldonado landholdings within the family.

The Maldonado roots in Puerto Rico can be traced back to the 16th century. In an article in the Puerto Rican Genealogical Society’s magazine, *Hereditas* (vol.8, num.2, 2007), author Otto Sievens Irizarry writes that the Maldonados of the 16th century were considered to be of upper class and distinction. The Maldonado name was well established in the areas of Arecibo, Utuado, and Adjuntas, and soon spread out into the regions of Ponce, Peñuelas and Guayanilla. In fact, I also have Maldonado on my mother’s side of the family, which is from Adjuntas—my grandmother’s name was María de los Santos Maldonado Torres—and I am currently tracing that line back to see where it connects with the Maldonado family from Utuado. As I recently learned, Adjuntas was once part of Utuado.

The aforementioned Antonio Maldonado Caraballo (great-grandfather of Florencio Rivera) was born in Utuado in 1763, a mountain town that his grandfather, Lope Maldonado de León helped found (Lope was also one of Utuado’s first mayors). Several of his 16 children, including Remigio, Cipriana, and Felipe, ended up settling in Guayanilla.

Remigio’s first wife was María Mercedes Rivera Rivera, the daughter of Francisco Rivera and María Celedonia Rivera, and they had 15 children, 12 of whom lived to be adults. María Mercedes died on November 30, 1855 in Barrio Pasto of Guayanilla, at the age of 55. Five months later, on April 26, 1956, Remigio remarried. He and his second wife, María Bonifacia Ruiz Irizarry, had nine children that lived to adulthood. In an 1840 record of landowners of Guayanilla, Remigio Maldonado is documented as owning 260 acres of land, and on July 28, 1848, he acquired another 400 acre estate. (Irizarry, 2007)

Remigio Maldonado served as Commissioner of Barrio Pasto, but he had the impediment of not knowing how to write or sign his name. So, in the file for his son, Manuel de Jesús, to marry his cousin, Rita de la Cruz Maldonado, the priest from Peñuelas—Juan Guillermo Jordán— had to sign the paternal consent because Remigio didn’t know how.

Remigio’s brother, Felipe, was born about 1802 in Peñuelas and died on November 6, 1861 in Guayanilla. He married María Aplolinaria Rivera, on February 10, 1831 in Peñuelas. The couple moved to Guayanilla, where all of their children were born. They had five children that I know of: Zoilo, Juan Tomás, **María Dominga**, Justo Pastor, and José de la Cruz. José de la Cruz married his cousin—one of Remigio’s daughters—María Mercedes Maldonado, on December 7, 1872. When cousins married, they had to receive a special dispensation from the Catholic church.

Remigio’s sister, Cipriana, married José de los Santos Rivera, who—as the son of Francisco Rivera and María Celedonia Rivera—was Remigio’s brother-in-law. So Remigio and José de los Santos were double brothers-in-law. This gets confusing, doesn’t it?

Cipriana and José de los Santos were the parents of seven children that I am aware of: María Matilde, María Mónica, María Moncerrate, **Manuel Alejo**, Teodosia, Pedro Alcántara, and Victoriano. Manuel Alejo married his cousin María Dominga, and as the parents of Florencio Rivera, became the paternal grandparents of Adela, Oscar, María, Sinfioriano (“Guar”), Elena, and Anita.

Guess Who This Baby Is?

The answer is found on page 6.



At this time in our family history...

- *Pedro José Rivera Maldonado was born on April 3, 1875. He was a brother of our family patriarch, “Papa Flor.” Pedro only lived for 15 months, though, dying on July 10, 1876.*
- *168 years ago, on April 13th, María Inés Vilá and Marcelino de la Cruz were married. They were my father’s maternal great-grandparents. María’s father, Pedro Vilá, was born in Cataluña, Spain.*
- *On April 22, 1946, my parents, Oscar C. García and Ana M. López, were married in San Francisco.*
- *Florencio Rivera (Tío Guar) died on April 22, 1986.*
- *April 23rd makes sixteen years since my father, Oscar, passed away.*
- *Máximo Cruz, my father’s maternal grandfather, married his second wife, Genara Maldonado, on May 5, 1909. He was widowed from his first wife, María Engracia García.*
- *Jesús Cruz Maldonado was born on May 20, 1896. He was my father’s uncle, the son of Máximo Cruz and his second wife, Genara Maldonado. I met this man when he was about 74 or 75 years old. I was with my father “debajo del Acueducto de Ponce”. . . We were on our way to visit Tío Guar when we encountered Tío Jesús, who was very happy to tell us that he was learning to read and write. You are never too old to learn!*
- *Elena Sevilla de Rivera (Tío Guar’s wife) would have been 95 years old on May 22nd.*
- *María de los Santos Cruz, youngest sister of María Engracia García, was born on May 23, 1859.*

¿...y la familia?

Other Family News



Frankie and Amy Valentín are the proud parents of a new baby boy, Jayden Daniel, born on April 14th at 1:08 p.m. He weighed 6 lbs. 7 oz. and measured 18 inches. Jayden and big sister Kaylee are the grandchildren of Mary Lillian Pérez.



Hayli Frosheiser's story took second place in the state of Nebraska in a very prestigious writing contest called the Bess Streeter Aldrich Foundation.

"They have done this for nine years," explains her grandmother, Kathy (Merritt) Caffey. "It was unusual in that the first place winner was a senior from Seward and the second place winner was Hayli, of course. Her teacher was thrilled that he had entered her story in the contest. It was unusual that a freshman would place at all. The story was the same one that she did before— "Crime and Compassion". It just placed first in the Women's Chamber of Commerce contest and second in State in the Bess Aldrich Contest. Bess Streeter Aldrich is a famous author of short stories and novels from Nebraska. I'm sure a lot of people have never heard of her, but there is a Bess Streeter Aldrich museum in her home town and Hayli's story is included in the anthology that is on sale there. We have a copy."

"They had a lovely banquet and the winners got to present portions of their stories from the adult to the middle school level. Hayli was the only high school student there and I will say she did a much better job of introducing not only herself but in giving a great theme to her story before she read her parts. The adults were boring, but she, being herself, was animated and interesting. It was a good time and were we glad we took the time and went. I forgot my camera (????) so I just have one off my cell phone it is kind of blurry. She will be a soloist at church on Sunday May 22nd. We are kind of thrilled about that, too."

Cousin Carol (Medina) Wright was recently nominated as an Executive Woman of the Palm Beach's Women in Leadership for 2011. She will be honored on May 5th at a recognition banquet at the Kravitz Center, which is a super exclusive location, and they will have close to 700 guests. Carol says she feels really humbled and honored to be recognized as a small business owner.

Her Circa Vintage Consignment boutique has really taken off and it has been featured just recently in Palm Beach Illustrated Magazine and will appear in an upcoming issue of Florida Weekly. Olivia Newton-John was in Carol's store not too long ago, and her friend from Los Angeles loved it so much that she did a feature online article about Circa Vintage on her online magazine. See it at luxecoliving.com/luxeco-style/circa-advintage-shop-green-2/. I checked it out and it is a great article (and long!). Great publicity!!

Carol adds that she now has six fabulous employees and that her online store is doing amazingly well.

It's nice to have some *good* news to report about in our family newsletter. Congratulations, Carol, and keep up the good work!

Cousin René Rivera shares that they were invited to go to the Catholic University to watch a basketball game against the University of Mayagüez in honor of his granddaughter, Francheska, who passed away on January 14th. Before the game started, all the girls on the team were wearing T-shirts with Cheska's picture on it—the same picture that appears on the front page of the February issue of ¿...y la familia?" The University president, Dr. Ochoa, and the whole basketball team gathered to present Cheska's mom with a picture of her with her team and of her with the president, and they gave her a new basketball uniform with Cheska's number 3 on it. This was recorded for TV and radio. It was a very gratifying moment.

The baby singing in the tub on page 5 is Hayli Frosheiser, granddaughter of Kathy (Merritt) Caffey.

Family *¿...y la familia?* Reunion



The 2011 Family Reunion is rapidly approaching. The Rivera family are excited to be hosting this year's reunion at our home south of Indianapolis, IN on **June 24 – 26. It will be a wonderful time to re-connect with family members from all over!**

Hosted by Carlos and Garnet Rivera
4884 Krestridge Court East
Bargersville, IN 46106-8322
Tel. (317) 422-1685
Email: carlos@ylafamilia.org

**Please help by
pre-registering!**

We encourage you to pre-register so as to get a count of expected attendance for planning purposes. Please visit www.ylafamilia.org/reunion_registration/pre-register.php to register online or send an email to carlos@ylafamilia.org with your name and the names of others coming with you.

REUNION PLANS

Details of the 3 day event are posted online together with maps to hotels and reunion locations. For your convenience, some of the information is reproduced here.

Friday June 24, 2011

BBQ Cookout at home of Chad & Brandi Strain
1790 Dockside Drive, Greenwood, IN
Tel. (317) 300-1821

Directions from hotel area: Drive west on Southport (or County Line Road or Main Street depending on your hotel location) to SR 135 (also called Meridian St). Turn left (South) on SR 135 and go to the stop light at Olive Branch Rd. Turn right on Olive Branch and go to stop sign at Berry Road. Left at Berry Road and go to the stop sign at Brockton Manor S Drive. Turn left and take the first right at Atherton Lane. Go to the stop sign at Dockside Dr. The Strain's home will be on your left at the corner of Atherton and Dockside.

Saturday June 25, 2011

- Recreation/Swimming, 1pm - Pool Open at Chad & Brandi's home
- Banquet 6 - 10pm - home of Carlos & Garnet Rivera - See Location

Directions from hotel area to Carlos & Garnet's home: Drive west on Southport (or County Line Road or Main Street depending on your hotel location) to SR 135 (also called Meridian St). Turn left (South) on SR 135 and go to the stop light at Whiteland Road (also called W 500N). Turn right. Drive approximately 2.5 miles on Whiteland Rd to SR 144. You will cross over SR 144. After crossing over SR144, go approximately 0.3 miles taking the second left (Kerrington Proper subdivision). Drive straight back, around the roundabout to the stop sign at Krestridge Court. The Rivera house at 4884 Krestridge Ct. East will be in front of you to the left of the subdivision section sign.

Sunday June 26, 2011

Breakfast Brunch—9am - 11:30am - home of Carlos & Garnet Rivera

Recommended hotels include:

*Holiday Inn Express Hotel (see picture of room at right)
1180 Wilson Drive, Greenwood, IN
(317) 881-0600

Candlewood Suites Extended Stay Hotel
1190 N. Graham Road, Greenwood, IN
(317) 882-4300

Hilton Garden Inn Indianapolis South / Greenwood
5255 Noggle Way, Indianapolis, IN
(317) 888-4814



**Generally a favorite place for the family to stay. ☺*

“¿...y la familia?”

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

Birthday Greetings

Michael Barnes (48) - April 1	Dalie Delgado (19) - April 23	Roberto I. Rivera (60) - May 16
Emilio Maldonado (80) - April 1	Naiome Campos (7) - April 23	Ryan Reinke (15) - May 12
Michael A. Feliciano (45) - April 3	Raymond L. Cavino (12) - April 25	Helen Correa-González (49) - May 12
Catherine Rivera (34) - April 5	Hayli Frosheiser (15) - April 26	Alexis Valentín (26) - May 17
Dustin Cavino (20) - April 4	Daniel Campos (17) - April 27	Kirstin Frosheiser (39) - May 21
Wilma E. Roig (26) - April 6	Luz E. Sánchez (5) - April 28	Riley Hargraves (9) - May 22
Marlynn (Merritt) Krause (63) - April 6	George Rivera (38) - April 29	Heriberto Rivera (24) - May 26
Tiana J. Rivera (16) - April 6	Mirra Noemí Quiñones (1) - May 1	Ada I. Rivera (34) - May 26
Ana V. Pettit (26) - April 8	Nicholas Rivera (21) - May 5	George Nicholson (66) - May 27
Tom Smith (73) - April 13	Ted Reinke (74) - May 13	Lucas R. Pettit (25) - May 29
Elienith Dessus (23) - April 21	Isidro Rivera (92) - May 13	Stephanie (Krause) Thompson (34) - May 29
Emilio Meléndez (56) - April 21		Cristina Cruz (8) - May 30
Vic Stenroos (63) - April 22		

Anniversaries



Jana and Orlando Rivera (3)
April 12

Monica (Rivera) and
Mike Shenker (14)
May 10

Carmen (Feliciano) and
Maximino Carrasquillo (36)
May 16

Cathy (Rivera) and
Eric Montalvo (14)
May 24

James and Erika Frosheiser (4)
May 26

Marlynn (Merritt) and
Paul Krause (41)
May 30