

Family celebrates Easter Sunday with Francie and Lyle

Lots of great food the Easter Cousins Cook-off - New game enjoyed by all

Once again the family enjoyed the hospitality of Lyle and Francie on Easter Sunday 2008. Grandma and Grandpa arrived around noon, and the others began to stream in shortly after. We all enjoyed inspecting and sampling the various entries in the Easter Cousins Cook-off contest so ably organized by Francie. There were nine team entries as follows: Megan (Bagels), Ana/Craig (Lemon muffins), Jason/Chava (Ceviche), Dustin/Lauren (Tri Tip), Kristy/Seamus (Pasta Salad), Kevin/Nicola (Mac and Cheese), Nate/Brook (Nacos), Michael (Mashed Potatoes), and David (Guacomole and Chips). Needless to say, we all enjoyed this extra special variety of great foods which the



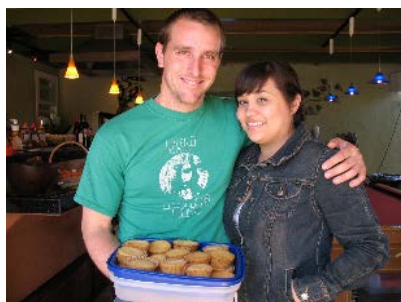
grandchildren and their dates so expertly prepared. After lunch Francie passed out rating sheets so that everyone could vote for their favorite team. Each entry was rated on a scale of 1 -5 in

three categories: Presentation, Taste, and Degree of Difficulty. The judging team compiled the results and the lucky winners were Kevin (1), Jason (2), and Megan (3). However, Grandpa personally, enjoyed each one equally well.

After all had eaten their fill some of the party enjoyed a new game discovered by Francie and Lyle. It consisted of tossing two balls connected by a short rope at a three rung rack. The object of the game was to toss the balls so that they draped over one of the rungs. Points were awarded depending on the degree of difficulty.

In addition to all the other fun things, we had an opportunity to celebrate a family birthday. Yes, March 23rd was Jeff's 56 birthday, and we all enjoyed celebrating this milestone with the traditional birthday cake. HAPPY BIRTHDAY, JEFF!!!

It was a great party, and we thank all who helped make the success that it was, especially Francie and Lyle.



The Riel Family Newsletter

Catch the News

April, 2008

Bruce takes business trip to Manila – spends time in Korea with Curtis

Recently Bruce was sent by his company to Manila to interview prospective employees. When he completed that assignment he took off for a few days to visit Curtis, in South Korea. He kindly provided us with the following trip report.

I recently was asked by my company to travel to Manila, Philippines with our HR director, Bing Maniquis, to interview potential candidates to fill positions as electric power generation technicians in our San Diego and Hawaii service operations. This idea had been floated in several different strategy meetings but I don't think anyone ever really thought it would come together. On Friday, March 13, I got a call from Bing asking if I could leave tomorrow, Saturday, for 12 days in Manila. It turns out that new information from our attorneys regarding required dates for Visa applications was the reason for the whirlwind travel plans. I agreed to go and by the next evening we were off on a 17 hour flight to Manila out of LAX. And, by the way, that is just too long to sit in an airplane, especially in coach seating!

We landed at 6:00 am in Manila and were driven to the Makati district by private car to the Shangri-La Hotel. There we were greeted by bomb sniffing dogs escorted by their M-16 and shotgun toting security officers. Once our bags were inspected we were allowed to enter the hotel to check in. Bing and I both needed a nap and made a time to meet later in the day.

Bing took me for a grand tour of the city. She grew up in Manila so she had a lot of info as well as knowledge of where (and more importantly) where not to go. We had dinner and called it an early night so both of us could get organized for the work ahead.

Our driver came for us early and we connected with the placement company that had done the advertising and prescreening for us prior to our arrival. We set up shop in their offices, also in the Makati district, and began interviewing what turned out to be 48 candidates over the next few days.

Manila and all of the Philippines is a VERY Roman Catholic country. When Holy Thursday rolled around the entire city closed up so Bing and I were out of business. With the help of a travel agent I was able to arrange a flight on Friday to see Curtis in South Korea. After the three hour flight from Manila, Curtis met me at the Incheon Airport. I borrowed a cell phone and finally made contact with him in that cavernous international terminal. We shared a great big hug and headed for the bus that would take us in to Seoul.

Once in Seoul we walked around looking for the right place to have dinner. Curtis wanted me to sample the local fare that he has come to enjoy. We settled on a tiny hole-in-the-wall restaurant where we enjoyed a soup / stew cooked in a wok on a small portable gas burner at our table. It was spicy and wonderful! We then headed for the train station to catch a three hour ride to Kwangju where Curtis lives, in the southern part of the country. We arrived at about midnight at his apartment building which is a high rise amid a group of identical high rises. We stopped by his buddy's apartment to borrow an air mattress and apologized for waking him at such a late hour. After making up my bed we both settled in for (at least for me) was a much needed rest.

We woke up early and set out to see the sights of Kwangju. Curtis is a great tour guide and speaks enough Korean to make travel easy and fun. Taxis are cheap, we did a lot of walking, and it was wonderful to see where Curtis calls home. We did some shopping and sightseeing but most of all it was great to just spend time with my son. That night we were treated to a very elaborate dinner at a very nice restaurant by Curtis's counterpart in the Korean army who heard I was coming to visit and wanted to honor me by arranging the dinner. We were joined by two guys from Curtis' office and their dates as well as a Korean intelligence officer and his date and a local prominent businessman. Fortunately one of the guests was the translator from Curtis's office, otherwise conversation would have been quite a challenge. We enjoyed the dinner, drinking and conversation very much but had to say our thank you's and goodbye's hurriedly in order to

catch a cab to the train station to make the last train headed to Seoul. Curtis showed the train ticket to the taxi driver and showed him the departure time of the train. The message was understood and we had a wild and frightening ride in the pouring rain to the train station. We made it with five minutes to spare and settled in for the three hour ride to Seoul. We checked in to a hotel at about midnight in Seoul ...I was exhausted! We agreed to meet up in the morning at 8:00 am.

We got going as planned at 8:00 A.M. Easter morning and our first stop was the nearby military base to get a wind breaker for me and a couple of umbrellas. When I packed to leave home I was going to Manila which has hot, tropical weather. I was not prepared for the spring weather in Korea. We got a cup of coffee and a light breakfast while we were on base



then hailed a taxi to take on the day in Seoul. We had a blast... Curtis took me to a huge Korean military museum that he knew about where we spent several hours. Then we went to an ancient palace where we walked the grounds and looked in all the different buildings. We did some major shopping where we found jewelry for Birdy and Listy as well as some Coach hand bags...knock-offs from China... \$50 dollars instead of \$500. We had a really great day just hanging together, talking and taking in the sights. Finally it was time to go and we headed for the subway station. There was a brand new line that was recently opened that went all the way to the Incheon Airport so we decided to try it out. Time was short for me to catch my 8:00pm flight back to Manila, so Curtis wanted to ride with me through to the final transfer station (to be sure I would make it on time). We said goodbye at the last transfer and shared a great big hug. We both had lumps in our throats as we said goodbye but Curtis had a long train ride back to Kwangju and I had a long trek back to Manila. It was the best way I could have spent the weekend no matter how tired I was!

Back in Manila I met up with Bing on Monday morning and we shared stories of our weekend as we got back to work. We ended up hiring twelve very skilled electrical engineers and mechanical engineers to fill the open positions in the company, so the trip was a complete success in many ways! We left Manila on Wednesday and arrived home at almost the same time we left Manila...time travelers! I took Thursday and Friday off from



work to allow the jet lag and exhaustion to beat me up for a few days and spent a little time with Birdy before we both went back to work on Monday.

The Riel Family Newsletter

Catch the News

April, 2008

Ana's Shower.

We were honored and thrilled to throw a family bridal shower for Ana and Craig on March 30, 2008. Bob was the chef and had grilling duties for the toppings for our salad bar. We started the shower with many snacks and great food. We shifted to games to help break the ice. Craig and Ana were deemed the Newlyweds-to-be and we decided to test them on how well they knew each other. Listy played the emcee, and asked the following questions to both Ana and Craig. Contestants had to decide after each question asked, if Ana's and Craig's answers would match. Birdy won, showing she knows them well. We then excused the couple and asked everyone to try to recall what Craig and Ana were wearing. It was amazing to see the details that were noted and we were impressed to see that Ana's sister and mother were the most observant. After that, it was presents galore and Ana and Craig were most grateful to all who came.

Newlywed Game for Craig and Ana

1. When your spouse to be leaves the house, what time is it? Party time, time to clean, or nap time?
2. Who would your spouse say was the "better catch" out of the two of you?
3. Who takes the longest to get ready in the morning?
4. Who drives the worst?
5. What was breed and name of Craig's and Ana's childhood pet?
6. What is Craig/Ana's favorite Color?
7. Name the last book they read?
8. Craig, What is the color of Ana's toothbrush?
9. Ana, What is the strangest gift Craig has ever given you?
10. Ana What percentage of the housework would Craig say he does?
11. Who is the better cook you or your wife?
12. Ana, Does Craig know more about Gilligan's Island, Treasure Island, or Three Mile Island?
13. Ana when you first met Craig, what will he say was the one thing which first caught his attention about you?
14. Craig, when you first met Ana, what will she say was the one thing which first caught her attention about you?
15. Craig, if Ana could send you to a Body Repair Shop, what on you would she have fixed?
16. Where was your official first date?
17. Name your spouse to be most favorite food?
18. Craig Who would Ana say was the "better catch" out of you two?
19. When it comes to home improvement your wife considers you to be?
A. Tim the tool man, (makes the job worse); B. Bob the builder, (forever starting new projects without completing the old); C. Al, (does it right the first time); or D. Clueless
20. Craig, Complete the following sentence: "A perfect wife is one who _____"
21. Ana, Complete the following sentence: "A perfect husband is one who _____"



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Dear Friends:

I'm writing to ask for your help. As you know, I teach fifth grade at Encanto Elementary and resources are scarce in the classroom. In order to get my students the resources they need to learn, I have posted a proposal on DonorsChoose.Org called "Incubating Young Minds: Learning Science/Math with Duck Eggs," Every spring for the past 22 years I have incubated duck eggs, an event the entire school looks forward to. Traditionally, for our Open House my students will have hatched anywhere from 5-7 ducklings and created a student made, temporary duck environment complete with pond (kiddie pool). Parents and students from all grades as well as students and parents from previous years come back to see the ducklings. Last spring, only one duck survived due to an incubator that has been repaired one too many times and is finally irreparable. What started as a hands-on science lesson investigating the life cycle of birds in a second grade class has evolved over the years to include many science and math skills.

Please help me get the word out about this great opportunity and thank you!

Sincerely,
Carol Benesch

Incubating Young Minds: Learning Science/Math with Duck Eggs

I am a fifth grade teacher in a self-contained classroom at a richly diverse school located in California. We are a Title 1 school; thus all students are eligible to receive free or reduced-price breakfast and lunch. Our school has a high percentage of Hispanic Students with English as their second language. Many come from a single parent family. We are a Program Improvement school whose state test scores have continued to go up over the past three years due to an inquiry based approach to educating children. Unfortunately, many of my students enter fifth grade a year or two behind state norms struggling with the application of rote-learned skills. Living in an economically deprived area, many lack the "out of community experiences" that build background knowledge necessary to the application process. Every spring for the past 22 years I have incubated duck eggs, an event the entire school looks forward to. Traditionally for our Open House, my students will have hatched anywhere from 5-7 ducklings and created a student made, temporary duck environment complete with pond (kiddie pool). Parents and students from all grades as well as students and parents from previous years come back to see the ducklings.

Last spring, only one duck survived due to an incubator that has been repaired one too many times and is finally irreparable. What started as a hands-on science lesson investigating the life cycle of birds in a second grade class, has evolved over the years to include many science and math skills. Due to budget cuts, it is hard to ask for extras such as incubators. We have to rely on what parent support we get for school supplies and other more essential items that are no longer supplied by our district.

In order to keep this memorable experience alive, I need a new incubator with an automatic turner. In addition to the incubator the Classroom set and scope would add to the learning. The incubator and automatic turner are the essentials to keeping this learning experience alive.

In order for my fifth graders to continue their scientific inquiry method, which includes predicting, (weighing eggs during the incubation period), gathering and interpreting data, (weighing/measuring the ducklings the first 4 weeks), reporting findings using calculations and graphs (graphing their growth and comparing to other mammals) while making scientific and mathematical conclusions, we need your help!



It is a much more difficult task for an economically challenged student to rise above adversities to continue their educational goals. Giving students meaningful experiences in elementary school that incorporate the need for educational skills and concepts fosters a desire of continuing their education. Your donation of a simple piece of equipment may be what inspires a child to pursue a dream by continuing their education. Thanks for your consideration of this project.

This story has a happy ending! Carol's matching fund donation proposal was accepted for \$500, and her request for support was oversubscribed by school parents and friends. The excess money was transferred to another school project proposal. So, there soon will be baby ducks in the Encanto pool, and the children will be learning while having fun.