

Tim and Jessica star in musicals

Tim plays role of Sancho, Squire to Don Quixote, Knight of LaMancha – Jessica has the lead female role of Portia in the new musical Great American Tall Tales

POINT LOMA HIGH SCHOOL THESPIANS PRESENT

Man of La Mancha

Tim Riel

March
4th, 5th, 6th, 12th, 13th at 7pm
11th at 3pm

SAN DIEGO/EAST COUNTY
CIT presents

World PREMIERE

GREAT AMERICAN TALL TALES

March 5, 12 & 13 at 7:00 p.m.
March 6, 7, 13 & 14 at 2:00 p.m.
Lewis Middle School Auditorium, 5170 Geesebiter Avenue, San Diego
Spring 1999

Sponsored in part by:
C & D Towing Specialists
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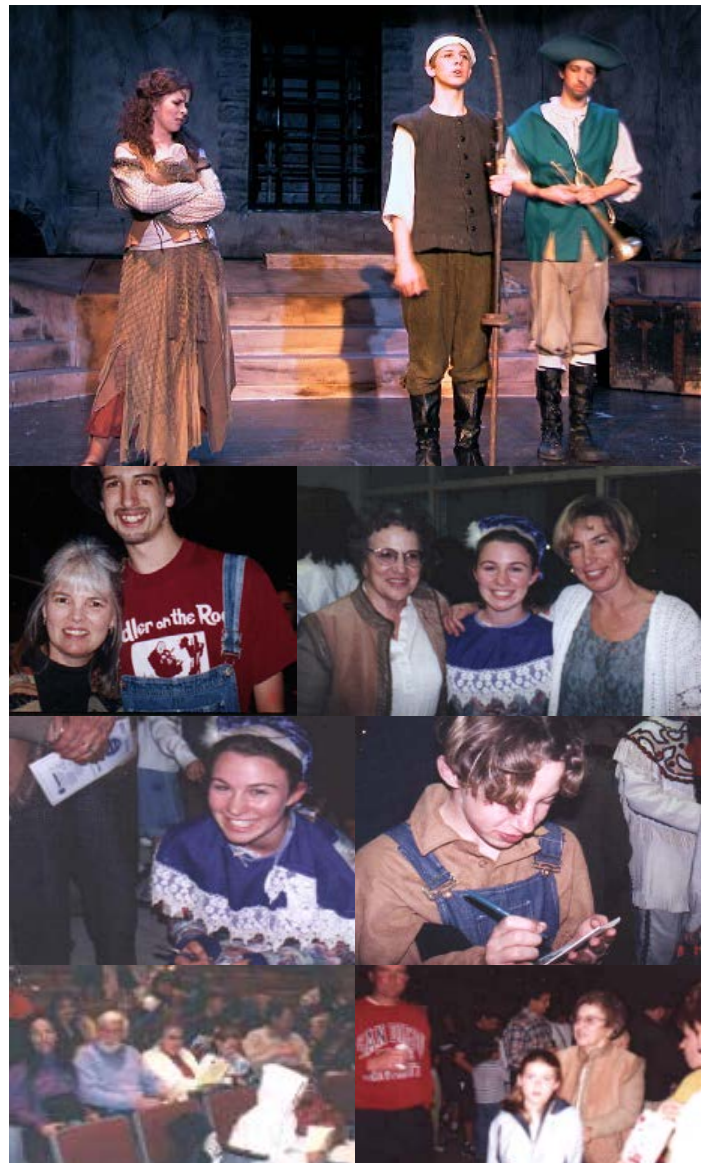
On Saturday, March 6th we enjoyed seeing Tim Riel play a major role, as Sancho, in the popular musical "Man of LaMancha". This show, which enjoyed a long run in New York and since has been performed in numerous cities across the country, is based on the story of a somewhat odd Spaniard who aspired to become Knight. Sancho is his loyal companion and helper, and together they act out the story of the misadventures of Don Quixote. Tim did a terrific job in a demanding role that involved both singing and dialogue, and we congratulate him and look forward to his next project.

On the following Saturday we watched Jessica play the lead in a new musical created by Paul Russell, Director of CYT. This delightful musical tells a series of stories about some of the great characters of American Folklore. The story line is built around

a group of small children in their classroom. Puck and Portia (Jessica) materialize and teach them history through stories about many real and fictional characters, including Davy Crockett, Johnny Appleseed, John Henry, Paul Bunyan, Calamity Jane, Annie Oakley and Pecos Bill. Scenes from the

life of each of these characters are acted out with much singing and dancing. Puck and Portia act as narrators, introducing the various segments of the show. It was a great performance, and Jessica did an outstanding job in a role that required singing, dancing, and much narration. We all enjoyed the performance, and met afterwards at the home of Carol and Jeff, for an informal after the show party. It was a special evening, enjoyed by all, and we congratulate Jessica on a job well done.

Dustin also was a member of the cast, and played several roles, one as Old Aaron, in the Johnny Appleseed sequence, and appeared in several other scenes as one of the song and dance group members. He did a great job, and we enjoyed seeing him perform. We have some pictures taken at both shows, as follows.



The Riel Family Newsletter

Catch the News

April, 1999

Michael Merica stars in program in celebration of Greek Independence Day

On Sunday, March 21 the Greek community in the San Diego area celebrated the Greek equivalent of our 4th of July celebration. The historical basis for this celebration goes back to the year 1453, when the Ottoman Turks conquered Constantinople and plunged this ancient city into 400 years of Islamic dominance. The details are outlined in the article shown at right, written in both Greek and English by Michael, and published in the program.

The celebration, attended by about 200 people, began with a buffet luncheon of traditional Greek food. During Lent the Greek tradition is a Lenten diet which eliminates any animal based food. The entrée was a delicious fish dish with a great olive oil based sauce, enjoyed by all.

After the meal the program was presented, and Michael played the role of a Greek priest instructing groups of children who recited, in Greek, various poems in celebration of the day. Afterwards a group of students put on a demonstration of traditional Greek dances. The readers were from the Ss. Constantine & Helen's Greek School, and the dancers were the Ss. Constantine and Helen's *Armonia Dancers*. It was a very interesting program, and Michael did a great job, not only in the show but also in organizing the entire program.



Grandpa and Grandma were joined by Margaret, and Grandma had a chance to talk to a friend she knew from the time she was living in Tehran. We also enjoyed visiting with Aunt Isa, Michael's mom, as well as Linda and the Merica children, Julia, Athena, and Cassandra. We have some pictures, which are printed on page 3.

THE YEARS 1453 TO 1821

"The City is taken! The City is taken! "

This heart-rending lamentation could be heard far and wide amid the screams and thunder of cannons and horses, on that fateful day of May 29th, 1453.

The city was Constantinople. Its few valiant defenders quickly rallied around Emperor Constantine, exhausted, and decimated. One by one, they fell, adding forever their glorious names to the roster of the nation's heroes, and to History's immortals. As the hordes of Ottoman Turks sullied the ancient streets and hallowed places, of a city that was the center of the world for 11 centuries, the cries of the shrieking and horrified Byzantines were gradually drowned in an ever increasing crescendo of Allahu Akhbar! Allah is great!

The bright light of Hellenism, a light that like a primeval force had illuminated the world and elevated man to his most divine state, was now smothered by the ruthless, horribly efficient barbarism of the East. The great city of Constantine taken. The magnificent edifice of Justinian, St Sophia sullied by the infidel. Four centuries of darkness, brutality and abject slavery had dawned upon the descendants of Pericles.

And yet despite it all, the horrors, the massacres, the multiple attempts at genocide, were not enough to eradicate the spirit of Leonidas. The best the Turks could hope to do was to kill the Greeks. They could never defeat them! From beneath the crushing weight of a cruel and vicious tyranny, the all but smothered sprig that was the Greek spirit, endured, suffered, persevered.

Until that spring morning of 1821. The little sprig, watered with the blood and sweat of countless heroes and bathed with the light of Orthodox Christianity and its unshakable faith in our Savior, grew into a massive tree with roots that ran as deep as its branches were high, touching the heavens.

Weakened by centuries of evil and brutality, the iron grip of the enemy weakened. In Ipiros, in Attica, in Mani and the Peloponnese, in Crete and throughout the islands. Wherever Greek hearts beat with heroes' blood, wherever the smell of liberty and freedom was fragrant in the

nostrils of the oppressed, one phrase ever louder was uttered. ELEFThERIA I THANATOS. Freedom or death!

The mothers of Greece told their sons those same words uttered so long ago by Spartan mothers.

"I tan I epi tas" "Come back with your shield or on it!"

This day we reclaim our ancient cities and the hallowed graves of our ancestors. This day with God's help, Our great mother Hellas will ascend the blood-washed marbles of the Parthenon, holding in her arms a dead hero. There, in the bosom of our most sacred altar, she will bury him. And as she looks up through tear-soaked eyes she sees fluttering from the sacred rock, a flag. It is our flag. The flag of Greece, its blue and white mingling again with the heavens and the blue Aegean. Proud, Free, Eternal.

The great effort of those Greek heroes whose blood and pain gave us liberty as a nation, we honor today. We honor not only those who fought with saber and rifle on the hallowed battle-grounds of Dervenakia, Tripoli and Messolongi. We also honor those who, far from the motherland, fought their own battles in the salons and ministries and great halls of Europe, incessantly lobbying the Great Christian Powers of the time to come to our aid. Mother Greece has always had two children. One who stayed behind to keep alive the eternal flame that gave light to the world. The other travels far and wide, an omni-present ambassador of Hellas in foreign lands, yet never out of earshot of the Motherland. Always ready to help, to protect, to nourish and defend that which is Greece's greatest legacy to humanity. A state of mutual respect, tolerance and cooperation between men and women underlined by a civilization which was Christian in character, before Christ. A state called Democracy.

(Greek and English by Michael Merica)

The Riel Family Newsletter

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April, 1999

In case you do not recall, Michael is Grandma's nephew, the youngest son of her oldest brother, Romulus Merica, and his wife, whom you have met, Aunt Isa. The photo at left was taken in 1983, when we visited Aunt Isa in Athens. At that time Michael was



still in high school. The other photos, shown at right and below, were taken at the celebration.



Let's hear from you, so we can fit into your busy schedules. Any Sunday is OK, - first come first served!

Birthday calendar for April

Dustin Benesch	April 3	14
Brian Riel	April 5	10
Kevin Riel	April 11	20

A poem by Megan Riel-Mehan

Expectations

This is what you've been practicing for

My chest adds an extra beat to the music
 The curtains rise
 and stop my heart
 Each eye is on me
 waiting, expecting

Breathe in
Breathe out

I open my mouth
 The words are there
 This is what I've been practicing for
 Their voices are silent
 so they can hear mine
 Their expectations
 Give me power
 And a desire to
 go beyond

This is where I belong
 the stage beneath me
 the audience before me
 and a character within me
 the words I recite
 Become mine own
 I say them for the first time

This is my moment

They hang on every word
 Watch every movement
 I smile
 They laugh
 I gasp
 they hold their breath
 I cry and they give me their tears
 I hold their hearts
 and give them mine

Megan Riel-Mehan

Classic truck progress report



The latest word on the Chevy truck Craig and Bruce are re-modeling is that the paint job is **DONE** and the truck is back home ready for the final assembly steps. The photo on the left shows Craig with the front grill, ready to mount. It

won't be long now, so watch out for the final report and a picture of the **CLASSIC TRUCK!**

Birthday celebrations

There were no kids celebrations again this past month, and we are seriously delinquent in this department. We need schedules from Megan, Michael, Brett, Jessica and Craig.

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Some sports items

We have the following pictures of Megan, one showing her stealing the ball in a soccer game, the other participating in a new sport, relay racing. We understand from Margaret



that she really is enjoying the relay race format, and hopes to continue to participate in this school activity.



Francie reports that Brett and Bryce have been on a trip with Alan. The destination was Phoenix, Arizona, to check out the 1999 Padres. If past history is a guide they will bring back a bunch of autographed stuff to add to their already extensive collection.

Travel news

Francie went on another business trip, this one to New York City. As mentioned in the last issue of RFNL, this trip was to demonstrate some of the new hairstyles she created recently. We hope to have a more complete report for the next issue.

Robert and Karla recently spent a long weekend in Laughlin, where they met Karla's dad for a family visit. We understand that they did not have much luck at the casinos, but otherwise had a great time.

Help wanted – RFNL is looking for a volunteer sports editor

For some time the RFNL editor has been dissatisfied with his inability to keep up with all of the sports activities of all of the kids. It seems that as the kids get older the sports activities increase, and it is difficult to keep up with baseball, soccer, golf, football, running, and who knows what else. Consequently, we are seeking formal assistance through the acquisition of someone, grown up or kid, who

would be willing to assume responsibility for collecting all the sports news, each month, and writing a column depicting family participation in the various activities. In addition, this editor would have an opportunity express his/her opinion on any sports related activities. There is no pay involved, but it is an opportunity for someone to develop his writing and reporting skills. In addition, his column would include his picture, and his own byline. E-mail or regular mail, as desired, can be used to submit material. Space will be available for pictures associated with the items covered in the stories. Contact Grandpa for more information.

Margaret celebrates 49th birthday at the Ed Riel home

The evening several family members attended the Tim Riel :Man of LaMancha" show happened to be the night of Margaret's birthday, March 6th. Consequently, the after the show party included a birthday celebration. The guests enjoyed drinks, snacks, lots of pizzas, and of course, the birthday cake. Everyone was in a partying mood, and all joined in to wish Margaret a happy birthday! We have some pictures, as follows.



Some movie reviews

Recently we have seen some movies, and a few comments are in order. "October Sky" is a modest, run of the mill type film. The story involves a young man and his ambition to get away from a domineering father and work in a coal mine. He succeeds in getting into college through his interest in rocketry, and wins over his father.

Another film, ED tv is a crude attempt to be funny by televising the 24 hour activity of one young man. A camera crew follows him through his daily activities, and the situations sometimes are comical. However, there is far too much crude and offensive material. Not recommended.