



# ¿Que Pasa?

¿Que Pasa? The Columbia Restaurant Newsletter

September 2007

## Richard Gonzmart And USF Iron Bull Donors Run With The Bulls In Spain



*Richard is on the left side, along the fence wearing a USF Red T-Shirt.*

A group of 34 University of South Florida USF Iron Bull donors are so “bullish” on the upcoming Big East Athletic Season that they traveled to Pamplona, Spain to run with the bulls on July 7, 2007. The mascot for USF is a bull.

Tampa restaurateur and USF loyal supporter Richard Gonzmart, of The Columbia Restaurant, led the group on an eight day culinary and winery tour of Spain to Madrid, Segovia, Ribera de Duero, Pamplona and Barcelona. He knows firsthand about running with the bulls. This was his second run, the

first was in July of 2005. Richard is the 4th generation family member and president of the 102-year-old Columbia Restaurant, founded in Tampa’s Historic Ybor City in 1905 by his great-grandfather.

Richard was joined on the festival’s first day run on July 7 at 8 a.m. by two fellow Iron Bulls, Tampa Attorney Gary Trombley and Real Estate Developer Dimitri Artzibushev. The six bulls used daily for the Encierro (The running of the bulls) are released for bullfighting against a Matador on each day of the festival at 6 p.m.

During the Iron Bulls run, three of the bulls came within inches of the Tampa natives. Gonzmart said, "The event is like Mardi Gras, Gasparilla and Super Bowl all wrapped up into one. The running with the bulls is the biggest adrenaline rush of my life. I couldn't stop thinking about the thousands of runners and the six beautiful brave bulls as we ran through the historic narrow streets of Pamplona, I was so excited for hours afterwards."

The festival of San Fermín in the city of Pamplona (Navarre), in northern Spain, is a deeply-rooted celebration held annually from Noon on July 6 to midnight July 14. While its most famous event is the Encierro, the running of the bulls, the week-long celebration involves concerts, fireworks and many other traditional and folkloric events during the eight day festival. It is known locally as San Fermín and is held in honor of Saint Fermín, the patron saint of Pamplona and of Navarre. Its events were central to the plot of *The Sun Also Rises*, by Ernest Hemingway, which brought it to the general attention of English-speaking peoples. It has become probably the most internationally renowned fiesta in Spain.



## 6th Annual “Richard’s Run For Life” 5K Race Friday, November 2 at 6:30 pm

**The 5K begins and ends in Ybor City’s Centennial Park and is open to runners and walkers  
100% of all proceeds donated will support The Amandalee Fund at  
H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center & Research Institute in Tampa**



The entry fee is \$20 per person donation for pre-registration through November 1, and \$25 per person donation the day of the 5K Race. Entry fee includes admission to the post-race party after the 5K in Centennial Park with food from Columbia Restaurant, Cha Cha Coconuts and Moe’s Southwest Grill, Michelob Ultra Premium Beer and live music.

Guests and visitors can also enjoy the festivities and food for a \$20 donation, and children under 10 for \$10.

“Richard’s Run for Life” 5K was created by Columbia Restaurant President, Richard Gonzmart, as a way to combine his love for running with his long-time desire to find a cure for cancer. For more information and to register, please visit [www.richardsrunforlife.com](http://www.richardsrunforlife.com)

## The Columbia Rolls Back Prices on Sunday, September 16th For “1905 Day” To Commemorate 102nd Anniversary

On Sunday, September 16th, Columbia Restaurant will celebrate “1905 Day” to commemorate the 102nd ANNIVERSARY of the family-owned business. As has been the tradition since their 75th Anniversary, the Columbia has developed a special menu with the prices of yesteryear for this day.

“1905 Day” will be in effect at all seven Columbia Restaurants in Florida; including Tampa’s Ybor City, Sarasota, St. Augustine, The Pier in St. Petersburg, Sand Key on Clearwater Beach, Celebration, and in West Palm Beach. Columbia Restaurant is open 7-days a week for lunch and dinner.

From noon until 7:00 p.m., guests will enjoy the Columbia Restaurant’s world-famous Spanish cuisine for the prices they might have paid in the “good ole days”. Menu items will include: Chicken & Yellow Rice “Ybor” for \$2.95, Boliche (eye round of beef) for \$2.95, Merluza “A la Rusa” for \$2.95, Columbia’s Original “1905 Salad” for \$1.95, Sangria for \$.95 cents, flan for \$.50 cents, and their richly brewed American coffee for \$.05 cents.

“1905 Day’ is our way of thanking all of our customers who have contributed to the success of the Columbia for over 100 years and five generations of

ownership,” explained Richard Gonzmart, 4th generation family member and president of the Columbia Restaurant Group. “We are convinced that we would not be celebrating our 102nd anniversary without the support of the communities we serve, he said.

On this day only, reservations are not accepted, and take-out items are not available.

The Columbia Restaurant was founded in 1905 and is Florida’s oldest restaurant. All Columbia Restaurants are owned and operated by 4th and 5th generation members of the founding family.



## Join The Columbia 401 (k) Plan And Watch Your Savings Grow!

Your savings will need to last the rest of your life...and that might be a long time. In fact, you may need to live without a paycheck almost as long as you lived with one! And with the escalating costs of everyday items such as gas and groceries, it is more important than ever to assess your financial situation and prepare for retirement when you will no longer be receiving a regular paycheck.

Given that personal savings will form more than half – and possibly a lot more than half – of your nest egg, and that you may live to a ripe old age, you are going to need as much time as you can get to put it all together. 401(k) plans are great programs for accumulating retirement funds.

The Columbia Restaurant 401(k) Savings Plan is a generous and easy way to build retirement savings for you once you qualify.

- Any amount that you put toward your individual 401(k) savings is deducted from your check before taxes are calculated.
- Therefore, you pay less tax than you would if you do not participate.
- Additionally, the Columbia Restaurant will match your contribution by providing an additional 50% of your contribution amount to your 401(k) savings account (up to 3%).

Of course, there are rules for participating. See your manager for more information about this great benefit.

Here are a few other tips to help you find additional dollars for saving:

- Pay down or consolidate your credit card debt.
- Made your last car payment? Increase your 401(k) contribution by that amount.
- Getting a tax refund? Don't spend it – use it to pay down debt.
- Save with your spouse. If you and your spouse both work outside of the home, consider contributing an extra amount equal to a portion of your spouse's salary.
- Not enough paycheck to defer? Consider using bonus pay, special event pay, etc... as your source for contributing.

Join the Columbia Restaurant 401(k) plan as soon as you are eligible, and watch your retirement savings grow!



## Congratulations Go To Our Columbia Gem!

**Andrea Gonzmart** was recently certified as a **Spanish Wine Educator** from The Wine Academy of Spain.

Andrea was named one of “**40 Under 40**” by *The Gulf Coast Business Review* in July 2007.

Andrea was also nominated and appointed to serve on the Board of Directors for the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art in Sarasota, the youngest Board Member appointed.



# Columbia Restaurant 10th Annual Community Harvest In September Benefits Non-Profit Groups In Florida

Let your taste buds do the giving while you support local non-profit groups in Florida by dining at any Columbia Restaurant during the month of September for lunch or dinner during the 10th Annual Columbia Restaurant Community Harvest program.

Through this program, Columbia Restaurant donates 5% of all guests' lunch and dinner checks to the charitable organizations chosen by their customers during the entire month of September. The Community Harvest will be in effect at the Columbia Restaurants in Ybor City, Sarasota, St. Augustine, The Pier in St. Petersburg, Sand Key on Clearwater Beach, Celebration, and in West Palm Beach at CityPlace. Columbia Restaurant is open 7-days a week for lunch and dinner.

Over the past nine years, the Columbia Restaurant Community Harvest has donated over \$698,000 to 100 non-profit organizations throughout Florida.

"We are hoping for a record Community Harvest this year so we can help as many non-profit groups as possible during our 10th Anniversary of giving back to the communities we serve," said Richard Gonzmart, 4th generation

and president of the Columbia Restaurant.

"Over the last nine years, we have maintained our commitment of giving back even through some tough times, including 9/11 and several active hurricane seasons. Last year we had to do extensive structural repairs to our Columbia on St. Armands Circle in Sarasota, forcing us to close that location during the Community Harvest. But this year we are back and looking forward to making an even bigger donation, and we expect a banner year with this year's Community Harvest donation exceeding \$115,000 for our local non-

profit groups," Gonzmart said.

"We started this program in 1998 as a way of contributing to the many non-profit groups that are so important to our communities," noted Richard Gonzmart. "We thought the best way to do this was by letting our customers get involved in selecting the organizations. The process is simple. They just put a check mark next to the name of one of the charitable organizations listed on the form we provide to them, or they can write in the name of their favorite charity, and turn it in to their server. We do the rest," explained Gonzmart.





## Donna Stokes, Bar Manager At Columbia St. Augustine Shares Her Story

*Donna Stokes, who earlier this year received an honorable mention award as the 2007 Tourism Attractions Employee of the Year from the St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra & The Beaches Visitors and Convention Bureau.*



My name is Donna Stokes. My nickname is "Donnasaurus" because I have worked at the St. Augustine restaurant for so long. I tell them that I am "GARLICLY PRESERVED."

I am the bar manager. I have worked at the St. Augustine Restaurant for 24 complete years. My starting date was June 7, 1983, the same day we opened here in St. Augustine. The only position I have held is that of bartender.

My favorite dishes are the Filet Salteado and the Completa Cubana. My favorite dessert is Flan. My favorite drink is the OLD BLOODY MARYS. {Tell Curt I will never give up trying to get my mix back} I also suggest the Cava Sangria in the summer and the Import Sangria in the winter.

I would like everyone to know that the Gonzmart family has been VERY GOOD TO ME. I tell people that if you give the Gonzmart family 100% they will give you back 200%. The Columbia Restaurant gave me the opportunity to raise my daughter around a full time schedule. I am currently putting her through college at FSU, where she is a junior.

Through the Columbia Restaurant I have met many customers that have ended up being very close and treasured friends. I still enjoy going to work and I love my job. I remember when I was one of the youngest employees at the restaurant and now I am one of the oldest. I consider Fernando Morelos, Susan Richardson and Luis Astorga to be part of my family. We have all been together for 24 years.

My favorite memories of the Columbia Restaurant are:

1. Adela playing the Steinway piano in the bar one morning. I was the only one there and she played for about 1 hour. It was like my own private concert. I miss her. She was a Great Lady.
2. Richard playing the bongos with the band "Killamanjaro". He talked them into coming to the restaurant to play one night. There were only 12 employees at this concert. We had a blast. Richard ended the night with bloody hands.
3. I believe that Curt Gaither is the best thing to ever happen to this company. He is a good man. He is a fair man and complement to the company.
4. I am really glad that Jean Pedaggi is back as our General Manager. We all missed him. The St. Augustine restaurant needs him.
5. Meeting Miguel Torres. The man is elegant and nice to everyone. Meeting him was an honor. He drew me a picture in my own special Columbia Cookbook that I keep at the restaurant for celebrities to sign.

My favorite quote to new employees is "Welcome to Spain".

In conclusion I would like to thank you all once again for thinking of me, and asking me to share my story for our newsletter.



# *The Columbia Restaurant Chilean Antu Wine Dinners In September And October*

All seven of our Columbia Restaurants will host wine dinners featuring the Chilean Wines of Mont Gras and their Limited Production Antu Wines from the Ninquén Mountain Estate in Chile.

*Dinner and Wines paired by  
the Gonzmart family of The Columbia Restaurant.*

**Seven O'clock in the evening  
\$75 per person (all-inclusive)**

**Wednesday, September 19th, 2007**

Columbia Restaurant in Sarasota  
on St. Armands Circle  
941.388.3987

**Tuesday, September 25th, 2007**

Columbia Restaurant at the Pier in St. Petersburg  
727.822.8000

**Thursday, October 4th, 2007**

Columbia Restaurant in Ybor City  
813.248.4961

**Wednesday, October 10th, 2007**

Columbia Restaurant on Sand Key  
in Clearwater Beach  
727.596.8400

**Thursday, October 11th, 2007**

Columbia Restaurant in Downtown Celebration  
407.566.1505

**Thursday, October 16th, 2007**

Columbia Restaurant in West Palm Beach at CityPlace  
561.820.9373

**Thursday, October 18th, 2007**

Columbia Restaurant in Historic St. Augustine  
904.824.3341

*Reservations are required and seating is  
limited, please call for reservations.*



## A Message From Richard

I returned from Spain with 34 friends from USF Athletics this past July. I ran in my second San Fermín Running of the Bulls on July 7th, 2007 with friends Gary Trombley and Dimitri Artzibushev.

There were others who wanted to run with me but were unable to get on the course. I made the AP Wire video and photos.

I had stopped to look back to see where the rest of the bulls were and right then and the bull on the right slid to the ground landing next to my feet. I wanted to help him up, I felt so bad for him, his eyes were sad. It could have been a fatal mistake so I watched him get up and ran with him for a bit. The street at this point was very narrow, maybe 14 feet.

What did I learn from this? That at any age you must live life, the adrenaline rush was incredible, I was feeling the high for about three hours and still do right now. Be sure to live life, it is so fleeting.

When I am gone I want to be sure that no one will say "poor guy, he didn't get to do everything he wanted in life, he didn't have fun, he didn't care about others." I am blessed to have a loving family and friends that care. No matter how much time I have left on earth I will keep trying to learn and discover the meaning, the reason I am here.

God is great, God is forgiving, and God is love and peace. He has allowed me to live a full life.



*Peace and health to you!*  
Richard Gonzmart



*Wishing You Many Blessings in 2008!*

## Columbia Accolades



The readers of the *Sarasota Herald Tribune* voted The Columbia on St. Armands Circle First Place for "Best Spanish Restaurant" and "Best Cuban Sandwich."

Tampa Bay Metro chose the Columbia's Original "1905" Salad™ as the "Best Salad" in the Tampa Bay area.

## Special Dates

**Entire Month Of September**  
Community Harvest

**September 16, 2007**  
1905 Day - Sunday

**November 2, 2007**  
6th Annual "Richard's Run For Life" 5K Race - Friday

**November 22, 2007**  
Thanksgiving Day - Thursday

**December 24 & 25, 2007**  
Christmas Eve/Day - Monday & Tuesday

**December 31 & January 1, 2007-2008**  
New Year's Eve/Day - Monday & Tuesday

¿Que Pasa? is a quarterly newsletter for the Columbia Restaurant.

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