



The End of an era – Riel Bowl XX

January 1, 2011 marked the end of 20 successive years of New Years Day family celebrations. Starting last January Robert, with help from Karla, Brian, Katy, Listy, Bob, Grandpa and others, created a 150 page book of words and pictures depicting twenty years of family history. Coincidentally, all 21 grandchildren were included, since the youngest, Frank “JJ” Riel was four months old on 1990 and the oldest, Kevin Riel, was eleven. In preparing the book Robert borrowed from Grandpa his entire file of hard copy newsletters, and some, but by no means were all of the stories copied from that source. Also, Robert borrowed from Grandpa his file of approximately 3000 hard copy photographs from the pre-digital camera era. Using those sources plus his own recollections he created a truly remarkable account of the growth of the Riel family during the 1990 – 2010 period. The final draft of the book (expertly proofread by Listy and Bob) was finished in November and sent to a commercial printer who made 16 copies. At the gift hand out part of the 20th celebration a gift wrapped book was given by Robert to each Riel family. In addition, 20 CD copies were given out to the grandchildren families. The complete book can be



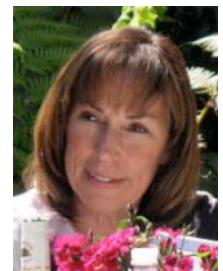
viewed on the internet by entering blurb.com and searching for Riel Bowl. Also, anyone desiring a CD copy can get one by contacting Robert or Grandpa.



The 20th Riel Bowl celebration started off in much the same way as the prior ones. Families began to arrive before noon, and there was the usual mixing, snacking, and picture taking. The “tee it up” golf ball puzzle generated a lot of interest and frustration. However, there were three winners: Pete, (Brian’s friend), Jason, and Michael. Lunch was served next, and all agreed that Robert’s prime rib roasts (two) were the best ever. Next was the Jeopardy game, which Robert authored. The questions were in the form of photos taken at various Riel Bowl events, and the contestants were required to identify the year depicted. There were six teams: The Home team (Karla, Katy, Brian, and his friends, and teams headed by Listy, Birdy, Carol, Ed, and Margaret. The competition was spirited, and the winner was Brian’s Home team. It was a great contest, enjoyed by all. The next item on the program was something special. Everyone had been invited to submit, in advance, some special incidents they fondly recalled from past Riel Bowl celebrations. Birdy kindly volunteered to meet with each person and record their memories. Birdy then reorganized the items into a movie, complete with sound track.. Contributors included Grandpa, Grandma ,Carol, Jeff, Ed, Francie (from New York), Annie (from Spain), Bob G, Jessica and Miguel, Dustin, Bud and Margaret, Birdy, Listy, and Craig. The movie was extremely well done, and gave some interesting recollections. The gift exchange was next, followed by distribution of individual presents. After wishing Grandma a happy 86th birthday, the party ended, but it was announced by the President of the Riel Bowl, Grandpa, that this was not the end of the Riel Bowl Celebration. See the following article.

Commissioner Robert Riel announces retirement after 20 years of service

Confirming rumors heard throughout most of 2010, Robert announced that he is stepping down as Riel Bowl Commissioner, and the 20th will be his last official act. Everyone agreed that he has made the Riel Bowl a special family celebration, and the one of the great family events of the year, from the beginning up to this day. It is rumored that Riel Bowl president Frank Riel soon will announce that the title of Riel Bowl Commissioner Emeritus will be given to Robert. This means that he has the title but no official duties or responsibilities. It also was announced that a new Commissioner has been appointed for Riel Bowl XXI, Carol Benesch. She has reported that she will rely on significant support from husband Jeff, as well as her children, especially Jason, since both Jessica & Dustin are not residing in San Diego. Carol and Jason have announced that they already are exploring ideas for Riel Bowl XXI.



The Riel Family Newsletter

Catch the News January, 2011

Riel Bowl XX – Socializing, Dining, Playing games, Exchanging gifts



He teed it up



Karla chats with Curtis and Lauren



Robert bastes the roast



Grandma and Carol enjoying snacks



An old Jeopardy score board



The commissioner rules !



Was there really a silly hat category?



A tough question



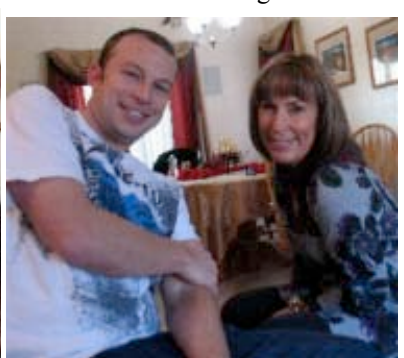
Brian's winning team



Little kids get big gifts



Ed unwraps a white elephant



Jason and Carol planning for 2012



Family Reflections on the Riel Bowl

Following the Riel Bowl, there were many thank you messages to Bob, Dad and the twins from the family reflecting on what a larger family means to all of us. We include Birdy's comments here and the rest will come in the next edition.

Dear Robert,

Wow....words escape me. I couldn't wait to get my hands on that book but as soon as we got home...Michelle and David were pouring over it. And then, soon afterwards, Curtis and Lauren spent a long time reading it. We all love it for different reasons. If you are sister or brother, niece or nephew...you love it because you lived it. If you are new to our family, you love it because it gives you a window into the world of the Riels.

I was talking to my own family about this. Mom and Dad created a family for us that was unique in that...it was void of the regular presence of grandpas and grandmas, aunts and uncles. Given the distances, we never knew what it was like to have an extended family. For us...family started with mom and dad...and just grew. So I have no idea what it is like to have grandparents as a center of a family. Nor do I know what it is like to have aunts and uncles who are there all the time trying to be a part of my life...but I do know what it is like to have brothers and sisters who care about each other. And I do love my role as an aunt to an amazing array of nieces and nephews. I love being in this family...I love our gathers...and I love my brother Robert for putting into words what I feel in my heart. Thank you, thank you, thank you. I am speechless over your hours of work and timeless energy. To say I am proud of your accomplishments would be putting it mildly. Robert...you created a book that I will love forever.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart.
I love you
Birdy

Family News from The Merica Side

Just prior to Christmas Grandpa and Grandma received the following email from Grandma's nephew, Gerard Legrain. He is the son of Grandma's sister (deceased) and he fills us in on the Merica Family.

Dear Uncle Frank and Aunt Edith
Your lovely card arrived today! The time difference favours me, but there is no way a card from London could reach you in time. Shame on me! Please forgive these electronic wishes. We hope you are well. Margaret keeps us posted on the events of your now huge descent; a biblical blessing as you know. In comparison our family is tiny; two sons Philippe and Pierre and one daughter Milli in between. Period. I have a sister Françoise who lives in Paris. Not married, no children. We talk frequently on the phone and she went with us to Greece last summer (see below). My wife Katrin has a brother Ivar who lives in Camarillo, Ca. He is married to Evelyn and they have two daughters. Both are married and one of them has a baby daughter. We are all

healthy and happy. We see from time to time Patrick Fairweather (Maria's widower) and his daughters as well as Aunt Isa whom we went to see in Greece last summer. As you know she is in mediocre health but keeps all her head. We are also in touch with Colia (Nicholas), Evy and Mickey (uncle Romulus's children). Last summer, we attended the wedding of Ira, Evy's daughter in Kavalla (Northern Greece), a memorable occasion. Whatever you read about Greece's problems, do not doubt that their values are in the right place. When they celebrate with their family and friends, the world and its worries are not allowed to intrude. We keep in touch also with Nicole, Helli, Lilly and Hemon, Uncle Byron's children. Hemon has two sweet children. The girl Mahé is a fencing champion and I believe Victor her younger brother is taking up fencing too. Last but not least we keep in touch with Aunt Morag (Uncle Michael's widow) and her daughter Elizabeth who is a Londoner. We see her less frequently but we keep in touch with her brother Theo who lives in Cheshire. He is married to Kate and they have a little boy called Louis. Theo simply does not like traveling much. We attended his marriage in the North and we just hope they will come some day to London! Aunt Morag hops on a train at the drop of a hat and she is past eighty! Katrin is cooking a Christmas Eve dinner which will be attended by our three children, Aunt Morag and Elizabeth. So you see, we can't compete with your numbers but we are not alone!

Happy Christmas and much love to you both!

Gérard and Katrin

Grandpa and Grandma's Purdue friend dies.

We were saddened to receive the following note in a Christmas Card.

So sorry to have to tell you Jack died March 1 of this year. He had been working in the yard February 25 and had come in and was sitting on the couch by me when he had a stroke and never regained consciousness. I'm doing all right but of course miss him terribly. I'm so glad Kathy was living with us and continues to live with me.

I hope the year was good to you and the next one will be too. Merry Christmas and lot of love,
Margy

Jack and Margy Dulin were next door neighbors and good friends during our Purdue days (and Margaret's Godparents). We still remember the New Years Eve parties we enjoyed together, drinking Jacks home brewed beer and welcoming in the next year. We didn't have much money, but there are a lot of fond memories. The picture was taken in Palm Springs, in 2004, when we visited them while on vacation.



Engagement Party for Michelle and David

Not lost in all the holiday merriment, our family had the additional joy of celebrating the engagement of our very dearest Michelle to the lucky and very impressive David Lane. The gathering was at the nicely redecorated home of Bruce and Birdy. The food was plentiful and delicious to which we should thank and credit the extended Hartman family. The Riel's did bring their traditional songs to the event; in fact there were no less than three songs written. Being set to easy Christmas carols tunes, it almost sounded like we Riel's could sing!!! We hope that Robert and Denise Lane, Davids parents, as well as his sister Colleen and her husband, Micah Sybor, felt welcomed, and embraced. We realize that our family has become so big that these large parties might seem more like a convention rather than a family gathering. Please know of our individual and personnel commitments to join, and connect, with you in fostering the happiness that will surely result in the mirage of these two very strong and beautiful individuals. For all readers, let me restate the wedding date; October 8 of this year, and, while it is not yet in full service, there wedding website is www.Lanes2Be.weddingwindow.com. Let me close with some pictures, and Michelle's blog of the day that she meet David.



Written by Michelle, September 8th, 2009

On Friday night, my roommate Elaina and I decided that we were going to go skydiving. Originally the plan was for Saturday, but plans had been forgotten and we decided to go on Monday instead. As luck would have it, ... we loaded up the car and went for a 50-minute ride up to Pepperell, MA to the SkyJump airport. There was a lot of waiting... it was a bunch of hippies running the place. ... We were sitting around waiting for about 2.5 hours and then we finally got to suit up in some really sexy Dickies coveralls. We were paired up with a tandem instructor that we were attached to throughout the jump. I was paired up with a guy named Dave. He helped me put on my harness and showed me what to do as soon as we got out of the airplane and how to land properly without getting hurt. ...I was stoked (as you can see by the goofy grin on my face)! I will admit that there was a moment of "oh crap, I can't believe I'm doing this... too late to turn back now!!" as we stood at the door of the plane about to jump. No lie. BUT, as soon as we started falling, there was no time to think about it. There was a little glitch with our parachute, which kept us from jumping at 10,000 feet, and there was a crowd, so we had to wait until 13,000 feet. This translates into about a full minute of free fall instead of 40 seconds. Dave mentioned that the free-fall felt like forever... and it did feel long. We did some 360's to get a really good view, although the clouds got in the way of the Boston skyline.... Dave gave me the signal and I pulled the chute (but his hand was there to pull it in case I didn't make it). At that point, I experienced the most peaceful feeling in the world. It was unbelievable. Seriously. I even got to control the parachute for a bit while we were up in the sky (but I was much more comfortable letting him control this instead of me). We landed and then it was over. But I am SOO glad I did it. So glad! I hope to do it again sometime.

<http://sunnyhunngirl.blogspot.com/>

