

## Finally!! – A decision Listy promoted to principal

We got the good news in an e-mail from Birdy.

Hi family,  
 The news is in! Listy has been promoted to principal status. She has been assigned to DePortal Middle School in Tierrasanta. Can you believe it...two principals in one household! That's one powerful place! Congratulations Listy~ I know you are going to love this new challenge and that school is in for quite a treat with you at the helm! love,  
 Birdy



An interview was conducted on August 2, 2003, with RFNL Staff Writer Margaret Riel asking the questions.

*RFNL - It has been quite a while since it became known that you were under consideration for a principal position. Why did the decision take so long?*

Listy – Cause they knew it was me, ha, ha! Because, from what I could gather, it had to go before the Board of Education, and the Superintendent was very active in the process, as well as the new person in charge of the schools. What they told me was that they were going to review the process and then make a decision from there.

*RFNL – How many candidates were there, and was more than one position open?*

Listy – There were originally four candidates – one was placed at a different principalship. Then, they got down to three candidates. The interviewer stated that when I was placed at DePortal that position was not open because that principal was there, but she said “we knew from the moment we interviewed you that we would love to have you at DePortal.” That told me that they knew all along that they were going to move the DePortal principal to the Scripps position, which was fine with me.

*RFNL – Who and what was involved in the selection process?*

I had to write out an application and go through a paper screening process. Then, I had to do an interview with about eight people on a panel, and then I had to do something the district called a walk-through. You go into four different classroom instruction (sessions) and then you have ten minutes to present what you saw, what you would change, how you would help the teacher, and what you would do for staff development in terms of what you do.

*RFNL – How do you think the new principal will do at your old school?*

Well – I think she will have a challenge, without a doubt. I don't know if she thoroughly understands what she got into – bless her heart!

*RFNL – Why do you think she will have a challenge?*

Because as we went through the punch list of all the things that in the last month needed to be done or needed consideration you could see her eyes kind of grow. I think she expected it to be a smooth and easy transition – just bigger, and you know how you forget all the components of one site vs. another – and her punch list was empty and ours was – well, you know, and this last week happened and you know it's just big – a big job!

*RFNL – Can you tell us about the new school you are taking over – size, staff, location, etc.?*

There are thousand kids, give or take some, each year. There are 40 teachers, so I've been told, and when you add all of the staff there will be close to 100, so it will be just a terrific place to work.

# The Riel Family Newsletter

Catch the News

August, 2003

*RFNL – Have you been to the new school?*

I have already moved in and my office is all set up.

*RFNL – Are you acquainted with any of the current staff?*

I'm not, but I have met the librarian, the two vice-principals, my secretary, (*Margaret - You have two vice-principals at a little school?*) It's amazing, and I think that is why all eyes will be on her (new Scripps Ranch principal) because she had more staff to help her at this school – she had a math administrator, a literacy administrator, she had two vice-principals, and she had herself. The school that she's coming to, Scripps Ranch, has two vice-principals, a principal, and that's it. We did staff development, we did everything, so I think that's where she is going to be surprised. *Margaret – Yes, that's a big difference.*

*RFNL – When you were interviewed a you a year ago last November after assuming your past position as vice-principal at Scripps Ranch you were asked if you were no longer interested in classroom teaching. You answered that you would give administration a try to see if you like it. Does acceptance of this new position mean that you have decided that classroom teaching is out of the picture for the foreseeable future?*

For the next four years at least, I'll give this a try. I think I am leaning more toward it because it's fun. It's different every day. It has me dishing out changes, which is always fun. Will I rule out teaching as a choice? No. Who knows, I may decide to go back and teach at a different level in a private school, I may decide to go into the university level. Who knows – the door is wide open.

*RFNL – What changes would you like to see at your new school?*

I think the biggest piece is just the size issue and being able to be in classrooms and get to know teachers at a more personal level than I would at the last location, where you are lucky if you seem them twice a year.

*RFNL – What will your plans be in supporting your forty teachers?*

To watch them teach, to be a part of the community as a whole, to be involved with the kids – I look forward to that. The challenge is that DePortal is a high performing school. It has an API rating (the way we evaluate schools) of over 800, you know, right up in that range. To convince teachers that I

have some input into helping making them be better teachers – that will be interesting. I want to be very involved in staff molding to show my credibility and demonstrate that I have some good ideas,

*RFNL – What do you see as your long range career path? What would you like to be doing ten years from now?*

Well, I'm happy to start here and see what happens, as always. I hope to stay there for at least four years, and then should a high school position come open again I may consider it, but I don't know. Part of me thinks that I'll just be so excited with the smallness of it that this is something for me. I would say that ten years would be the bulk of my career. I spent eight years in high school, so it's time to come back.

*RFNL –During your last interview we asked if you had any ambition to seek public office, perhaps on the school board and your answer was “a definite no.” Is that response still true?*

Absolutely, a definite no, in about eight million ways. No,No,No!!!

*RFNL – How do you think the school will be different after you have been principal for a year?*

Well, you know, I guess you can only go by what was in place – and that will take some time to determine the culture of it. From what I've gathered from just the few people that I've met is that the door was pretty closed and I don't know, for some reason, they didn't feel that that was an approachable person. I hope to open that door wide and make it feel I'm someone to work with hand in hand together with some of the kids. I hope to have them feel the touch of someone excited about education, excited about the community, and, how we can make it, you know, a cool place to be.



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Catch the News

August, 2003

## Bud undergoes hip replacement surgery

Most of you are aware that Bud Mehan has been experiencing severe hip pain for some time. Finally, a decision was made to proceed with the operation, which took place on August the 4<sup>th</sup>. We have the following report outlining how things went.

## A Report from the New Hipster

Thanks to the Riel Family members and Innocent Bystanders who have expressed their concern over my recent hip surgery. I am providing a non-graphic account of the operation and my recovery to date. I checked into Scripps Green Surgery unit on Monday August 4 at 5:30am (they schedule you before they are open), filled in last minute paper work, and Margaret was asked to put an indelible x on the correct hip. Given her problems with left and right, I had to oversee this critical step. I was given anesthesia by a drip system on my way in the operating room. I swear I do not remember anything from that point until I woke up in recovery at 2:00 PM. I didn't count down from 100; I didn't even see my surgeon. Now, the procedure and the recovery from anesthesia did take longer than advertised which scared Margaret who was waiting patiently for news.

My first 18 hours of recovery were a morphine induced fog-with psychedelic dreams of wild animals, rock and roll concerts-all in vivid color . And those little squares of lime Jello never tasted better. Since the operation pushed muscle, tendons, and nerves aside to remove the damaged bones and insert new ceramic parts, all the muscles in my operated leg felt cramped all the time. On the second day, muscles spasmed less and physical therapy began. From that point on, gains have been slow but significant. Bending the knee, getting off the bed without help, sitting in a chair for 45 minutes-these don't seem like major milestones-but they are.

I am sorry to report that no one got the picture of the year-me in those open-backed hospital gowns, pushing a walker down the hall, catheter tubing dangling. But Francie did get some good shots of Carol, Jeff, and Margaret who managed to time their visit to find me awake.

Now that I am home, under the adoring and attentive care of Margaret & Megan (and soon Michael), I gain strength, and the pain subsides each day. Physical therapy works on the Vince Lombardi principle of 'no pain no gain' and within a week I'll be able to handle the staircase to the study and car travel. Already the chronic pain that I felt in my hip joint is gone. Now I just have to uncramp the muscles, get rid of the

swelling and get my new hip in gear. Definitely worth it.

Thanks, Bud, for this interesting blow by blow description of the whole procedure. We are sorry that there are no pictures of your first steps with the new hip. However, we do have, thanks to RFNL Ace Photographer Francie, a picture of the patient being encouraged by a visit by Jeff, Carol, and Margaret.



The whole family is delighted to learn that the operation was a big success. Just maybe the Innocent Bystanders will have their star soccer player back on the field before too much longer. Good luck, Bud, on a speedy and complete recovery!!

## Benesch family back from Europe tour

In the July RFNL we printed (page 4) an account of the experiences enjoyed by Jeff, Carol, Jessica, and Dustin while visiting France and Italy. We now have some pictures, as promised. First of all, we celebrated their return by having lunch. Afterwards, we scanned some pictures they brought along for us to enjoy. (see page 4)



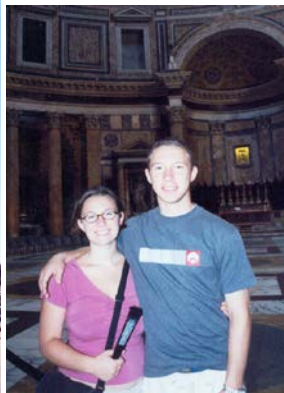
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This is the family Jessica stayed with during her visit to Siena



## Carol celebrates last birthday

After 49<sup>th</sup> – that's it!

Recognizing that it would not be possible to surprise Carol on her next birthday, Jeff and family decided to put on a surprise “good-by to birthdays” party on her 49<sup>th</sup>. As soon as Margaret started running her around she knew that something was up, but she didn't know just what. It worked out great, and we all had a fine time.



HAPPY 49<sup>TH</sup> CAROL!!!