

To all our family and friends we extend our best wishes for a very  
**Merry Christmas and Happy New Year**



**Richard, Liz, JJ, Ed, Jan, Kevin, Chris, Nathan, Tim, Margaret, Bud, Michael, Megan, Francie, Lyle, Brett, Bryce, Alan, Carol, Jeff, Jason, Jessica, Dustin, Robert, Karla, Katy, Brian, Listy, Bob, Kristy, Seamus, David, Annie, Birdy, Bruce, Craig, Ana, Curtis, Susan, Michelle, Scott, and all of our friends who share with us the various events which make up the lives of our family!!!**

As reported in this issue of RFNL, Grandpa reached his 88<sup>th</sup> birthday on December 6<sup>th</sup>, and Grandma will be 82 years old on January 2<sup>nd</sup>. We are both so fortunate to be as well as we are, and able to enjoy watching our growing family of children and grandchildren develop their careers in the various fields they have chosen, or are considering.

It has been a good year overall. Grandma is fully over her back surgery, and playing better golf than ever. We still try and put in one round on every Monday, and to keep fit the rest of the week we take in a senior fitness class on Wednesday, and a second on Friday.

The long planned condo bathroom remodel finally got off the ground, with Ed and Bob G. in charge and doing great work.

The original scope of the project was expanded from one bathroom to two, with new tubs for both. One job is almost complete, but the main one, (master BR) has been delayed by the tardy delivery of the second tub.. The latest ETA is December 14<sup>th</sup>, after leaving Maryland on the 2<sup>nd</sup>. During the selection of tub style, color, and fittings Grandma got lots of much appreciated help from style consultants Listy and Birdy.

The big news, of course, was the announcement of the engagement of Kristy to Seamus Keith. The wedding is planned for August 4, 2007, and will take place at the St. Vincent de Paul Church, in Mission Hills. This is where Mom Listy was married to Bob, and also where many of the Riel children attended elementary school many years ago. Grandpa and Grandma are still active members, even though they have away from Mission Hills. Our Parish has been in the midst of a major remodel project, which will be completed before Christmas of this year. In addition to expansion of the Parish school, the church will have a remodeled alter area, new pews, air conditioning, an adoration chapel, new rest rooms, a redesigned main entrance, and many other changes. A second phase is in the planning stage, and it will include removal of the rectory, with school expansion into that area. The new rectory will be located across the street, on a lot purchased long ago by Msg. Mimnaugh in anticipation of the need for future expansion.

Although there were many nice events in 2006, there were a few not so nice. David has had several restricted breathing incidents, and thus far no cause has been determined. Long time family friend Cindy had cancer surgery, and is having a slow recovery, especially with chemo and radiation treatments. Bruce's recovery from knee surgery has been slower than hoped. Finally, and saddest of all Jeff's father Bernie Benesch passed away suddenly (see article in this RFNL). He had been suffering with Parkinson's disease for some time, but his sudden death was a shock to all.

We certainly hope that the health problems will clear up very soon, and we all can enjoy the holiday season !!

# The Riel Family Newsletter

Catch the News

December, 2006

## *Another Thanksgiving with Margaret and Bud*

Once again the family gathered in Encinitas to celebrate the annual turkey day feast. As usual, the crowd began to gather around 11:00 a.m. Grandpa and Grandma had been offered a ride with Ed and Jan, and all was well until we got part way there, on the freeway. Suddenly the traffic jammed up, and it was stop and go for about ten miles. Finally, we made in time for the main course. We did miss the annual carving of the turkey, but were in time to see and photograph the grilling of a large slab of salmon on the outdoor fireplace. There was lots of other traditional Thanksgiving Day food, drinks, and desserts. The rest of the afternoon was devoted to conversation and relaxation. Also, a new feature was added to the celebration. Margaret had purchased ten different kinds of squash, which were displayed as shown below. Each contestant was invited to identify each one by name. Two teams, (Kristy/Seamus and Susan/Curtis) were tied for first place, and are shown in the below photo. We were able to get lots of good pictures, so we can share some of them with you.



**Margaret's purse stolen from car trunk** Margaret and Bud were out on a recent night to see a movie, and rather than carry her purse she locked it in the trunk of the car. When they returned the car window had been broken, the trunk opened, and the purse gone. The purse contained credit cards, her driver's license, and some cash. This common crime is carried out by a loner who hides out in the parking area, watching for someone who puts something in the car trunk. Knowing that the victim will be gone for a while makes it easy for the robber to gain access to the trunk contents. The police officer called to the scene recommended that once the purse is put in the trunk the driver should leave the area and park somewhere else far away. Afterwards, Margaret reported that the police recovered the credit cards and drivers license, but about \$200 in false charges were made. We report this incident to alert the family to this kind of crime.

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Catch the News

December, 2006

## Jeff's father dies

It is with great sadness that we report that Bernard Benesch passes away in November. We have the following obituary notice, published in the Ventura County Star.



Longtime Thousand Oaks resident Bernard E. Benesch passed away on Tuesday, November 26, 2006.

Bernard was born in Chicago, Ill., on September 25, 1925. He was a Navy veteran and a graduate of the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). He, his wife Audrey, and their five children came to Thousand Oaks in 1962, where Bernie was the proprietor of Conejo Village Bowl. In midlife, Bernie

switched careers, joining the Equitable Life, first as an agent, then as district manager and financial planner. Upon retirement, he began teaching insurance and investment planning.

Bernie and Audrey were one of seven founding families of Temple Adat Elohim. Until his passing, he remained active in temple affairs, the brotherhood, and his havurah.

Bernie was an active bridge and poker player. He enjoyed a good game of tennis and swimming laps in the pool. He and Audrey enjoyed trips to Europe, China, and Israel. He was a lifetime Bruin. He certainly smiled at UCLA victory! Bernie is survived by his loving wife of 57 years. Audrey; daughter Debby; son and daughter-in-law Carol; son Pete; and daughters and sons-in-law Georganne Benesch and David Condon and Elizabeth and Bob Adams, eight grand children and two great grandchildren will also miss their grandfather.

Tributes can be made to Temple Adat Elohim Past President's Fund.

## News from Michelle

Hi grandpa,

I've attached a letter for you as a word document in this e-mail. I also included pictures. I put the pictures in the word file but I also attached each separately as a JPEG file.

I hope all is well in your world!! I miss you very much!!!

I can't wait to see everyone at Christmas... my boyfriend Brian Day is coming the day after Christmas and will be spending New Year's with us. He is really looking forward to meeting you. You'll like him grandpa. He's very nice, he's smart (he's an aerospace engineer), and he treats me very well.

I'll talk to you later. Let me know if you need me to re-send any pictures or something.

Love, Michelle

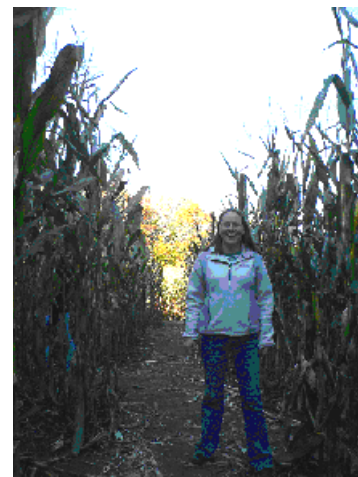
Greetings from New England! The weather here has been getting chilly... we've had several days that we haven't broken 50°F, but the fall colors are very pretty and *almost* make up for the temperature.

Grad school is going well. I'm gearing up for my qualifying exam this coming April which means a lot of time spent in the lab and reading.

Since it's been getting colder, I haven't done much



touring of the area. Except in September, my boyfriend Brian Day and I went to Nantucket (the island next to Martha's Vineyard, off the coast of Massachusetts) for an air show and to watch the Blue Angels. It



was the first time I had been to Nantucket and it was really beautiful! There is nothing quite like it. The picture of Brian and I was taken on one of the beaches there.

I have also had the pleasure of going to a corn maze. (This is exactly what it sounds like- a giant cornfield with a maze cut into it). I've included a picture of that too. The corn maze I went to was on a farm in New Hampshire. Farm activities are very popular

here in the fall. People spend their weekends going apple picking, going to pumpkin patches, corn mazes, and hay rides. It sounds crazy, but it really is a lot of fun (with the right attitude of course).

I hope all is well in sunny San Diego! I look forward to seeing you during the holidays!

Love,  
Michelle

# The Riel Family Newsletter

Catch the News

December, 2006

## Grandpa celebrates 88<sup>th</sup> birthday

On December 6<sup>th</sup> Grandpa became 88 years old, and he is indeed fortunate to have survived all these years, and still is in reasonably good health. Of course, he attributes some of his good fortune to many years on the golf course, thus justifying all the money it cost.

At this age he is qualified to reveal his five rules for a long life. They are: 1. No drugs: 2. No alcohol: 3. No tobacco: 4. Keep active physically: 5. Keep active mentally.



Unfortunately, he did not always follow his own advice, in that he enjoyed alcohol (mostly wine and beer), until a severe bout of pancreatitis put him in the hospital.

When a doctor at bedside says "If you don't give up alcohol you are headed for serious trouble" the decision becomes pretty easy. Grandpa used tobacco (a pipe) for a few years, back in 1950, but quit because it gave him a sore throat.

Grandpa and Grandma have been in a senior fitness program since 1990 and still go twice a week. Grandpa keeps active mentally by volunteer literacy tutoring, and is in his tenth year with the READ/San Diego Adult Literacy program. Tutoring is a great retirement hobby, one that gives lots of mental exercise and emotional satisfaction.



There were a number of birthday celebrations, starting on November 28<sup>th</sup> and finishing on December 12<sup>th</sup>. On the 28<sup>th</sup> Francie and Margaret entertained us with dinner at the Zocalo restaurant,



followed by the Theatre in Old Town, where we saw the production of "Son of a Bush". It involved a mock debate between an actor playing the president and an actress representing Hillary Clinton. It was OK, and funny at times, but not rated by us as a very good production.

On December 6<sup>th</sup> Grandma and Grandpa enjoyed a quiet lunch at local Thai restaurant.



On December 9<sup>th</sup> at Tio Leos on Morena Blvd we enjoyed



lunch with those shown in the picture below. The final celebration was on the 10<sup>th</sup>, with Francie, Lyle, Margaret,

and Bud. We dined at home, with Margaret bring the food. We enjoyed lamb chops, expertly cooked by Bud, plus potatoes, salad, drinks and dessert. Afterwards, we went to the Theatre in Old Town to see "Sister's Christmas Catechism", an absolutely hilarious one person act. Prior to



the performance a local church choir of children sang Christmas Carols, and also participated in the formal program. It

was a special evening. We had great seats at little tables right down in front of the stage. There was lots of audience participation, enjoyed by all.

Finally, on December 12<sup>th</sup> Richard and Liz invited us to have dinner at a local restaurant. We chose the Red Lobster, on Midway, and enjoyed a nice meal at one of our favorite eating places. JJ joined us, and it was another nice birthday celebration.

## Riel Bowl XVI - January 1, 2007

*Yes, it's almost time for the 16<sup>th</sup> annual Riel Bowl family celebration. There will be lots of food, cross word puzzles (new format) Jeopardy, white elephant gift exchange, presents, Grandma's birthday, special prizes and surprises, and lots more!!!!*