



Riel Bowl XVIII - January 1, 2009

For the 18th consecutive year the family convened at the Alpine home of Bob and Karla shortly before noon on New Year's Day to welcome in another exciting year. It brings back happy memories of the early years, when little kids (now mostly grown up) played soccer against their parents in the large back yard. As the years rolled by the kids got bigger and faster while the parents got older and slower. Not to be outdone, however, the clever parents devised mental contests so they could hope to maintain some level of equality. This year Robert concocted a complex treasure hunt based on a somewhat imaginary history of the Riel family. Teams made up of family members were challenged to use a secret code to unravel clues and locate buried treasure in the back yard. The three top teams winners were (1) Michael, Bud, Margaret, (2) Listy, David, Annie, and (3) Bryce, Laura, and Francie. These three winners qualified for the Jeopardy game. This year there were six categories: Cities, States, Countries, Continents, Events, and Riel Stuff. After a hotly contested game the final winner was the Listy team, with the Margaret team second and the Bryce team third. The white elephant gift exchange was lots of fun, for both the parents and the kids. The regular gift exchange also took place, and it really was a second Christmas celebration. Lunch was served at one o'clock, as usual, and the prime rib cooked by Robert was outstanding, as usual, as were all of the many items brought in by the families. It was one of the best Riel Bowls ever, and we hereby express our thanks to Robert, Karla, Katy, and Brian for all of the time and effort they put in to make it such a great success. The whole celebration resulted in some additional comments from others in the family, which we reprint as follows.

On Jan 3, 2009, at 3:20 PM, Francie wrote:

Brother Bob and I are at the stadium reading your emails and everyone loved what you said. It was awesome. Bob says Katie and Bryan loved being in on the whole thing. Sounds like a win win for all. How lucky we are. Thanks 2 all can't wait 4 next yr. Go chargers.

Dear Fam....

I just wanted to recognize big brother Robert for all the work on creating a terrific Riel Bowl....I don't know how long it took to write the story.....make the code....and create several individualized treasure hunts for our competitive family...but I know it wasn't easy....add thanks for the amazing financial prizes, the cooking and cleaning to prepare for this event (we probably took his entire break away from him) and the outstanding prime ribyou did a great job and we had a ton of fun because of you.....bringing the family together means so much to Mom and Dad and is probably the 7th reason for living a long life that dad hasn't included in his list (smile)....Thank you Robert!

Thanks to Dad for putting together the jeopardy questions as well....they were fun and filled with family trivia and recognition to be shared by all. I don't know how you find time to do this and I really appreciate the effort you put into it each year.

Finally, thanks for the great gifts and contributions everyone made to the overall event. I love that we all come and continue to model to our kids the importance of laughing and playing together as a family....

Happy New Year

Much love

Listy

Well said, Listy! Robert, you are amazing! The kids came away all talking about how much fun that hunt was...the only kids that might have felt left out were your own kids...next time, I want them on my team; Since you can't very well have your kids walk away winners....but if they were on one of our teams....all is fair in love and family....

Thanks in a huge way,

Birdy

I really didn't get to see it all, but it looked like a lot of fun!! Robert, you and Carla are always so generous we walk away feeling like we don't do enough. You really outdid yourself this year. I already can't wait for next! Thanks again, you get the best brother (in Alpine) award and almost the best brother of all! Jeff, Carol, and the gang

The Riel Family Newsletter

Catch the News

January, 2009

Continued from page 1

On Jan 3, 2009, at 5:31 PM, Margaret Riel wrote:

Hi all, At the risk of being mistaken for mom... it was the best Christmas ever! I know how much time it takes to make one of these hunts...we all used to make a single hunt for the kids when they were little. But making them for adults... well that is really something. And making them for different teams-yikes! and a four-page back story. And we had so much fun figuring it all out. Challenging without being frustrating... it was so much fun to be kids. Thanks for letting us play.

How about you post the story on the google site? Maybe Karla can do this since she knows how to get there. (If anyone else needs help getting there...let me know...) It would be great to save the story-- but I think a bit too long for inclusion in the newsletter. Margaret



(Note – Answering Margaret’s suggestion (above), the story will appear in RFNL in serial form, starting soon.)

The Riel Family Newsletter

Catch the News


January, 2009

Christmas Eve with the Francie/Lyle family

Each Christmas we look forward to starting off the holiday by spending Christmas Eve with Francie, Lyle, and children, plus a few invited guests, and this year was no different. Prior to the celebration we attended mass at St. Vincent's church. Grandma and Grandpa were joined at the 4:00 p.m. service by Richard. Francie, Brett, and Bryce joined us at the 5:15 service, so we were well prepared to celebrate the blessed event. We proceeded straight to 3015 Greyling Street and were welcomed by Lyle and the rest of the group. Lyle expertly grilled beef for Fajitas, with all of the ingredients supplied in abundance. Grandpa was treated by Brett to a sneak preview of the Sorem boys Christmas gift to their Father Alan. It was two beautiful wide angle photos taken at the Old Course at St. Andrews, during their recent visit. They were beautifully framed, and the picture shown below hardly does them justice. We enjoyed seeing the Benesch family, along with Jason's two pet Golden Retriever puppies. They are as cute as a Disney animal star, and amused everyone with their display of training skills. It was a pleasant evening, and as usual we thank Francie and Lyle for inviting us.



Mt. Loretto, Dubuque
Christmas, 2008



Dear Family and Friends,

Blessed Christmas season, and Happy New Year to each of you and your family!

I hope all of you are well and happy. I think my health is all right, for my age (101+ years!).

I am generally pain free, which is a blessing. However, I can't get around by myself any more - not even with my walker. I depend on someone to push my wheelchair wherever I go. I still get to daily Mass in the chapel, and to the main dining room, but the latter is getting to be more of a challenge. I can't see as well as I could before, but someone is always available to read and write my letters. My memory is also weaker, but I do as well as I can. Let us keep praying for each other.

Thank you, in advance, for all your Christmas greetings. I am so blessed to have such good friends.

May the Infant Jesus bless each of you in a special way this Christmas season, and may He fill your hearts with His own Love, Peace, and Joy in 2009!

My love and prayers,
Mrs. Mary Paschal (nee McNeil)



The Riel Family Newsletter

Catch the News

January, 2009

Christmas day at the Hartman's

Grandma and Grandpa were once again invited to share a Christmas with Birdy, Bruce, and family. We arrived around noon. and had time to greet the other guests and admire the Christmas decor. Lunch was served shortly thereafter; baked ham, salad, vegetables, potatoes, etc. Afterwards we all gathered in the living room to open the many presents. There was much joy experienced with the opening them, and the only sadness was over the absence of Curtis, who was much missed. His status is outlined later on in this issue of RFNL. Finally, we thank Bruce and Birdy for including us in this special family day. GOD BLESS ALL!



And a very merry Christmas to all of our family and friends

The Riel Family Newsletter

Catch the News

January, 2009

We were pleased recently to receive from Bob Gillingham the following great report on the recent marathon Listy ran in Sacramento. The good news was that she ran so well that she qualified (second time) for the famous Boston Marathon. Here is the story, as told by Bob.

The Quest for Boston

Eleven years ago, Listy qualified to run in the Boston Marathon by achieving a qualifying time of 3:47 in one of her first marathons. Since the memorable trip to Boston ten years ago, she's literally been chasing the dream again by competing in many qualifying marathons, but always falling just a little bit short of the needed time. Nevertheless, because of the volume of events Listy's entered, she's achieved a bit of fame along the way. Two years ago, she was recognized as one of only roughly 200 people to run all 10 of the first 10 Rock 'n' Roll marathons, earning induction into the Rock 'n' Roll Marathon Hall of Fame.

This past December, she and I and her long-time running partners, Kym and Doug Farkas, traveled to Sacramento so the three of them could run in the California International Marathon, a course beginning in Folsom and ending right at the state capitol building. The event is widely regarded as a good qualifier because the elevation drops from beginning to end. I had signed up to run, but the Ironman 2 weeks before had taken more of a toll than I had anticipated. Doug very kindly offered to run with my number in order to pace Kym and Listy, even though he had not planned on such a long run.

Although Listy had been to Boston, Kym and Doug had yet to qualify. The cutoff times are determined by age with gradual forgiveness as one gets older. Thus, Listy would have to run under 4:05, Kym under 4:00, and Doug, penalized for a Y chromosome, under 3:30.

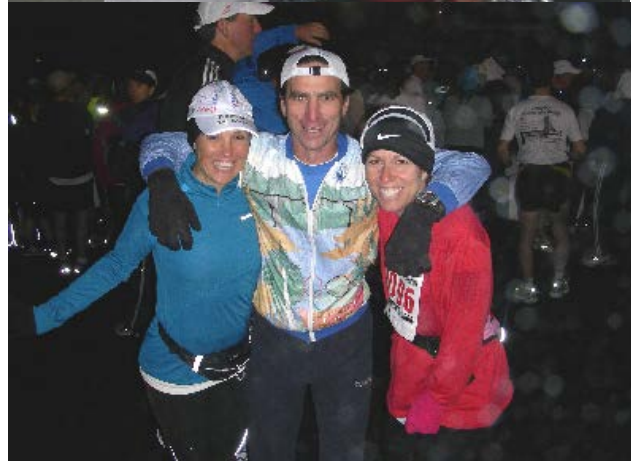
Race day morning was quite cold and damp, but the conditions were actually ideal for runners. Everyone set off at the gun, and the spectators scattered in a zillion directions to try to follow runners they were tracking. I ended up seeing all three on three different occasions. At 10 miles, they looked great, and they were all ahead of pace. At 21, Kym came flying through first, followed by Listy a minute or so later, then Doug, who was clearly suffering the effects of the cold and under training.

After seeing them doing quite well with just five miles to go, I drove hurriedly to the finish area so that I could see them proudly achieve their goals. I arrived in what I thought was plenty of time, positioned myself about 200 yards from the

finish and waited. I watched as the official clock approached 4 hours, knowing that Kym would be along at any moment. Instead, Listy ran through with a big smile on her face, finishing at 3:58:59 with over six minutes to spare. And, while I was beyond thrilled for her, I was so disappointed that Kym, who had been doing so well, would miss the mark.

I plowed through the crowd, which completely filled the capitol park and surrounding streets, looking for Listy. After wandering all over the area, I heard and then saw both Kym and Listy calling out to me, their faces nearly obscured by their smiles. Kym had somehow run by me, finishing a minute ahead of Listy at 3:57:59, and she was clearly deliriously happy. We found Doug sometime later, complete with blue lips, having finished a few minutes behind the girls.

Hours later, after nice hot showers and a serious infusion of calories, everyone looked very content, and Kym and Listy (and Bob and Doug) were making plans to travel to Boston in April.



The Riel Family Newsletter

Catch the News

January, 2009

Mehan family vacations in Belize

The Riel-Mehan's continue a Christmas tradition of travel. This year, Bud, Margaret, Megan, Michael and Michael's girlfriend Ashley took off to Belize in Central America. They spent time above ground in the sun, underwater exploring the barrier reef and the blue hole, tubing through fresh water caves, climbing to the top of Mayan ruins and hiking in rain forests to feed howler monkeys.



We covered Riel Bowl XVIII on pages 1 and 2. One of the highlights of the party was the search for the Riel treasure. The treasure hunt started with a somewhat fantasized Riel family history, according to the Commissioner, Robert Riel. This account was the basis for some clues which would help the contestants find the treasure. Since Robert's story is too long to fit into one RFNL we will record it in serialized format. The first chapter starts here.

The Legend of the Riel Treasure

Back in the late 1700's King Louis Riel was in the waning years of his monarchy. After almost 50 years of ruling in the south of France, he had amassed a great amount of wealth and power, but his prize possession was housed in a simple chest no larger than the head of his favorite hunting dog foxy. While only the king knew what exactly was in the chest, it was said to be the reason he was able to rule for such a long time in very volatile times. In fact, it was rumored that what ever was in that chest gave its owner such great strength and power that all would fall before him. It was this possession that consumed King Riel's thoughts as he neared the end of his life.

During his rule King Riel had accomplished many great things with the help of his secret possession, but he had also made a few foes along the way, mostly the King of England who had tried unsuccessfully to take his land. This was his lament as he and his family had his favorite Sunday dinner (a mix of fresh berries, bananas, sweet jams and nuts all over a rich cream that had been frozen in the catacombs below the castle). He decided to call together his most trusted knights (known as the Knights of the Tempered meal because they were often invited to join the family for their special Sunday meal or as they later were called... the Knights Temper).

He told the Knights that his rule was nearly over and that he believed the rebels in the new world had the right idea, a place of freedom and self government (not to mention sticking it to that uppity English King). He went on to say that he was sending his youngest son Frank to America with the secret possession (now called the Riel Treasure) and he commanded his knights to make the journey as well. The Knights Temper were sworn to secrecy and to protect the Riel Treasure at all costs. As a cover for this journey the King issued a proclamation that he was sending money and advisers to help the American rebels in what he called a peace keeping mission.

So the king sent an armada of ships to America via the northern route, passing what is now Greenland and Nova Scotia. During the trip down the North American coast, one ship slipped away with Frank Riel and the Knights Temper and landed in the Canadian territory. The rest of the Armada went on to provide General Washington with much needed funds, weapons, advisors, and one more thing... the recipe for the kings favorite dinner. The king, in hearing of Washington's false teeth knew that the recipe would be a big hit. In fact the first time he got a chance to tasted it, (July 4th 1783) General Washington declared it to be a American tradition to eat what he called a banana split (because of the lengthways cut of the banana).

(To be continued in a later issue of RFNL)