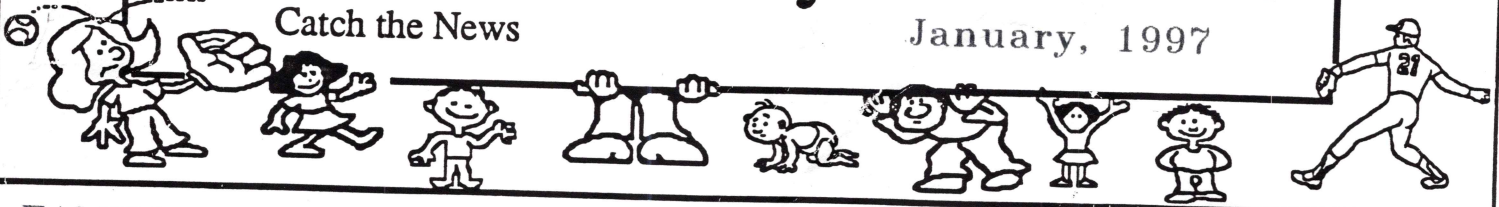




The Riel Family Newsletter

Catch the News

January, 1997



FAMILY AND FRIENDS CELEBRATE 50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

GRANDPA AND GRANDMA RIEL TREATED TO GREAT PARTY AND SHOW BY ENTIRE FAMILY

December the 28th was the big day for the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Riel/Merica wedding, which took place in Fremont, Ohio, in 1946. After many months of planning, meetings, rehearsals and organization on the part of everyone, the big show went off without a hitch. Snacks and a buffet style dinner were served in the Frances Parker Lower School Hall, which was lavishly decorated with Christmas style table settings. Both walls were covered with a large collection of photographs collected from many sources. The feature exhibit was a life size enlargement of the original wedding portrait taken at the church in Fremont. Other photos were contributed by the family members, and included both recent and older shots.



for Robert procrastination on household chores, for Listy running, and for Birdy shopping.

While the meal was being enjoyed a series of family pictures was flashed on the large screen TV on the front stage. The first item on the formal program was a reenactment of the wedding, put on by the parents and grandchildren. Bob Gillingham sang the same songs sung at the original wedding, with JJ Riel simulating the pianist. The wedding procession began with Kristy Gillingham, who played the role of maid of honor, leading the procession down the aisle and up the stage to the wedding place. Brett Sorem played the role of priest and Michael Riel-Mehan the groom. Annie Gillingham followed Kristy down the aisle, as the flower girl. The bride, wearing the original wedding dress, was played by Megan Riel-Mehan, and Tim Riel was great grandfather Riel, who gave away the bride in the original wedding, since the Merica family could not be present. After the ceremony Megan and Michael presented the new ring and the bridal bouquet (a copy of the original one) to Edith.

Dustin Benesch then read to original description of the wedding as it appeared in the Fremont newspaper in 1946. Then each if the Riel children gave a brief speech about their own family and some recollection of a past experience. Some of the grandchildren then performed a reenactment of one of the annual Easter family pictures that were taken when the family was young.

The in law family (the innocent bystanders) was introduced, and they put on a series of hilarious skits about life in the year 2006. In each skit the IB was played by the real person, and one of the other members of the group played the Riel character. Each skit was built around a Riel child preoccupation or characteristic. For Richard it was politics, for ED surfing, for Margaret computers, for Francie business travel, for Carol involvement in outside activities,

This concluded the formal program, and Edith and Frank were seated on the stage and invited to express their thoughts on this day. Both expressed their thanks to all who worked so long and hard to make this the greatest celebration they had ever experienced. As a final expression, Frank presented Edith with one more gift, a planned cruise to the Caribbean, sometime in the spring.

The Riel Family Newsletter

Catch the News



January, 1997



KRISTY AND MEGAN AT THE WEDDING REENACTMENT



BRETT SOREM READS THE WEDDING VOWS



AUDRIE AND BERNIE BENESCH CHECK OUT THE FAMILY PICTURES



FLOWER GIRL ANNIE GILLINGHAM COMES DOWN THE AISLE



EDITH AND REGINA HICKEY GREET NAT AND BRUCE HARTMAN



ED, JEFF AND BUD ENJOY THE CELEBRATION

RFNL0702

The Riel Family Newsletter

Catch the News



January, 1997

MARGARET BIG WINNER AT RIEL BOWL VI

BIG GRANDMA'S BIRTHDAY/CHRISTMAS/NEW YEARS DAY CELEBRATION HELD IN ALPINE

The 6th annual Riel Bowl celebration at the Alpine home of the Bob Riel family was another big success. As usual, the fun started with some games played by the kids. They hiked over to the Alpine school yard for some soccer, and straggled back when they got hungry. As usual there was lots of food; candied yams, escalloped potatoes, mixed vegetables, salad and lots of pre lunch snacks. The center piece of the meal, however, was Bob's famous prime rib roast. Everyone agreed that it was better than ever, if that is possible.

While everyone enjoyed their food the tape of the 50th anniversary celebration was played (blacking out the usual New Years Day football telecasts) and enjoyed by all. The next item on the program was the announcement by the Commissioner of the winner(s) of the annual cross word puzzle contest. In spite of his threat to create a puzzle which no one could completely solve, there were three who submitted perfect (?) solutions. The official solution, as provided by the Commissioner, is reproduced on this page. The lucky winners were Margaret, Listy and Birdy, and they became eligible for the Jeopardy Game play-off. Commissioner Bob had set up the questions, and also had used his electronic wizardry to make a control machine with flashing lights, a buzzer, and hand held buttons for the contestants to signal their readiness to answer a question. The questions were tough ones, and at one point all of the contestants were at negative dollar levels, with Margaret a poor third. However, in a stunning upset she reclaimed the lead and was never challenged at the finish.

The gifts then were distributed and opened, and everyone was excited and pleased to receive his reward for good behavior over the past year. The parents then enjoyed the ever popular white elephant gift exchange. There was some lively picking and stealing, but everyone had a lot of fun. As the Jeopardy Game winner, Margaret had the last pick, and won the annual RFNL dinner gift certificate.

As usual we all owe to Bob and Karla a great big THANKS for opening up their home and hospitality for this wonderful Christmas season celebration.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Grandpa Riel celebrated his 78th birthday with various gifts, phone calls and good wishes expressed by all, and he thanks each one of you for everything. Grandma owes a celebration to Kristy, and she will set up a date in the near future.

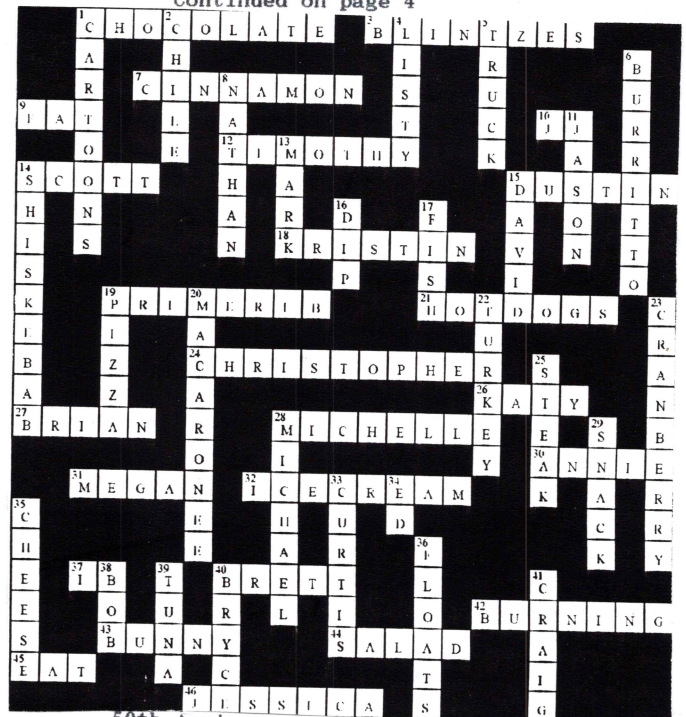
JANUARY BIRTHDAY CALENDAR

Edith Riel	January 2	72
Megan Riel-Mehan	January 15	13

TRAVEL NEWS - LISTY AND BIRDY VISIT UNCLE JIM AND AUNT ELOISE IN SUMTER, SO. CAROLINA

As a part of the math seminar tour Listy and Birdy were able to spend an afternoon at Sumter, to meet Uncle Jim and Aunt Eloise, and also cousin Debbie and her husband Dave. They spent the afternoon exchanging family news, and copies of recent RFNL issues were topics of the discussions. They also visited the graves of grandma and grandpa Riel, who are buried in Sumter. For the record, grandpa Riel (Frank James, Sr.) was born on September 2, 1887 and died on April 20, 1991, at the age of 94. Grandma Riel (Edna Southam Riel) was born on November 6, 1881, and died on November 25, 1972, at the age of 91. Eloise and Jim gave the visitors several items of jewelry that had belonged to our mother, including a locket containing pictures of Frank, Sr. as a young man, his wife, Edna, and a child believed to be Frank, Jr. It was a most

Continued on page 4



50th Anniversary (from page 1)

After the formal program the cake was cut, and the celebrants were toasted with champagne. The rest of the evening was spent talking to the many old friends who were in attendance. On page 2 we have reproduced some photos taken by reporter Francie. The official photographs are not yet available, but will appear in the February issue of RFNL. We also give a special thanks to Francie's friend Mark, who produced a professional video tape of the entire proceedings, complete with sound track and professional editing. It was a wonderful evening and we can only say "GOD BLESS YOU ALL !!!"

The Riel Family Newsletter

Catch the News

January, 1997

enjoyable visit, and more details on the South Carolina Riel family can be obtained by talking to Listy and Birdy, who certainly thank their aunt and uncle for the chance to get to know them. Some pictures were taken, and are reproduced on page 6.

LISTY PERFECT IN NASHVILLE!!

On December 17th Listy completed the last of her first four seminars for math teachers. As we have reported in prior issues of RFNL she has presented programs at Indianapolis, Cincinnati, Columbia and last of all Nashville. She was graded by a company evaluator, at each presentation, on a rating scale of 1 to 7, with the latter the best rating. The adjacent letter defines her ratings at each site, and it can be seen that she improved steadily, and at the 4th seminar, in Nashville, she achieved a perfect 7 on both categories rated. This prompted letters from two top executives of the Bureau of Education & Research, the sponsor company and the one she will be associated with from now on. Although no new schedule has been set up thus far, it would appear that more travel is in the near future. Of course, Birdy claimed that the improved performance in the second leg of the tour was due to her moral support. Also, Listy commented that in Columbia she made some comments on the evils of smoking, which did not receive complete approval from an audience raised in the tobacco growing south.

BER Bureau of Education & Research
915 118th Avenue SE • PO Box 96068 • Bellevue, WA 98009-9668
Phone (206) 453-2121 • FAX (206) 453-1875

January 2, 1997

Mrs. Elizabeth Gillingham
8704 Robles Drive
San Diego, CA 92119

Dear Elizabeth,

Congratulations! Your first four seminars went extremely well. We're pleased you will now be presenting under Bureau of Education & Research sponsorship.

Over the twenty years we've been presenting seminars we have learned that the number one most important aspect of a quality seminar is an outstanding presenter. As you know, we're very selective about whom we invite to join our group of presenters because our audience expects the very best from us. I am pleased you have demonstrated you present at the high level of excellence our audience demands.

There is another very important aspect of presenting top quality seminars. In order to do their best work, presenters have to receive top quality support. If there's anything Ken or I or our staff members can do to better support you, please call us at any time. We want to be sure we're doing everything possible to allow you to present the best seminars possible.

Elizabeth, we appreciate your dedication and professionalism. We're proud to be working with you.

Sincerely,



Richard W. Herzberg, Ph.D.
Executive Director

RWH:bk
cc: Ken Young

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CLASS: MSA7F1
INSTRUCTOR: ELIZABETH GILLINGHAM

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TO: Listy
DATE: 1/2

FROM: Ken Young

For your information
 Please take care of this
 Reminder
 Please see me

Per your request
 Per our discussion
 For your files
 Payment approved

Again Congratulations! You can't get off to a better start. Thanks for all preparation, planning and creativity you put into the seminars. What a teacher!

Happy New Year!
Ken

On page 6 we have reproduced some photos of Listy in action, and as you can see she is putting on a dynamic and well received presentation. We congratulate her on this well deserved career advancement.

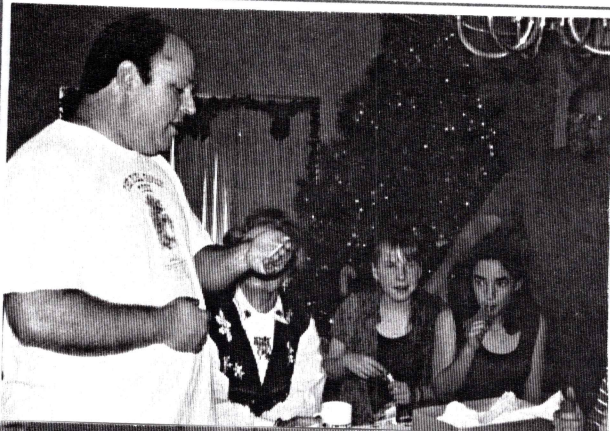
JESSICA BENESCH WINS ESSAY CONTEST

We learned recently that Jessica was declared the winner in an essay contest sponsored by Southwestern Cable TV. The theme of the contest was "What traditions and dreams do Americans share". Her response was selected as the winner over about 50 entries, in that category, by the judging committee. She received a \$250.00 savings bond and also will be entered in a national competition sponsored by Time Warner, Inc. Due to lack of space in this issue we will have to delay publication of her entry and the award announcement until next month. However, we extend our congratulations to Jessica for this achievement, and wish her the best luck in the national competition.

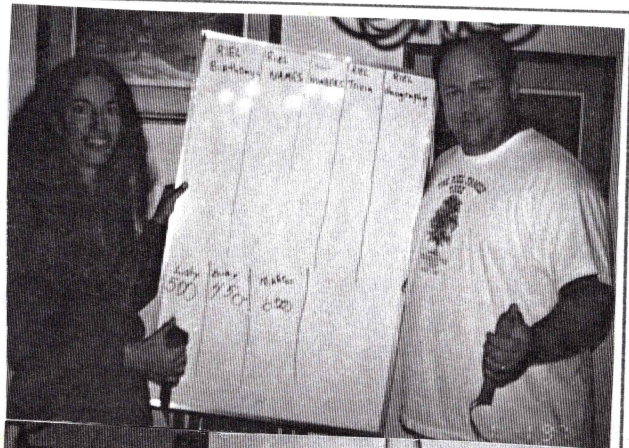
The Riel Family Newsletter

Catch the News

January, 1997



COMMISH
BOB ASKS
QUESTIONS



MARGARET
WINS 1st
PLACE



CONTESTANTS
READY TO
RING BUZZER



JEOPARDY
GAME
AUDIENCE



LISTY AND JJ
CHECK
PRESENTS



ED, JAN AND
MARGARET
WATCH FUN



FRANCIE
CHECKS OUT
A GIFT



MARGARET
LOOKS AT
FAMILY
ALBUM

SOME RIEL BOWL VI ACTION PHOTOGRAPHS

The Riel Family Newsletter

Catch the News



January, 1997

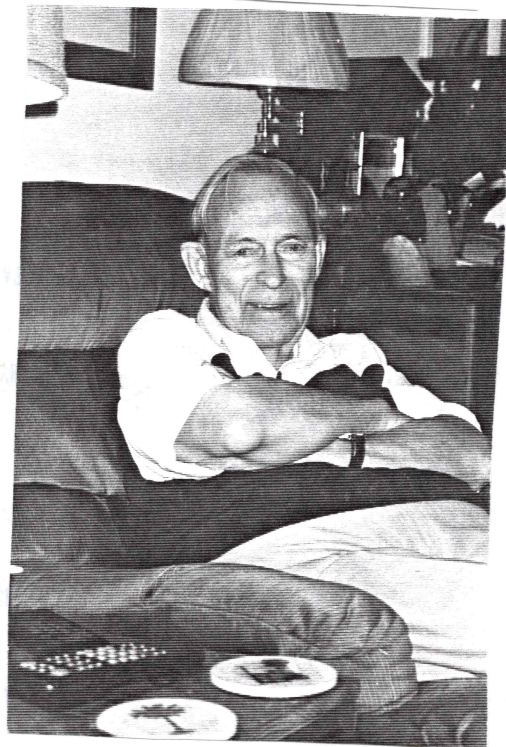
LISTY AND BIRDY VISIT SOUTH CAROLINA



LISTY DEMONSTRATES SOME OF HER TEACHING CONCEPTS IN COLUMBIA

AUNT ELOISE, UNCLE JIMMY AND LISTY IN SUMTER

LISTY TALKS TO SOME OF THE SEMINAR PARTICIPANTS AT COLUMBIA



UNCLE JIMMY, AUNT ELOISE, DAUGHTER DEBBIE SON IN LAW DAVE AND BIRDY IN SUMTER



UNCLE JIMMY



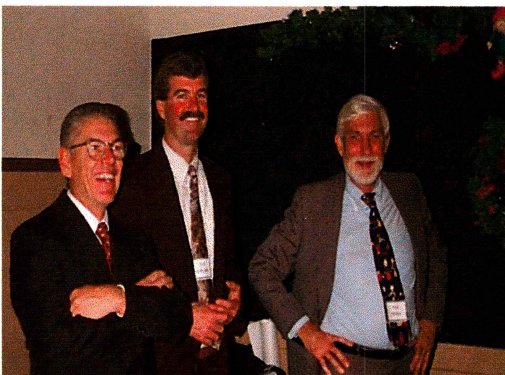
Special 50th Anniversary Edition

Commissioner Speaks Out

The Riel bowl commissioner, in a very rare interview, spoke about the Innocent bystanders attempt to slander him.

"I was very surprised they felt that way. However, I must not allow simple and irrelevant comments to tarnish the great name of RIEL BOWL". He went on to say that "fines were not out of the question, but he was still reviewing the tapes".

In a surprise move two innocent bystanders tried to soften the blow by disclosing to Alan a successful escapee from the IBer's that they really didn't want to say it but Jeff made them.



Bob and Bud confess there unwillingness to go along with the oath.. But were pressured by the rest. This probably explains how they got married too.

When the Commissioner was asked if there would be any retaliation for their remarks he responded "One can understand the frustration they must carry around. I mean it must be rough to be so close to being a Riel, yet only to know that they will never really be one." He went on to say "If they feel I have been a wimp, I accept that as constructive criticism. I will make every attempt to correct this situation, especially when it comes to rulings that the IBer's are involved with."

"As far as singling out one of our best sponsors, Pic 'n' Save, all I can say that if it wasn't for this fine retailer many a Christmas stocking would have gone un-filled"

In closing his last thoughts were consoling ones, "Truly I understand the pent-up frustrations of the male IBer's, after all they did marry Riel Women. I am sure that the comments made the other night were really a sounding off of their own *short* comings. We as Riels must stand above all the good natured comments and be compassionate to their undeniably pathetic situation.



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Richard W. Herzberg, Ph.D.
Executive Director

RWH:bk
cc: Ken Young



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TO: Histy

DATE: 1/2

FROM: Ken Young

- For your information
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- Per your request
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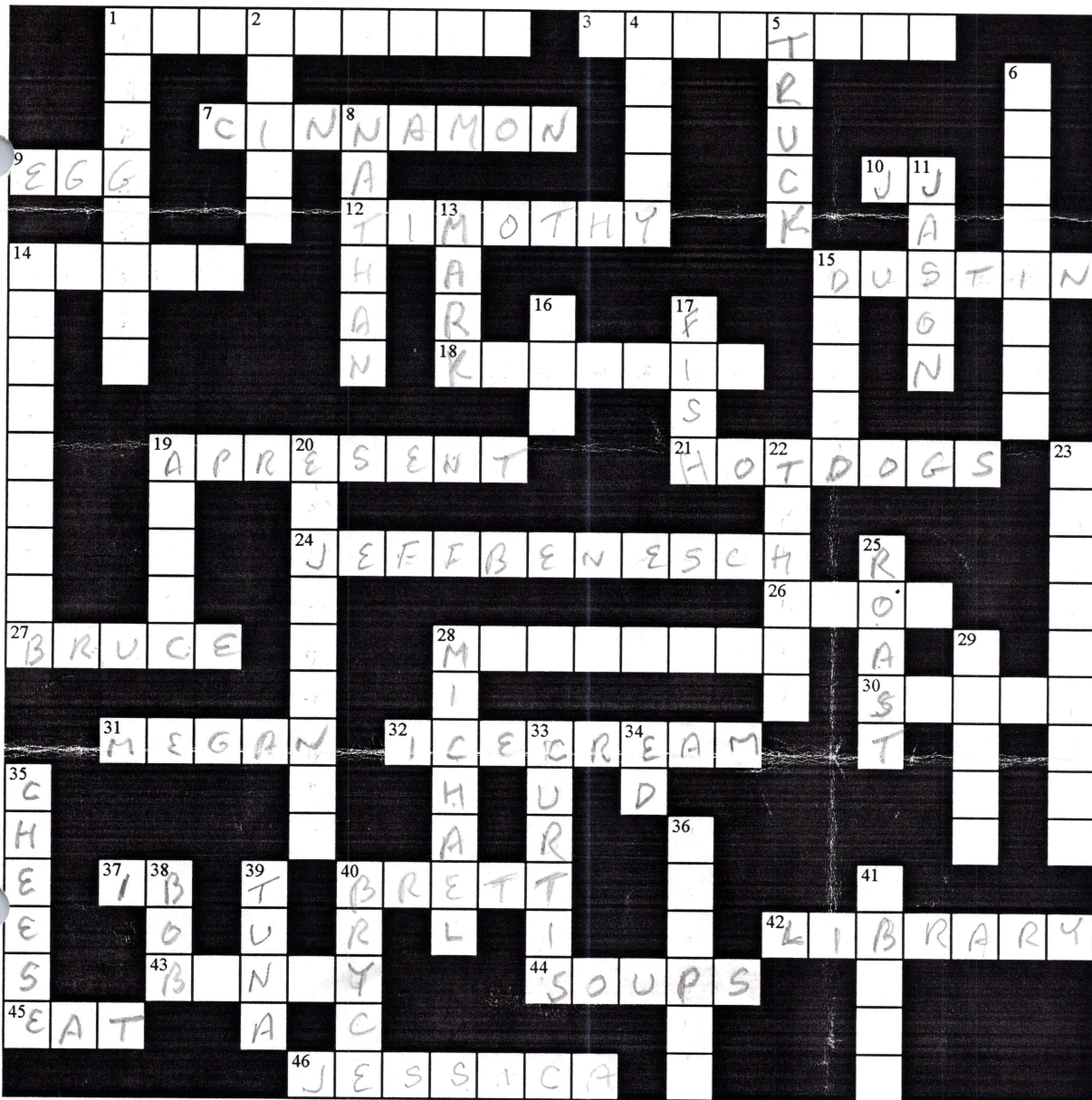
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	SERIES AVERAGE:	6.58	6.69

Evaluations are represented on a 7-point scale with 1 = low and 7 = high.



Not
DUSTIN
CAROL
KRISTIN

Dec 27, 1996 - Crosswords Plus

Across

- 1. A favorite of everybody
- 3. A Benesch favorite
- 7. A spice in Brett's raisin toast
- 9. the least favorite ingredient
- 10. the piano player
- 12. he was his dad's dad's dad
- 14. He likes garlic bread
- 15. He likes the sandwich in 39 down
- 18. She was the bride's maid
- 19. You get this every new years day
- 21. An old family favorite
- 24. He played one of the Riel boys
- 26. She was Carol
- 27. He was Bob
- 28. She was Margeret
- 30. Flowers are her game
- 31. What a Bride!
- 32. A long walk with mom gets you some of

- this
- 37. Almost as bad as ID4, are the ___ 8.
- 40. He spoke the words.
- 42. Jan 'specializes in ___ things'
- 43. a type of salad
- 44. Lots of these in the Riel cookbook
- 45. What we all must do, some better than others.
- 46. She was Francie

Down

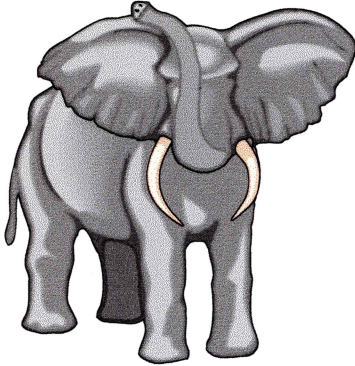
- 1. Last thing you turn off when making bay omletts
- 2. Hartman Style _____, by the way they both can give you a lot of gas.
- 4. Another gas creator
- 5. What Kevin lost then got back
- 6. Jason's meal
- 8. He makes a 'Great

Special'

- 11. What a best man
- 13. Video Producer
- 14. You need something from your closet to make this.
- 15. First one to use a co-author
- 16. Jessica's _____
- 17. A Friday Special
- 19. You would think we were Italian the way we make these
- 20. you add 35 down to this
- 22. Smoked, baked, fried, soup, boiled and micro-waved.
- 23. A festive salad
- 25. A Sunday meal.
- 28. Was practicing for a future engagement.
- 29. Curtis makes one full of energy
- 33. He was at the wedding
- 34. He's a dad and was dad

- 35. Foxy call
- 36. Sherbert goes with this
- 38. Can he sing, or what?
- 39. A Bumble Bee made sandwich
- 40. He likes 20 down and 35 down
- 41. Apples and whip cream

White Elephant Exchange Rules



Yes it's time for that once a year ritual we have fondly come to know as the Riel Bowl headline event the White Elephant gift exchange. As most of you know each couple brings two gifts, one nice and one that is, how shall we say, something laying around the house that we would love to get rid of. They are both wrapped so that no one knows which is which.

Numbers are selected by random draw to decide what order we pick in. Please keep in mind that the winner of Riel Jeopardy gets the last pick. The first person selects a gift and opens it. The next person then has the option of stealing the gift or selecting a new one. There is no maximum amount of steals however you may only own the same gift once.

More Photo's



Shawl, wig, hat

Innocent Bystanders' Skit Frank and Edith's 50th Wedding Anniversary
12/28/96

A sign sits on easel with Lyndon address, and December 28, 2006 date in bold letters. Small table and 2 chairs, Edith (IB stand-in) sitting, Frank (IB stand-in) approaches with funny looking cane.

Scene 1: Frank and Edith

Frank: Now that we're going to see the whole family tonite at our 60th Wedding Anniversary Party, I think we should come up with some logical plan to take the great-grandchildren on their birthdays.

Edith: So many, many children. God bless them all.

Frank: Even though we've cut our golf down to 2 days per week, and we usually play at the Presidio Park course, we still can't afford to take each great-grandchild one at a time, and every one to a meal, movie, and the toy store.

Edith: But Frank, since you've patented your "Putter-cane," the money is ~~no~~ ~~problem.~~ just rolling in.

Frank: Oh, it's not the money. It's the time. Now that nearly all the grandchildren are having children, think what we're facing here Edith. If all 21 grandkids average 3 children, that's 63 birthdays. Better than 1 per week. And if you include our children, their birthdays and anniversaries, the grandchildren's birthdays and anniversaries, we could be looking at a potential of (pauses with calculator), 121 celebrations per year!

Edith: No wonder he call's his restaurant the Happy Chef. He's so happy to see us every few days. (Laughs at joke.)

Frank: Thank goodness they turned Keifers old market into a Pic 'n' Save Junior last year. That has saved us a fortune in toys and groceries.

Edith: Yes. And I can walk there. It's like a whole new store every time I go in.

Frank: Well, here's my suggestion. We pick one day per month to celebrate. Anyone in the family who has a birthday or anniversary in that month comes over, we rent a bus, and we go as a group out to eat, to the movie and hit Pic'n'save on the way home. Now what do you think of that?

Edith: So many, many children, God bless them all!

A sign sits on easel with December 28, 2006 date in bold letters. Small table and 2 chairs, Richard (IB stand-in) sitting, writing at table, Liz approaches.

Scene 2: Liz and Richard

Liz: Well, what have you been so busily writing there all afternoon, Richard?

Richard: I am planning my reentry into politics, Elizabeth.

Liz: (Rolling her eyes) Been there, done that, Richard. Besides, there's no mayoral race coming up anytime soon.

Richard: Mayor!? Huh!

Liz: School board then? We'll at least that's workable. You don't have to spend a fortune running for school board. Which board are you contemplating? Community College? City schools?

Richard: School Board!? Huh!

Liz: City Council? Richard, city council races have become very contentious, and very expensive lately. How do you plan on financing a City Council race?

Richard: Councilman Riel? Huh!

Liz: What then? Congressman Riel? Senator Riel? Have you lost your mind?

Richard: How does Governor Riel grab you, first lady?

Liz: Governor Riel? On whose ticket? Are you sure Susan Golding isn't running for a third term?

Richard: She can't. Two's the limit in California. Besides, I have a sure-fire way to get in front of the voters. A method no one else has ever tried. An advertising vehicle no candidate has even considered. Every Californian, from Redding to Rialto, from the Oregon border to San Ysidro, will know my name.

Liz: This doesn't involve any nudity, does it?

Richard: Ha, ha. Liz, now that there are no more banks in the state, everyone does their banking in the supermarket. And everyone that comes in the market to bank or shop is going to see my name.

Liz: You don't mean. . .

Richard: Yes, Elizabeth. The back side of deposit slips and cash register receipts. Governor Riel. Has quite a ring to it, no?

Eddie and Jan

Jan: Well, Ed, big day today, what with Timmy joining Riel and Sons, Home Builders. I never thought we'd have all four boys helping you run the business. But I guess with that contract for 500 homes to build, you'll need them all.

Ed: Yep. I'm sure all of them will be a great help to me in the long run. And this is a business that hopefully they'll keep going after we retire in a few years.

Jan: So I bet you'll be out at the worksite early this morning, meeting with Tim and the boys, getting the crews going, just making sure we don't fall behind.

Ed: Well. . .

Jan: 'Cause I know you know how important this deal is to our future and the kids now that they are starting to get families to worry about. . .

Ed: Well. . .

Jan: And, I know that you realize, more than anyone else, how important that hands-on, personal management style is in a big job like this with dozens of sub-contractors, architects, inspectors. . .

Ed: Yea, Jan, your right, of course. . .

Jan: And Ed, I couldn't help but notice that it's 6:30 and you're not even in your work clothes yet, when ordinarily you'd be out the door already, and your tools are not in your truck, and you haven't packed a lunch. . .

Ed: Well, I've got an explanation Jan if you'd let me get a word in edgewise. . .

Jan: I'd think with Timmy starting, and this huge project with our very future depending on it at such a crucial stage, that nothing could be more important, Ed

Ed: Two words, Jan.

Jan: Two words? What two words?

Ed: Surf's up!

Scene 4 Margaret and Bud

Bud: (Hauls big box and puts it down on table) Well, here you go Margaret. Let's see you outgrow this one.

Margaret: But Bud, we just got a new Mac Millennium 6 months ago.

Bud: Margaret, this is a used Cray 45000, from the University Supercomputer Center. This particular model was used by the Defense Department to track all military traffic, all planes, ships, tanks, satellites, and installations all over the world. It has 2 million gigabytes of hard drive, 500,000 Ram memory and a modem so fast it can download the entire Smithsonian database in 10 minutes.

Margaret: That's good, Bud, because I intend to download the Smithsonian database tomorrow. It was sooooo considerate of you to pick this up for me.

Bud: You know Margaret, I just realized we've had more computers than anniversaries. We've been married 30 years and have owned 32 computers. We've gone from an Apple 2e to a 2g to a Mac Classic, to an LC, a Performa, a Centris, a 5200, 6200, 7200, Power Macs, Platinum Macs, Millennium Macs, 486s, 586s, 1 gigs, 2 gigs, when will it ever stop? Will you ever have enough? You're insatiable, woman!

Margaret: Bud, I love when you talk passionately about CPUs.

Bud: And that's another thing, Margaret. Ever since the kids went off to school, you've been consumed with your work. You're more familiar with your keyboard than you are with me. You gaze into the eyes of your monitor with an interest we used to share. What's happened to us, Margaret?

Margaret: Nothing's happened to us, Bud. We've just expanded our capabilities, that's all.

Bud: I'm facing retirement in a couple years and you're involved passionately with a computer, building electronic education and commerce. What happened to our golden years?

Margaret: Oh, Bud. You're exaggerating. Now help me move this Cray into the bedroom. It was so kind of you to move into Michael's room so I can have a little more room for my, er, I mean, our computers.

Scene 5: Francie and Alan

The scene takes place in the Dallas Airport. Francie and Alan are both carrying small suitcases with the names of many cities and countries applied. They are walking in opposite directions when they cross paths.

Francie: Well, well, look what the cat dragged in.

Alan: Charmed, I'm sure. What the heck are you doing in Dallas?

Francie: On my way to Miami for an ISO symposium. We're introducing ISO to the Latin American community in a big way. Mucho Dinero, Senor!

Alan: Oh yea, aren't you now in charge of ISO overseas?

Francie: I am vice-president of development for ISO Internacional! What are you doing in Texas?

Alan: They put me in charge of Huffy, Southwest, or Tex-mex as we call it. I'm now responsible for all sales west of the Mississippi. I ain't home much anymore. Which reminds me, who are the boys spending Christmas with? And what about your parents' 60th Anniversary in a couple weeks?

Francie: I'm in Paris that whole week, but I've already arranged a video teleconference call so I can make a live appearance via satellite. I'm singing "You light up my life" to Mom and Dad.

Alan: You and who else? Well, maybe you can lipsync that old Debbie Boone version. I have to be in Albuquerque on Monday, Vegas on Tuesday, Phoenix and LA Wednesday and Thursday, but I ought to be home on New Years Day. I'll have the boys over for some football watching. Then I'm off to Seattle, Portland and San Fran until the tenth..

Francie: I'm in Paris, then London, Rome, Berlin, and then Miami again. I should be home by the 5th. I'm flying the boys over to Germany for Christmas Day and they'll come with me to Florida. We haven't been to Disneyworld for 6 months at least. Bryce will just be finishing Winter break and Brett doesn't start Spring Training until February.

Alan: In fact I've arranged all my Spring sales meetings around the Cactus League schedule. We had it written into his contract that if he gets traded, it has to be to another team that trains in Arizona.

Francie: Well, you get the boys on New Years then, I'll have them on Christmas, you get Cactus league games on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, I'll take Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and we'll split Sundays. Bryce can visit us on our off days from baseball or if either of us is in town. What do you think?

Alan: I think I need a Phd just to keep track of all of this!

Scene 6: Carol and Jeff

Jeff is sitting at a table working on a calendar when Carol approaches.

Jeff: You may not believe this, but I don't think we have more than a couple things planned for the next few weeks. Boy, getting the kids off to college sure has lightened the load around here.

Carol: Yea, other than my parent's 60th Anniversary, I can't think of much else going on. Except my soccer thing. I don't think I've told you about that one yet.

Jeff: Yeeeeees?

Carol: Well, my over-50 soccer team wants me to play in a Holiday Tournament next weekend.

Jeff: So? Why not?

Carol: It's in Tucson.

Jeff: Ok, so we go to Tucson. What's the big deal?

Carol: Well, the tournament starts Friday, but school isn't out until 2:30. It's the last day of the semester so I have a big holiday party planned for the kids and all the volunteers. Then we have our staff Secret Santa gift exchange. I have to change my bulletin boards since it's the end of the month, I need to change everything in the classroom to read 2007, I have parent-teacher conferences scheduled and our staff party is Friday night.

Jeff: Ok, so you miss the first game of the tournament, no big deal.

Carol: Saturday morning, I'm signed up to give blood at the bloodbank, Sea World is having a teacher orientation on a whale unit, I've got a planning session with my sisters at 11 AM for the Anniversary Party and Jessica wants us to come see her new play opening Saturday night.

Jeff: So maybe we make the final 2 games on Sunday.

Carol: That would be nice, except that we promised Dusty we'd help him apartment hunt for next semester this weekend. Jason has his first game with the Sockers. And when am I supposed to do my Christmas shopping? And baking? And sewing? And when do we get our tree? Time is running out.

Jeff: So much for our having some time to ourselves the next few weeks.

Carol: Now, honey, we have every night to ourselves. Except Tuesday and Thursday when I play soccer, And Wednesday when I have my Sorority meetings, Sunday is X-files night and Monday I start a new stitching class.

Jeff: Well, clue me in when you have an evening free, will you?

Scene 7: Robert and Karla

Robert is sitting at the table when Karla walks up holding a toilet seat in one hand.

Karla: Bob, I hope you remember you promised me that today, not tomorrow, not next weekend, but today, you'll finally get around to fixing that toilet in the spare bathroom.

Robert: Karla, I have every intention of doing just that. But a little later, ^{sweetie} non.

Karla: Bob, what could be more important than fixing this gosh-darn toilet?

Robert: Well, I promised Jason that I'd help him wire his new stereo system this morning. And then I'm helping Dad with his newest invention, the electric putter.

Karla: (Shaking the toilet seat.) Yea, and how about using your electric drill and your electric brains on this electric toilet seat? It's been over ten years and we still can't use that bathroom!

Robert: Well, Katie and Brian are coming home next week and I have to have their laptops fully programmed and ready to go before Christmas. And I'm setting up this dish antenna system to use at my parent's anniversary party so Francie can do a presentation from Paris. She's singing "You Light Up My Life." My suggestion. Get it?

Karla: Bob, she's singing?!? Solo?

Robert: Don't tell her, but I'm working on an overdub. Debbie Boone will actually be doing the singing.

Karla: So, Bob, give me a firm day that this bathroom will be operational. We're having the Riel Bowl for the 16th straight year and for 15 years, nobody's been able to use that bathroom.

Robert: Karla, I have to finish the electrical plans for Ed's entire sub-division by Thursday. And our Union is doing a "Feed-the-homeless" program next weekend.

Karla: You're going to be among the homeless if I don't get that bathroom fixed, Robert Riel.

Robert: Yes, dear. (Grabs the toilet seat.) Top of my agenda, dear. (Exits, winks to audience.)

Scene 8: Bob and Listy

Bob approaches Listy who's sitting at the table with a bike tire slung over his shoulder.

Bob: So List, today's looking pretty good for a bike ride. No rain, just a little wind, and no kids coming over to do their laundry!

Listy: And a nice day for a run. . .

Bob: (Not really listening) So I thought I'd ride to the beach and head up the coast. . .

Listy: Good route for a jog. . .

Bob: (Ignoring her) Then when I get up to Oceanside, I thought I'd head inland and ride into Escondido. . .

Listy: Sounds like about marathon distance so far. . .

Bob: Then, after a bit of lunch, I thought I'd head up through Ramona and up the hill to Julian.

Listy: Sounds great, Bob, good route so far. . .

Bob: (Interrupting again) Once I reach the top of the hill, it's an easy ride past Lake Cuyamaca and out to Highway 8. . .

Listy: I could do that. . .

Bob: Where I would ride down to the Viejas Outlet Stores where we could finish our Christmas shopping.

Listy: Bob, that's the best part of the whole thing.

Bob: So, what do you say? Will you follow me in the van?

Listy: Bob, I'm going to run that route! That's just a measly 2 marathons. I was hoping you'd follow me on your bike!

Scene 9: Bruce and Birdie

Bruce is pouring over a map on the table. Birdie is sitting at the table, looking at her fingernails.

Bruce: Bird, kids are gone, I'm feeling great, camper's running fine, you're not working next summer, let's plan some vacations. Just you, me and the great outdoors.

Birdie: Sounds great, honey. And very romantic.

Bruce: If we call now, we could probably get some reservations at Yosemite, Sequoia National Park, Lake Tahoe, maybe the Grand Canyon.

Birdie: We haven't seen any of those in years, Bruce. Any of the above suits me fine.

Bruce: Well, I've got a few days off around July 4th, that might be a great time to go.

Birdie: Well, it might be, but Bruce, I've already promised Listy we'd go shopping that weekend. There are the best deals of the summer on July 4th.

Bruce: I've got a 4-day break at Labor Day. We could go to the Sierras and back if we get an early start.

Birdie: Labor Day, Bruce? That's when all the Summer Clearance Sales are happening. Mom and I have a tradition to uphold.

Bruce: Veteran's Day then. The weather's a bit cool, but Arizona is beautiful that time of the year. In Sedona, all the leaves are turning color.

Birdie: Early November? Camping? Bruce, Veteran's Day kicks off all the Holiday Sales. And we'd have only one day off of work to shop, er, I mean, camp. Not much time to get there and back.

Bruce: Well, Thanksgiving is a long weekend. I could probably get Wednesday off and we could spend 5 days in San Felipe. Cha, cha, cha!

Birdie: Bruce, Bruce, Bruce. You know what the biggest shopping day of the year is? It's the day after Thanksgiving. My sisters would disown me if I went out of town that weekend.

Bruce: (Totally rejected now) Ok, Bird. I give up. Why don't I just take two weeks off next summer, and we'll drive up to Minneapolis, camp in the parking lot of the Mall of America and you can do your thing in the largest shopping center in the country?!

Bird: Now you're talking!

The Innocent Bystanders

Charter Members:

Bud, Alan, Jan, Liz, Jeff, Carla, Bob, and Bruce

Jan: Thank you for joining us, ladies and gentlemen, on this most auspicious occasion. Tonight, I share with you a story of some most remarkable people. Sure, 50 years of marriage deserves some mention, but I dare say, this. . . err. . . undertaking pales in the face of a much grander achievement. Yes, ladies and gentlemen, tonight we celebrate the twenty-first year of existence for the few, the proud, the . . .
Innocent Bystanders! (I. B.'s cheer).

Alan: Formed as an alternative to extensive psychotherapy, the Innocent Bystanders group provided needed focus and stability to those naive, but well-meaning men and women who succumbed to the charms of the wily Riels. To this day, members rely on the strength of the group's number in matching wits with those trained from birth in various urban survival techniques such as not being the last to the dinner table and carrying on and understanding several conversations at once.

Bud: As the reigning senior member of the Innocent Bystanders and by the authority vested in me as current two-year host of Thanksgiving dinner, I invite you all to look inside your hearts, to examine your souls and to join us in renewing your vows to those commitments in your lives which have virtually obliterated any memory of your carefree single days and over which you have pitifully little or no control.

Bud: Innocent bystanders, raise your right hands and repeat after me:

I . . . a loyal charter member. . . do solemnly swear. . . to abide by the Innocent Bystander Creed. . .

Bud: Answer "I do" to each of the following:

Do you acknowledge experiencing momentary disorientation, cold clammy skin, and rapid heartbeat upon first observing the chaotic, three-ring-circus-like activity within the Riel household?

Do you promise to take to your grave knowledge of the state of Robert's bedroom on Lyndon Road?

Do you understand Pic 'n' Save to be vital to the Southern California economy?

Do you understand that, even though you have thoroughly dominated every athletic event in which you have been pitted against the Riels over the last twenty years, you must, nevertheless, pretend that they have won convincingly?

Do you understand that even though you may struggle mightily for your life at Riel holiday gatherings over the last turkey wing or risk being trampled for a bit of mud pie you will, nevertheless experience the true meaning of Christmas and Thanksgiving at those times?

Do you realize the value of knowing a good mechanic (other than Bruce) by his or her first name, and do you concede that virtually anything can (and will) happen to any car driven by a Riel?

Do you treasure and proudly display the scars you bear as a veteran of annual white elephant exchanges?

Do you secretly believe that the Riel Bowl commissioner is a big wimp?

Do you understand that Edith and Frank Riel, tonight celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary, are, in fact, responsible for this support group . . . err. . . this supportive group?

With absolutely no authority whatsoever, but with a heart pure in the knowledge that in all matters pertaining to the eight upstanding and truly exemplary Innocent Bystanders, not one Riel will be consulted, I now pronounce you a reaffirmed charter member of this most esteemed group.

**For all the times you stood by me,
for all the truth that you made me see,
for all the joy you brought to my life,
For all the wrongs that you made right,
for every dream you made come true,
for all the love I found in you,
I'll be forever thankful, baby,
You're the one who held me up,
Never let me fall,
You're the one who saw me through,
Through it all.**

**You were my strength when I was weak,
You were my voice when I couldn't speak
You were my eyes when I couldn't see,
You saw the best there was in me,
Lifted me up when I couldn't reach,
You gave me faith 'cause you believed,
I'm everything I am because you loved me.**

**You gave me wings and made me fly,
You touched my hand I could touch the sky
I lost my faith. you gave it back to me,
You said no star was out of reach,**

**You stood by me and I stood tall,
I had your love, I had it all,
I'm grateful for each day you gave me,
Baby, I don't know that much,
But I know this much is true,
I was blessed because I was
Loved by you. . .**

**You were my strength when I was weak,
You were my voice when I couldn't speak
You were my eyes when I couldn't see,
You saw the best there was in me,
Lifted me up when I couldn't reach,
You gave me faith, 'cause you believed,
I'm everything I am,
because you loved me. . .**

**You were always there for me,
A tender wind that carried me,
A light in the dark, shining your love
into my life,
You've been my inspiration, through the
lies you were the truth,**

**My world was a better place,
Because of you.**

**You were my strength when I was weak,
You were my voice when I couldn't speak
You were my eyes when I couldn't see
You saw the best there was in me,
Lifted me up when I couldn't reach,
You gave me faith 'cause you believed,
I'm everything I am
because you loved me. . .**

**You were my strength when I was weak,
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I'm everything I am
because you loved me. . .**