

"...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 art-
work*

*Original poetry
Vignettes on
your imme-
diate family*

*Favorite family
recipes*

*Cute things your
kids have
said*

*Funny stories
Prayer Requests*

A Year in the Life of Hayli

By Kathleen (Merritt) Caffey

Hayli's year does not run from January to January as with most people. It runs from May to May; as in all things she travels her own path. This year she was blessed to see her mom married. It was a highlight of her life and she was so proud. Even better was the trip to Puerto Rico to celebrate the wedding and meet René and several other relatives. Being an only child she loves that she has such a large extended family and that she got to see Ponce where her great grandmother, Anita (Rivera) Merritt, lived as a child.

Hayli says she was blessed with a mom who knew how to do the right thing. When her mom and Jason moved to Lincoln, Hayli wanted to stay in Seward and continue at the same school with her friends and at the church she had grown up in. This allowed Hayli to continue with her worship team and excel in her academics and creativity.

I think creativity must run rampant in the Rivera family. We are all creative in some way. Hayli seems to have inherited a great deal of it, which she expresses in music, acting, writing, photography and art. She inherited a lot from her mom, Kristin Frosheiser, and her great-grandmother, Anita. Hayli's mom taught herself the art of recording music and Hayli has learned it as well.

This year has been a big year as she has broadened her horizons. Every summer for the past three years has started for Hayli by taking Prof. Kurt Van Kampen's Summer Chamber Music class. You have to audition for the class that he gives at Concordia University and they perform on the 4th of July and then again in August. She has learned so much from him and from the very first she has wanted to attend Concordia University because of the music department and art department in addition to the academics offered.. Prof Van Kampen heads the vocal music department and she fell in love with him as an instructor from the start because his students affect him so much he has tears in his eyes when they perform. He has the same feelings about music as she does. It is in the soul.

Hayli discovered music early on..at 18 months she was performing in my bedroom singing at the top of her lungs along with the animated film "Anastasia". We were lucky to catch this on film. One of my favorite pictures of Hayli as a tot is of her singing in the bathtub, using her toy shovel's handle as a microphone.



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I Remember... My Mother's Hands by Norma Pettit

I was rocking my sweet granddaughter, Mirra Noemí, and stroking her hair and arms while I sang to her. As I did, I couldn't help but compare my 60 year-old hands with her petal soft two-year-old skin. What a shocking difference! Then it hit me how very much my hands reminded me of my mother's hands, and all of a sudden my weathered and wrinkled skin took on a new beauty.

Mama's hands would stroke my hair, too, when as a child I'd get carsick riding on the bus with her in San Francisco. She'd give me a piece of hard candy from her purse and invite me to lay my head on her lap. The candy would alleviate the queasiness of my stomach and her hands smoothing my hair would soothe my distress.

Other times those same hands would rest briefly on my hot forehead to gauge whether or not I had a fever. I'm proud to say that this is a skill that she passed on to me, and which I used many a time on my own children.

Mama's hands stirred the pot rhythmically on the mornings that she made us Cream of Wheat for breakfast, the scraping of the spoon in the pot making a sound that will forever be etched in my memory. I find myself making the same motions to produce a similar sound when I make Cream of Wheat.

Recently I was hemming a pair of pants and had to measure the length that needed shortening. What did I use to measure? My fingers of course, just like I saw Mama do time and time again. Randy laughs at my measuring techniques, but it works! I measured "cuatro dedos" as I ironed a crease all the way around. Just look at that picture of my hand, with the shape of the nails and everything...that could have been Mom's hand!



Mom's hands were always busy. That's the way I always remember them...cooking, cleaning, sewing, gardening, painting, fixing things, washing dishes, hanging up clothes to dry on the line.... Even when she was playing her favorite game, Yahtzee, Mom's hands were working, because that's what she jokingly called playing Yahtzee. In Puerto Rico, when I'd go to Ponce to visit her, she'd ask, "¿Quieres trabajar?" ("Do you want to work?") and that was her secret way of asking me if I wanted to play Yahtzee.

All that work takes its toll on hands, but every little wrinkle is a badge of honor, and so if my hands look worn out next to my precious Mimi's baby skin, that's okay. I'm proud to say that my hands look like my mother's.

Mother's Day is coming up. God bless you, Mom.

The Way We Were...



This picture of Joi (De Nardo) Stenroos (standing) and me—Norma (García) Pettit—was taken almost 20 years ago! We still look the same, don't we? (Hint: the correct answer is, "Yes.")

Guess Who These Tots Are?

The answer is found on page 6.



At This Time in Our Family History

- **April 3, 1875**—Pedro José Rivera Maldonado was born. He was a brother of our family patriarch, "Papa Flor." Pedro only lived for 15 months, though, dying on July 10, 1876.
- **April 9, 1912**—Auntie Marie, baptized as María Perfecta, was born in Barrio Santo Domingo of Peñuelas, Puerto Rico. She was one of Papa Flor's daughters and the matriarch of the Nicholson clan.
- **April 13, 1839**—María Inés Vilá married Marcelino de la Cruz. Her father, Pedro Vilá, was born in Cataluña, España. They were the grandparents of Papa Flor's wife, Ana Cruz García.
- **April 22, 1946**—Oscar Cruz García of Peñuelas, Puerto Rico, married Ana María López Maldonado of Adjuntas, Puerto Rico. They were married in San Francisco, CA, and were the parents of Olga, Ruben and Norma.
- **April 22, 1986**—Florencio Rivera ("Guar") died in Ponce, Puerto Rico.
- **April 23, 1995**—Oscar Cruz García died of emphysema in Ponce, Puerto Rico. He was 84.
- **May 5, 1909**—Máximo Cruz, father-in-law of Papa Flor, married his second wife, Genara Maldonado. He was widowed from his first wife, María Encracia García.
- **May 22, 1914**—Elena Sevilla was born. She was Tío Guar's wife, and the mother of René, Roberto, Raúl, Milagros, Lilliam, Reinaldo, Luz, Heriberto and Edwin.

A Year in the Life of Hayli...continued from page 1

In July, Hayli was also in the praise band for the Christian Motorcycle Association, which held its annual convention in Seward and was hosted by her church. She spent several weeks in rehearsal for this and had a great time singing for the Lord and visiting with a whole group of people she would never have met before. They had five performances in the three days. CMA thought Hillcrest's Praise Band was one of the best they ever heard and they could not believe the big voice coming out of so small a girl.

Praise Band has been Hayli's mission for the church ever since she was old enough to join in her freshman year of high school. In addition to singing with the worship team, she has done several solo performances. Her last solo performance touched so many of the members hearts. She sang, "I Believe," as an advent song. Many in the congregation had tears in their eyes, and Hayli herself got emotional when she got to the part about the lonely tree. This is the version that is on YouTube. The church had her sing it again a couple of months ago because it fit so well with the Pastor's sermon about belief and faith.

Hayli also spent a lot of time during the summer on her art and photography. She always enters her art and always manages to whip her grandmother. Her photo called "Peekaboo" won best overall at the Seward County Fair. Her art piece "Girl in the Shadows" also won the big prize for her age group. She enters her photography in the county fair and also the Women's Club contest every year. Last year she won six first place ribbons and four this year in the local contest. She only enters these in the local contests because she is trying her wings, and they are growing bigger by the day.

In addition to art and photography, Hayli is a creative writer. She was recognized as one of the top ten in the nation for her poem on 9/11. In addition she has won three contests for her short stories. Hayli's writing, for the most part, leans much more towards fantasy rather than reality. She currently is writing a novel geared toward middle school to high school age kids. However after I read the first twelve chapters, I am anxious for her to finish it. Maybe it will be another *Harry Potter* novel in the making—who knows? She does not like to write on demand, although she does for school. She picks the novel up as she feels the creativity flow. We hope it does not take ten years to finish. In the meantime, her teachers keep entering her essays and poems in whatever is available. She wrote a story for the VFW called, "Every Soldier Has A Story," which won second place and relates the stories of three family members. It is one of my favorites because she writes about her great grandfather and a cousin who died in Iraq after being there only two weeks.

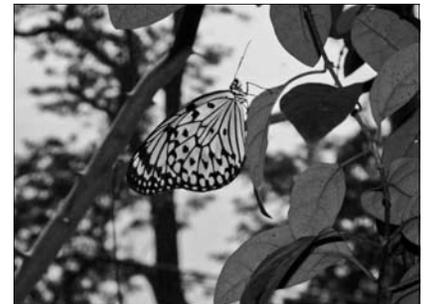


Photo Gallery

Top row: Hayli with her grandparents, Kathy and Jim Caffey; Summer Chamber Choir; Singing in the Tub; Tears at mom's wedding. Bottom row: Performing in "Beauty and the Beast"; Marching Band; Artwork—"Girl in the Shadows"; Winning Photography

Creativity for Hayli also reaches into the computer animation and gaming field. She received a new gaming headset for Easter and is in the process of making an entertainment video for YouTube involving gaming. Ever since she met Mario she has been fascinated by how games are designed. She wants to learn computer language that will help her in that area. For her birthday this year she and two friends will be spending a weekend in Omaha to attend Pon3y Con which is a convention revolving around the animated series "My Little Pony". The show was completely redone three years ago and that is when she became interested. She loves the story lines, the animation and the music. Pon3y Con is really for adults and it brings together animators and comic artists as well as various actors from the show. She wants to speak to many of the vendors to learn the who, what and why of it all. There will also be some improv theatre with it and she loves to do this. She can start a whole routine at the dinner table in various voices and topics that are so funny Jim and I are in stitches.

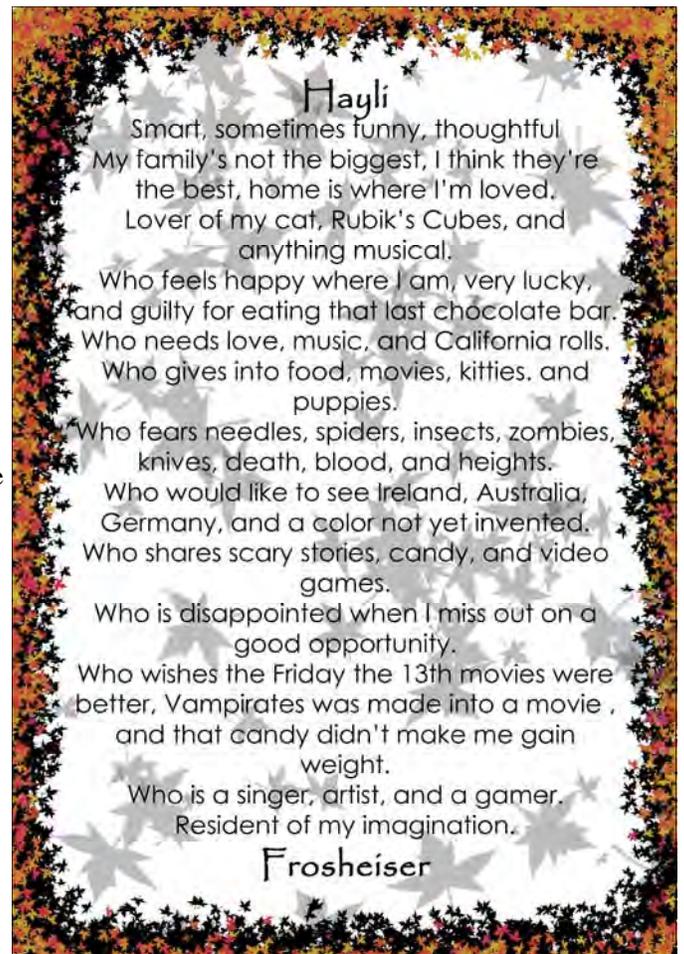
She had parts in two one-act plays, one of which went on to be the competition play. This was her first year for one-acts and she really loved it. She was able to hone her acting skills in these two plays. In addition she has participated in the theater workshops at Concordia University the last two years. She especially like the improvisational theatre.

With all her creativity, her main focus is still music. This year it became evident that she really needed a vocal coach if she wanted to major in vocal music. This has made a world of difference to her and she eagerly runs off to her lessons. Her recital this year included an operatic song sung in Italian. I almost fell off my chair because her voice had become so big and I had never heard her sing that way before. She is interested in all types of music and wants to be able to sing almost anything. Currently she is focusing on a French song, the Irish song "Danny Boy" and songs from the musical, "Annie Get Your Gun". She will be singing "Danny Boy" for District Music Competition this year. She loves singing songs from pop artists but wants to broaden her range of music and be able to sing in different "voices". This summer she will have to decide what she will be singing for her senior solo for "Opening Night" which is the first vocal production of the year and where the seniors get to show off their abilities.

Her band instructor asked me if she was trying out for drum major. She did last year and could have made it, but the flute section was sorely lacking in leadership, so she opted for section leader. Two of the flute players said they were trying out for other positions and she felt that that would only leave her. She would like to be a drum major but wants what is best for the band. She says that she likes playing, marching, learning the routines and that her "freshies" (as she calls them) are going to need her. Her teacher thought that was the most mature attitude he had heard from a high school student. They usually think only of themselves, not the band as a whole, and feel that the glory is in being the drum major. She wants the band trained and ready to be the best it can be, especially her flute section. That is what a section leader does. She feels the band needs her little feet on the ground. She is first chair flute and will be playing the flute solo in the symphonic piece they are doing for District Music Competition next week. She also is preparing for a flute solo for the spring concert. She will be busy at the District Music Comp since she is also doing a vocal solo and will be singing with the select choir as well. I am hoping for superior ratings all the way around as they got last year. It's not the glory, but being the best you can be with the talent that you have.

In June she is taking her show on the road, so to speak, when she goes on a mission trip to New Orleans. She is very involved with her youth group at church as well as her weekly young woman's Christian small group. She has gotten her best friend Emily involved, also, and they both attended a Christian Leadership conference this year. Emily will be going on the mission trip with her. Hayli went on the same mission trip two years ago but could not go last year due to conflicts in timing. She decided to give a scholarship to someone else who could not afford to go. She does not know who went and she did not want the other party to know who she was. It was to be a gift from God.

July will be filled with Summer Chamber Choir and Marching Band Camp and then in the middle of August her lessons and school will pick up again. She will be a senior...how time has flown from newborn babe to graduation looming on the horizon! Hayli wrote the following about herself...it describes her well.



¿...y la familia?

Baby News



*Nathaniel Fernando Vázquez
Born Feb. 17, 2013
at 10:15 p.m., 6 lbs. 3 oz.
Parents: Nando & Natalie
Grandmother: Madeline Rivera
Great-Grandparents:
Raúl Rivera & Julia Vázquez*



*This beautiful baby girl is **Leilani Isabel Sua**, the daughter of Jason and Michelle (Cabán) Sua. Leilani's grandparents are Robert and Vicky (Rivera) Cabán, and her great-grandparents are René Rivera and his late wife, Carmen Medina. Leilani was born on Feb. 23, 2013.*



*The tots pictured on page 3 are my two youngest children—**Ana Victoria Pettit, 4**, and **Lucas Randall Pettit, 3**. I had just returned from a three-week long trip to Puerto Rico to visit my father and bedridden mother, and I had missed my babies terribly. Randy and I took them on an outing to Lake Tahoe, where I snapped these photos on July 28, 1989.*

¿...y la familia?

2013 Family Reunion in Disneyworld

Official Reunion Dates: June 21-23, 2013

With the diversity of needs, desires, and family budgets, each family will have to find their own package plan that suits their needs and make their own reservations. I had previously taken a poll to see at which Value Resort people preferred to stay, and the majority chose Disney's Art of Animation Resort. Frankie Valentín, who works at Disneyworld, pointed out that for some people it would be more practical to stay at a cabin where they can fit a larger family and have a fully equipped kitchen to prepare meals in. Others might find even the Art of Animation Resort a bit out of their price range, as there are other value resorts that cost less per night. So, we suggest that everyone check out the different options and make their own reservations as soon as possible. You can visit www.disneyworld.com for information and package plans. There is a free vacation planning DVD that you can order. Also, you can get package plans through Southwest Airlines or AAA Insurance. If you know of someone who has been there, pick their brains about plans; the choices are almost limitless.



Some of us already have rooms booked at the Art of Animation Resort: Tía Tita and Tío José Medina, Larry and Carol Wright, Brian and Rosa Meddaugh, and Randy and I. Others live near Disneyworld and will not be staying inside the park, but will join us there during our reunion days.

The official reunion dates will be June 21-23, 2013, but many of us will want to stay longer at Disneyworld to see as much of it as we can. Some of us have never been there before! We are foregoing a formal banquet hall evening for this reunion, as it will take away from time enjoying the theme parks. Instead, Frankie suggested we gather at an area he can reserve for us where we can visit with each other, take group pictures, watch fireworks and have a catered dessert. ***Frankie has reserved such a location for us in the Italy area at Epcot Center on Saturday night from 8:00-9:30 p.m.*** This is a private outdoor



location by the lagoon, where will be served an elegant buffet featuring Italian cakes and other desserts. ***The cost will be \$35 per person.*** It may seem expensive, but Frankie has actually gotten a discounted rate for us. It will be well worth it for us to have a private area to gather and spend some time together as a family, enjoying the amazing fireworks display, the elegant sweets, and most importantly, each other! For those of us travelling from California or other long distances, we are already spending quite a bit of money to get there and experience Disneyworld, so another \$35 per person to have this opportunity to gather together is not that much.

I have agreed to collect the money beforehand and send Frankie one check to pay for this private location and dessert buffet. Please send me a check today while you are thinking of it. Make it out to **Norma Pettit**, and I will keep track of who paid and send Frankie one check made out to Disneyworld to reserve our private location in the Italy area of Epcot Center. I hope to hear from all of you soon!

“¿...y la familia?”

c/o Norma I. Pettit
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Visit us on the Web at www.ylafamilia.org.

Birthday Greetings

Michael Barnes (50) - April 1	Liliana Marie Tokar (1) - April 21	Isidro Rivera (94) - May 13
Emilio Maldonado (82) - April 1	Vic Stenroos (65) - April 22	Roberto I. Rivera (62) - May 16
Michael A. Feliciano (47) - April 3	Dalie Delgado (21) - April 23	Ryan Reinke (17) - May 12
Catherine Rivera (36) - April 5	Naïome Campos (9) - April 23	Helen Correa-González (51) - May 12
Dustin Cavino (22) - April 4	Raymond L. Cavino (14) - April 25	Alexis Valentín (28) - May 17
Wilma E. Roig (28) - April 6	Hayli Frosheiser (17) - April 26	Kirstin Frosheiser (41) - May 21
Marlynn (Merritt) Krause (65) - April 6	Daniel Campos (19) - April 27	Riley Hargraves (11) - May 22
Tiana J. Rivera (18) - April 6	Luz E. Sánchez (7) - April 28	Heriberto Rivera (26) - May 26
Ana V. Pettit (28) - April 8	George Rivera (40) - April 29	Ada I. Rivera (36) - May 26
Tom Smith (75) - April 13	Mirra Noemí Quiñones (3) - May 1	George Nicholson (68) - May 27
Jayden Daniel Valentín (2) - April 14	Nicholas Rivera (23) - May 5	Lucas R. Pettit (27) - May 29
Elieñith Dessus (25) - April 21	Ted Reinke (76) - May 13	Stephanie (Krause) Thompson (36) - May 29
Emilio Meléndez (58) - April 21		Cristina Cruz (10) - May 30

Anniversaries



Jana and Orlando Rivera (4)
April 12

Carmen (Feliciano) and
Maximino Carrasquillo (38)
May 16

Cathy (Rivera) and
Eric Montalvo (16)
May 24

James and Erika Frosheiser (6)
May 26

Marlynn (Merritt) and
Paul Krause (43)
May 30