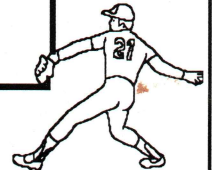
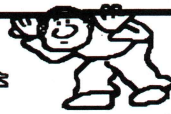




The Riel Family Newsletter

Catch the News

April, 1993



JASON, JESSICA, MICHAEL AND MEGAN IN ELEMENTARY SCIENCE OLYMPIAD

BIG EVENT TAKES PLACE ON MARCH 30TH

Tuesday, March 30th was a big day for some 40 elementary schools throughout San Diego. The Elementary Science Olympiad consisted of a series of science oriented contests requiring both physical and mental skills. A wide range of subjects were included, and the most popular ones included the catapult contest (see last month's issue for details), the paddleboat races, the Triathlon, and Save the Earth ecology event. As pointed out in last month's issue of RPNL, Grandpa Riel served in a consulting capacity for the Mehan and Benesch family entries, Michael, Megan, Jason and Jessica, representing the Paul Ecke Central and Green Elementary Schools. The Olympiad Committee awarded 5 first place awards, 5 seconds and 5 thirds. Michael won a first 1st award in the Triathlon, where athletic skills plus science know-how were tested. The toughest question, which he answered correctly, was "what is a cicada?". How many of the parents know the answer? Give us your guesses, and we will print the answer in the next issue. (No peeking in the dictionary!) Megan did well with the catapult, scoring a 2nd place, in spite of an equipment malfunction which negated one of the allowed test shots. The paddleboat results were a mixture of good and bad luck. Megan's entry had nothing but bad luck in the trials, due to a misunderstanding on the fine points of the rules regarding the use of the rubber band power sources. However, with the helpful advice from Jason, the problem was corrected and in the finals the entry was a big winner, making 1 1/2 trips around the prescribed course. Jason's entry, similar in design, did extremely well in the trial runs, and looked like a sure winner. In the final, however, it caught on a small fold in the edge of the course, got hung up and failed to continue the race. Naturally, Jason was most unhappy over this turn of events, but there is a lesson here, namely that luck frequently plays an important role in any event, and sometimes negates skill and talent. Also, we want to congratulate Jason for being the good sport that he was by helping Megan solve the problem with her boat. Jessica also had bad luck in the calibration of her catapult, and failed to place in that event. However, as pointed out in the last issue, the real merit in the program was participation, and the lessons learned not only in winning but also on being there. No doubt everyone who participated in the event is looking forward to another one next year.



MEGAN AND JESSICA ARE SHOWN IN THE ABOVE PHOTO WITH THEIR CATAPULTS AT THE OLYMPIAD SITE, READY FOR THE COMPETITION

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BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Craig Hartman celebrated his 10th with Grandma on March 22 with a visit to Toys R Us. For lunch he wanted Chinese food, and a restaurant in the Hillcrest area was chosen. The next item on the celebration was a visit to the Science Museum, and a chance to see the movie "The Rain Forest". They also took in the Zoo and the Museum of Man, so it was a pretty busy day. On the 26th Jessica had her big day, and chose lunch at the Corvette Diner in hillcrest. They then took in the movie "Homeward Bound", the third time for Grandma. They visited Toys R Us, but found better gift selections at the Science Museum store. They finished off the day with a hot chocolate, and then it was back home. We wish both children a HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

BUNNY NOSE DEPARTMENT

On March 29th Curtis Hartman showed up at Grandma's house for some TLC, which he got, plus lots of television viewing. That seemed to help a lot, since we understand that he has achieved a full recovery.

No doubt you are all aware that Uncle Bruce has been having some health problems, and in order to clear the air, as far as possible, we here publish a letter he sent us recently, as follows.

Dear Dad Riel

3-12-93

BUNNY NOSE DEPARTMENT

I'm seeing all the signs that the Riel "GRAPEVINE" is hard at work. I think it's wonderful that everyone cares. I'm taking time to write this now, so that there will not be any chance for misinformation. We all know how stories can get twisted around when passed from person to person. As a seasoned RPNL reporter, I will do my best to bring all of our readers up to speed with what is going on at the Hartman household.

The scuttle butt going around is that I am sick. Okay it's true. The problem is, however, we still don't know what it is! It started a year or more ago with the thyroid problem, Graves Disease. Graves is an Autoimmune Disease. AS you may recall, I was treated with radiation and have been on synthetic thyroid hormone and will be for the rest of my life. I had hoped that that would be the end of my medical problems. Not so... Over the last six months a separate but connected Autoimmune disorder had effected my eyesight. It causes a thickening of the muscles and other tissues behind my eyes which is pushing my eye balls outward. This in turn has caused very serious double vision. I must wear corrective lenses, but they don't help a lot. There is no way to know how bad it will get but it may stop on its own. If it continues to deteriorate surgery may be needed. The surgery involves cutting out the skull behind the eye which opens the sinus cavity. The other possibility would involve radiation to the eyes. I was told that this only has about a fifty percent success rate and could cause cancer later on. In the meantime I live with it and drive slower. There is also a thickening of the skin on my legs at the shin area but it's no big deal, kind of ugly, but not painful.

PAGE 2

In recent months a whole new set of symptoms have begun to plague me, and these are a little more serious. Of these symptoms, joint, muscle and spinal pain have been the worst. My Endocrinologist suspects that I have Systemic Lupus Erythmetosis, the same disease my Mom has. The blood tests that he performed were not 100% conclusive and therefore he has referred me to a Rheumatologist. My first battery of blood tests with him have also revealed little. He too suspects Lupus and/or Rheumatic Arthritis, both of which are Autoimmune Diseases. I hope he's wrong as both are disabling and without any known cure. The only thing that is known at this point is that I have something wrong with my spine. I will know more about that next week (3-17-93) when I go to Grossmont Hospital for sophisticated imaging. In the meantime I am very uncomfortable. I live on pain killers, Prednisone, and two different anti-inflammatory drugs.

Another symptom that has been making it difficult to work has been extreme fatigue. My blood tests two days ago show that I am very anemic due to some internal bleeding. Here again, I don't have any answers but I will know more on 3-19-93 when I see my Gastrointerologist. I have had chronic diarrhea for at least a year. He will be looking for bowel or colon cancer. I don't think it's either...but what do I know?

The worst part of all of this is not knowing. Very little is known about the autoimmune system. These diseases are very difficult to diagnose. My Mom went through many years of this testing and being mis-diagnosed. I have learned a lot from her, primarily, medicine is not an exact science. All in all I'm okay with all of this. I wouldn't be honest if I said I was happy about it. I have spent a day or two kicking things and had a few good cries. I have a very strong Christian Faith and pull a lot of strength from it. Birdy is very worried and has had a tough time dealing with this. I have a harder time seeing her upset than I do dealing with the physical discomforts. Marriage is a wonderful thing, together we work through these little obstacles and come out stronger in the end. I must admit though, I'm very thankful for Listy. This TWIN THING is something i don't think I'll ever fully understand, but it sure works for "The Bird". An hour or two together and Birdy is "as good as new". (or is it the shopping?) ---NOT---

One last thing... with all of this health business going on, the subject of SMOKING has come up. Not to mention any names, (MOM RIBL). I have not quit yet, but I promise I am going to. I just want get some of this behind me first...and thanks for caring.

Sincerely,
(signed)

Bruce Hartman
R.F.N.L

&

High Ranking Official of the Innocent Bystanders (Self Elected)

Bruce, you know we all care very much, and are praying very hard for a resolution for the problems you are having.

RPNL0252

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CORRECTION

In last month's issue we incorrectly identified Katy as one of the group that visited Grandma and Grandpa on February 19 (see "OTHER FUN THINGS", page 4) It was Kristy, not Katie who was present, and we mixed up some similar names.

SOME MORE OTHER FUN THINGS

The February 19th visit was so much fun that we had a second visit from the same group, that is, Michelle, Craig, Curtis, Scott, Kristy, David and Annie on March 15th. There was some more ping pong and other games. Afterwards, however, we all went to Grant School park for a picnic lunch and some more play time. After lunch we all took off for the Science Museum and a chance to see not only the exhibits but also a movie describing new techniques for motion picture projection. We got home just in time for Uncle Bob Gillingham to collect everyone and take them home.

VACATION NEWS

Recently Grandma and Grandpa took off for another visit to casino land. This time it was Laughlin, and Bob and Karla were with us for a long week-end. Friday night we met Karla's parents who coincidentally also were there, and they plus Roy's cousin and his wife took in a show, the Smothers Brothers. After the show we all went to dinner, and it was a most enjoyable evening. Saturday and Sunday morning were devoted mostly to bingo and other games of chance. Karla had two nice wins at the bingo room, and there was some other good and bad luck games. Grandma and Grandpa had the new experience of attending mass in the casino. One of the local churches brings over a team who put on 8:00, 10:00 and 12:00 services in the casino show room. (no, not the bingo room) We left at about 1:00 pm and after picking up Katie and Brian at the sitters home, got back about 8:00 pm. It was a fun week-end.

SPORTS NEWS

The soccer season is upon us again, and we learned that both Michael and Megan have made the AA teams in their region. Also, Micheal's basketball team is in first place. We are looking forward to hearing all about their games. Also, we suspect that there are other kids active in soccer, little league, etc. and hope we will be informed about their activities.

The Wednesday evening golf game with Grandma, Grandpa and Uncle Bob Riel is back on track, with the coming of daylight savings time. The first spirited match between Mom and Bob ended in a tie after Grandma put her third shot in the lake, and conceded the last hole. Karla joined us for dinner at Georgia's new Greek restaurant on Rosecrans. Before the golf Grandma took Brian out for his birthday celebration, so it was a busy day for all.

APRIL BIRTHDAY CALENDAR

Dustin Benesch	April 3	8
Brian Riel	April 5	4

Robert Riel	April 9	36
Kevin Riel	April 11	14
Jan Riel	April 21	45

ARTISTIC EFFORT

Some time ago, when Grandpa was not feeling well (sore knee) Birdy sent a card, and included a poem written by Scott. This is the first chance we have had to print it in the usual phonetic spelling used by students in his age group.

IF I WOR A BOOK

by
Scott Hartman

If I wor a book
Hung on a hook
I woodent let eneeewun read me
Cus a hook is not varee kumpftruboll
And its not verey hard to see wiye

APRIL FOOL'S DAY TRICK

Once again Francie managed to fool Grandpa Riel with one of her sly April fool's day tricks. This time she secretly gained admission to Grandpas den, through connivance with a certain Grandma who shall be nameless. She then disconnected the cable antenna connection on the back of the TV. The result was a picture of nothing but snow. Grandpa assumed that the cable was out, which it frequently is, but when he found out that the other TV was working properly, the truth was out. Pretty tricky, Francie!

LAST MONTHS PUZZLES SOLVED

SENIORS - The senior puzzle was a science question, and no one submitted an answer. Perhaps it was too hard for everyone, so we will give you the answer. In order to solve the question you need to know how a bass drum works. When the musician strikes the drum head it distorts, and the opposing drum head also distorts in response. This produces an area of compressed air, which travels away from the drumhead in all directions at the speed of sound in air (about 1700 feet per second). When this pressurized wave of air strikes your ear the eardrum is moved, and through the bone structure in your ear a signal is transmitted to your brain and you hear the sound of the drum. In answer to the question "how can you blow out a candle by hitting a bass drum", if you put a cover on the back side of the drum, and put a small hole in the cover, all of the sound (compressed air) must escape through the hole. This produces a blast which will blow out the candle.

JUNIORS - Here are the answers to the "wacky wordies" puzzles.

18 time's up or high time
19 checking it or check it
20 lean over backwards
21 sunny side up
22 space ship

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LAST MONTH'S WINNERS

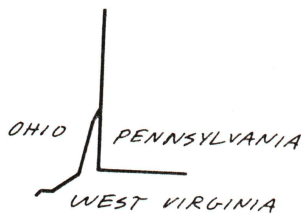
As we mentioned above, there were no Senior winners. However, in the Junior category there were two winners, Kristy Gillingham and Megan Mehan. Kristy checked in with four correct answers, and was almost right on the fifth one. Megan had three correct answers. Keep up the good work, and get ready for this month's challenge.

THIS MONTH'S PUZZLES

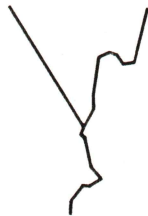
Get out your U.S. and world maps, kids, because this time we are having geography questions.

JUNIORS - BORDER PATROL

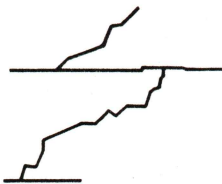
If the following lines look like random squiggles, maybe it's time to dust off your atlas. Each group of lines is an "aerial view" showing segments of the borders between the States of the Union. We've identified the states in the first group to get you started. Can you identify the others?



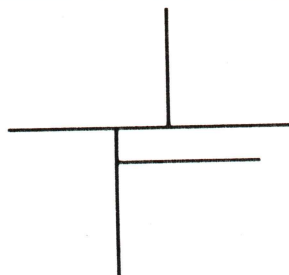
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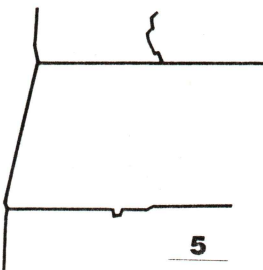
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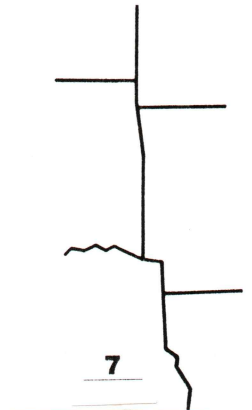
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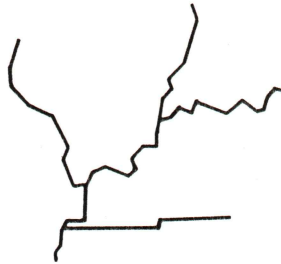
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10

SENIORS - WHERENESS AWARENESS

Putting things in their proper perspective is often only of relative importance. Take this quiz, for instance. Most of the places named here are familiar (and we don't mean to trick you - when we say Rome we don't mean Rome, New York.) You've seen them on maps many times - but do you know where they are in relation to other places?

What is the first foreign country you will hit if you travel

1. due east from New York City?
2. due south from eastern Detroit?
3. due west from Seattle?
4. due north from Point Barrow, Alaska?

Which city is farther north,

5. Paris or Montreal?
6. Mexico City or Honolulu?
7. Rome or San Francisco?
8. Moscow or Juneau?

Which has the greater area,

9. California or France?
10. Alaska or the province of Quebec?
11. Maine or the rest of new England?