



**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, Lyle, Alan, Carol, Jeff, Jason, Jessica, Dustin, Robert, Karla, Katy, Brian, Listy, Bob, Kristy, Seamus, David, Annie, Birdy, Bruce, Craig, Ana, Matthew, Curtis, Michelle, Scott, and all of our friends who share with us the various events which make up the lives of our family!!!**

Some time ago Francie provided us with the following article commenting on the state of today's world. We think that this is a good time to pass along its author's well expressed thoughts.

*The following was written by Ben Stein and recited by him on CBS Sunday Morning commentary. If they know of him at all, many folks think Ben Stein is just a quirky actor/comedian who talks in a monotone. He's also a very intelligent attorney who knows how to put ideas and words together in such a way as to sway juries and make people think clearly.*



I am a Jew, and every single one of my ancestors was Jewish. And it does not bother me even a little bit when people call those beautiful lit up, bejeweled trees Christmas trees. I don't feel threatened. I don't feel discriminated against. That's what they are: Christmas trees. It doesn't bother me a bit when people say, "Merry Christmas" to me. I don't think they are slighting me or getting ready to put me in a ghetto. In fact, I kind of like it. It shows that we are all brothers and sisters celebrating this happy time of year. It doesn't bother me at all that there is a manger scene on display at a key intersection near my beach house in Malibu. If people want a Crèche, it's just as fine with me as is the Menorah a few hundred yards away. I don't like getting pushed around for being a Jew, and I don't think Christians like getting pushed around for being Christians. I think people who believe in God are sick and tired of getting pushed around, period. I have no idea where the concept came from that America is an explicitly atheist country. I can't find it in the Constitution, and I don't like it being shoved down my throat. Or maybe I can put it another way; where did the idea come from that we should worship Nick and Jessica and we aren't allowed to worship God as we understand Him? I guess that's a sign that I'm getting old, too. But there are a lot of us who are wondering where Nick and Jessica came from and where the America we knew went to. In light of the many jokes we send to one another for a laugh, this is a little different: This is not intended to be a joke; it's not funny, it's intended to get you thinking. Billy Graham's daughter was interviewed on the Early Show and Jane Clayson asked her "How could God let something like this Happen?" (regarding Katrina) Anne Graham gave an extremely profound and insightful

response. She said, "I believe God is deeply saddened by this, just as we are, but for years we've been telling God to get out of our schools, to get out of our government and to get out of our lives. And being the gentleman He is, I believe He has calmly backed out. How can we expect God to give us His blessing and His protection if we demand He leave us alone?" In light of recent events...terrorists attacks, school shootings, etc. I think it started when Madeleine Murray O'Hare (she was murdered, her body found recently) complained she didn't want prayer in our schools, and we said OK. Then someone said you better not read the Bible in school. The Bible says thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, and love your neighbor as yourself. And we said OK. Then Dr. Benjamin Spock said we shouldn't spank our children when they misbehave because their little personalities would be warped and we might damage their self-esteem (Dr. Spock's son committed suicide). We said an expert should know what he's talking about and we said OK. Now we're asking ourselves why our children have no conscience, why they don't know right from wrong, and why it doesn't bother them to kill strangers, their classmates, and themselves. Probably, if we think about it long and hard enough, we can figure it out. I think it has a great deal to do with "WE REAP WHAT WE SOW." Funny how simple it is for people to trash God and then wonder why the world's going to hell. Funny how we believe what the newspapers say, but question what the Bible says. Funny how you can send 'jokes' through e-mail and they spread like wildfire but when you start sending messages regarding the Lord, people think twice about sharing. Funny how lewd, crude, vulgar and obscene articles pass freely through cyberspace, but public discussion of God is suppressed in the school and workplace. Are you laughing? Funny how when you forward this message, you will not send it to many on your address list because you're not sure what they believe, or what they will think of you for sending it. Funny how we can be more worried about what other people think of us than what God thinks of us. Pass it on if you think it has merit. If not then just discard it...no one will know you did. But, if you discard this thought process, don't sit back and complain about what bad shape the world is in.

Any questions?

# The Riel Family Newsletter

Catch the News

December, 2007

## Family celebrates Thanksgiving Day with Bud and Margaret

Great food, conversation, plant exchange, contest enliven the day

Thanksgiving 2007 was celebrated again at the home of Bud and Margaret. Francie and Richard were out of town, but the rest of the children plus many grandchildren were on hand to enjoy the day and its activities. In prior years the first item on the agenda was a rousing soccer game. However, time has added a few aches and pains, and somewhat more sedate activities were the order of the day. After some snacks and conversation dinner was served. There were the traditional entrees, roast turkey, baked ham and charcoal broiled salmon. In addition, there was Listy's famous baked potatoes, several salads, veggies, etc. Everything was outstanding, and much enjoyed by all. This years contest was the identification of 14 different apple varieties. Every variety available at the supermarket was represented, and contestants were provided with a list of each type. Each apple was numbered, and the objective was to match up apple name and number. The contest resulted in a tie between Robert and the team of Carol and Jessica. Hence the \$100 prize was divided. Then there was the plant exchange. Several months ago Margaret suggested that everyone bring a plant that they had started from seed. The various entries were exchanged, and all had a great time explaining what they had brought. Thus ended the party, and as usual we extend special thanks to Bud and Margaret for all the time and effort they spent in making the celebration the great success that it was.



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Catch the News

December, 2007

## News from Kevin in grad school

An e-mail from Kevin

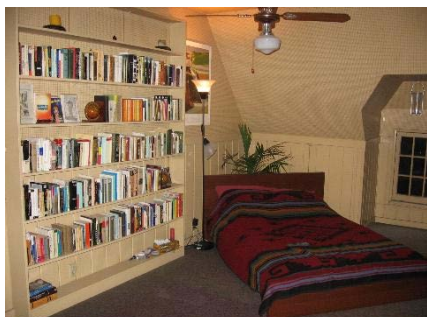
Dear RFNL

It's month three and I'm still not completely settled into my new home of Claremont. Money Magazine named it the fifth "Best Place to Live" in the U.S. and yet there are no waves here to surf, no 24-hour taco shops to keep me portly and insulated through the bitter winter months, nor is there much of a nightlife. Namely—I've found little to distract me—which, in a paradoxical way, is a good thing, because across the street from my home is Claremont Graduate University, a place, it seems, intent on imposing my days to a litany of reading, reading, some writing, and more reading. But



of course I kid. For those who don't know the details; I'm attending the CGU M.A. program in English and Creative Writing. I'm having a great time and

learning tons. I share this academic program with only three other people so I get a lot of attention (more, sometimes, than seems desirable). I have the entire



second story of a beautiful house built in the 1930's all to myself. Los Angeles (as attested to by all the smog) is reasonably close by and the gorgeous San Gabriel

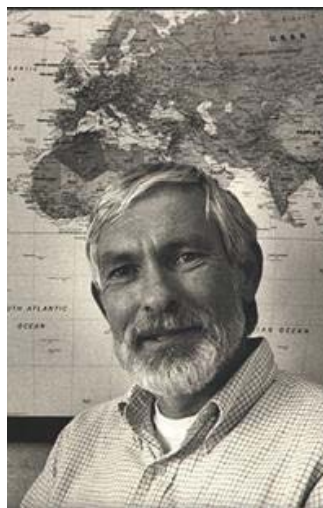
Mountains (if one can see them at all through the urban gloom) make up my backyard. Moreover, I'm only a short drive from home so that I always know that good waves, good Mexican food, and good times are only half a tank away—not to mention my friends and family who I miss very much! I'd also like to immortalize in print an acknowledgement of appreciation to my parents for helping me move in and get settled...or, at least, get as settled as I ever will. Very much love to everyone! Yours in reading, reading, some writing, and more reading,  
Kevin

## Bud's teaching program described in recent UCSD E connections publication

We have the following from Margaret

### From Researching Educational Inequality to Building Educational Equity: The Evolution of Bud Mehan

By Laura Margoni



When asked how he became involved in education and the study of educational equality, Bud Mehan—a Sociology professor and director of the Center for Research, Educational Equity and Teaching Excellence (CREATE)—is able to summarize his experience quite succinctly: "Right from the beginning of my career I've been concerned about education in general, but equity in particular, and how it is affected by human interaction. Over time, my

focus has shifted from trying to describe inequity in education to trying to make educational equity happen." He starts laughing and continues, "Now having said that, I've made it sound awfully neat, but it was really much messier than that." Indeed, studying educational equality and making it happen is not a simple process. At CREATE, Mehan, his staff and colleagues focus their efforts on trying to address a major challenge facing universities like UC San Diego; the need to increase the number of underserved, low-income youths who are eligible for admittance to college.

"CREATE is a research enterprise," says Mehan. "It's a center that deals with educational equity issues. Right now, we're trying to demonstrate the conditions under which it's possible to achieve an equitable educational environment, especially for underrepresented minority youth. It's a different focus than I had before and the work is exciting." To read the rest of the article go to <http://dss2.ucsd.edu/e->

Congratulations, Bud on this story of your program!

# The Riel Family Newsletter

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December, 2007

## Grandma and Grandpa enjoy grandparent's day at Cathedral Catholic High School

This was our first visit to the new Catholic facility located at 5555 Del Mar Heights Road. It opened in 2005, offering



grades 9-12. The campus is very impressive, looking more like a small college instead of a traditional high school. Unfortunately we were not permitted to tour the entire facility, since classes

were in session. Consequently, we saw up close only the gymnasium, where the ceremony took place.



There were a number of welcoming speeches, followed by a Mass served by one of the five priests assigned to the school. Afterwards a sandwich lunch was served, and the school

dance team put on an exhibition of their talent. It was a pleasant and well run program. We were able to get some good pictures, as shown.



## Grandpa celebrates 89<sup>th</sup> birthday

December 6<sup>th</sup> was a special day for Grandpa; it was 89 years ago that he arrived in this world. Some years later Mother told me how worried she and Dad were because 1918 was the year of a serious flu epidemic which killed many people. Fortunately, my family (father, mother, and older brother Jimmy) escaped the threat, enjoying good health. We lived in Cleveland, Ohio then, where my father worked for what was

then known as the National Carbon Company, the maker of the popular Eveready battery line. When I was about one year old the company offered my father an opportunity to move to a newly opened plant in Fremont, Ohio, and that is how we arrived at the place I consider my home town.

On Tuesday, the 4<sup>th</sup>, Francie and Margaret treated Grandpa and Grandma to lunch at the Miami restaurant, in University Town Square. Miami is a Cuban restaurant, with a largely unfamiliar menu, and we enjoyed looking over the many ethnic selections. Afterwards we visited the "Body" exhibit, a fascinating series of exhibits depicting how the human body is constructed and functions. The main exhibits are human skeletons with various simulated organs, muscles, joints nerves, etc shown in their proper locations. It's a very interesting exhibit, well worth seeing. It closes in mid-January. It was a fun day, and we thank Francie and Margaret for the treat.

## GET READY, IT'S ALMOST RIEL BOWL TIME

Do you know how to tell which one it is? Subtract one from the last digit in the New Year (08 in this case) and you get seven, so it's either 7, 17, or 27 and you can guess which one it is.

This year we are planning some changes. There will no longer be a cross word puzzle; we are replacing it with a short quiz, which will be different for each family. Second, it will be a family contest, with spouses and children working together. If you are short of children you may borrow one from another family, if mutually agreed to. The winning teams, as determined by the Committee will qualify for the Jeopardy game.

As is always the case, the Commissioner has the right at any time to make any change he sees fit, and there is no appeal.

The quiz papers will be handed out when you arrive, and must be handed in to Grandpa, Grandma, Robert, or Karla at the time indicated on the agenda, which also will be handed out when you arrive. GOOD LUCK (You'll need it)

## BOOK REVIEW

You all know that Grandpa has been tutoring for more than 10 years, including English grammar. Recently he came across, at the READ office library, a small book titled "Write Right", by Jan Venolia. It contains a wealth of helpful information on how to write correctly. There is a section on the correct use of punctuation marks, capital letters, etc. It also provides grammatical guidelines. Much of the material addresses common problems and how to correct or avoid them. It's an excellent reference source if you are unsure about how to use certain words (affect, effect, who and whom, may and can, etc. I recommend this book.