

GREATER MIAMI CHAPTER—GMIA

Carole Aring Bible tells us that her beautiful Mother, at age 98, met her Lord peacefully on March 16th. Carole had moved her Mom from Ft Myers to Miami Gardens, so she could be close to her in her and the last three years she was able to visit daily. Carol spent Easter in Morningside Ga. being the Easter Bunny for family & friends. This was the 5th year running and something she finds so much joy in doing.

Martha Aiken Falgout, who has been traveling only in the US lately and is looking forward to visiting Spain in the Fall with a friend. She tells us she just can't get the "traveling bug" out of her blood!

Our resident songbird, **Barbara Koesy** is still singing in the choir and staying involved in the "Natives of Dade". She was also proud to tell us that she was lucky to win three (3) plants at the South Dade Amateur Orchid Club in March!!

Alice Hofstadler Faircloth continues to be our liaison with the Cancer Caring Children's Clinic. For over 50 years our Miami Silverliners have collected toys and have given donations. We have spent countless hours meeting the children who have survived years of treatment. It continues to be one of our favorite charities.

Irene Esteban Baljet has now retired from American Airlines, where she worked after her Eastern career. She

has wasted no time making use of the benefits as she and husband recently returned from a trip to Madrid. **Irene** and **Irma "Mima" Martinez** are representing our chapter at the convention in Washington....What fun!



We are looking forward to the fall when we once again will have a booth at the church fair and yard/food sale in South Miami. We hope to be as successful as we were last year. Lots of hard work, but fun, too!! We are also supporting the "Dress for Success" charity this year.

Blessings to All our sister & brother Silverliners for good health AND good weather all over the country.

Submitted by **Beverly Wynn Bua**

BY GLORIA VASTA LEWIS
Special to the Miami Herald

In 1949, I first came to Miami to check out the University of Miami.

I hitched a ride from New York with my Uncle Pat, who drove the boss' shiny black Cadillac down south every fall to be the chief mutual racetrack teller through the winter season at Hialeah and Tropical racetracks. Leaving New York on a sleepy day, we cruised the whole way down on U.S. 1 and arrived, almost magically it seemed to me, in warm, sunny Miami.

As everyone promised, it was heaven!

Then it was Miami again in '52 when my parents and I joined Pat for another southland sojourn — this time including the necessary tourist stop at Silver Springs. But I ended up at NYU part-time and was lucky to land a great job at IBM, so Miami had to wait until 1954 when my friend Barb and I split our vacation and took a week in August — first to Vacation Valley in the Poconos — and then a week in December back to my warm Miami.

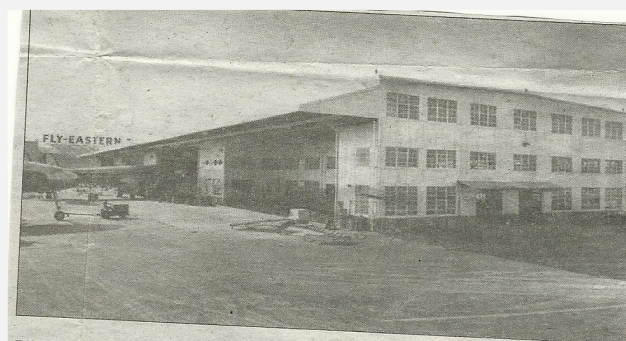
I had booked a package tour with round-trip air fare, seven days at the Lombardy Hotel on 63rd Street, some meals, transfers and tours — for \$99.

That summer before, back at Vacation Valley, Barb had been bitten by a black widow spider and had been pretty sick. Now in Miami, the sun activated the poison in her system, and she ended up at St. Francis Hospital on Miami Beach.

THE AUTHOR: Gloria Vasta Lewis, above and below.

In 1957, I bought my first home in southeast Hialeah for \$12,500. To get furniture shopping, I rented a car at \$1 a day and 1 cent a mile (air line discount). In the middle of that "Other Century," wasn't able to close on the house I bought because I was a single woman, so called for "back-up" — sent for my mom to come down from New York and co-sign with me. But this wasn't enough because she was a married woman and at that time — needed her husband's permission. I finally settled when Dad came down to sign for me. We've come a long way.

In the Miami sunshine Mother's arthritis almost entirely disappeared. When Dad came down on wheel ends and saw her improvement, he, too, became a Miami man, retiring from his job as an innovative production manager with Eveready.



EASTERN: Former Eastern Airline's hangars at Miami International Airport. STATE ARCHIVES OF FLORIDA, FLORIDA MEMORIAL

Labels, which served the entire international label industry.

Within the year, they moved to Miami and, instead of living with my parents, the switch happened. They lived with me.

We bought a few more houses — from \$10,000 to \$17,000 — and rented them out to new stewardesses, and my folks happily became surrogate parents to the homesick girls. Mom, always a terrific seamstress, tailored their uniforms expertly and gave more than a few Italian-style cooking lessons. We became a happy extended family — my parents and all their high-flying laughter.

It wouldn't be a bad idea for a thoughtfully written movie, I think, with worthy actors to play Sinatra and all the other celebrities we met and dined with back then — Jilly's on the 79th Street useway in those glamorous years.

married a pilot in '68, E.A.L. and became a Silver-

GMIA Chapter member **Gloria Vasta Lewis** shared her "Finding Florida and Eastern Air Lines" story with the Miami Herald.

and we moved to Kendall. My husband's hobby was rebuilding planes, so we bought an acre behind Baptist Hospital where he could have his large airplane parts spread out to work on. We remodeled a one-bedroom cottage to a three-bedroom, two-and-a-half bath home with a separate three-car garage workshop.

My airline job had to end in '74 so I could be available if and when construction workers decided to show up. It was a sad day when I wrote my letter of resignation. I still had my heart with E.A.L. and became a Silver-

liner, our national service organization of former Eastern flight attendants.

I only recently stepped down from being Miami's Silverliners president for 13 years, but I'm still active in our club, though our national membership has dwindled to 850 members and our local chapter from 45 to 11. I also joined the Red Hat Society, which widens my circle of friendships.

Under my mango trees and palms, I count my blessings every day for the good luck and sunny path that took me and my family to Miami.