

The Riel Family Newsletter

Catch The News

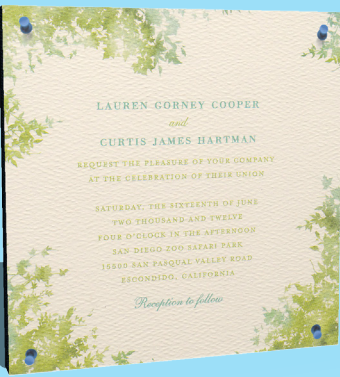
July 2012

RFNL 257



**Curtis and Lauren
Join Hearts
June 16, 2012**

The Rehearsal Dinner PARTY!



With the wedding but a day away, it was time for the rehearsal just to make sure everyone knew exactly what they were going to do and when they had to do it. So the whole bridal party took off for the wilds of San Diego's Zoo Safari Park to do the "walk through" of the next day's main event.

But the Hartmans like to make sure everything goes right so they also scheduled a practice party right after the rehearsal at the Old Spaghetti Factory in Vista. After all, you have to make sure everyone knows how to party after the wedding right?

Birdy and Bruce invited the whole family to help them celebrate the start of a very wonderful weekend. The room was perfect and Birdy had it decorated to perfection with all the trappings of a real Jungle safari. There were stuffed animals, and even safari hats and scarves for use by the party-goers to help them get into the mood.

The food was great and the beer and wine flowed liberally, I was told that this would help the Riel Singers perform better. All one can say is... well, they needed more beer or wine or both! But as usual, they put on a fine performance with little or no practice at all. The song (written especially for Curtis and Lauren by Bob Gillingham) is re-printed in the side bar on the next page.

After all the singing died down, it was time for some toasting (that Birdy just can't stop practicing). There were several short speeches and both Lauren and Curtis were very happy that the whole family could join them for a very special dinner.

We thank Birdy and Bruce for hosting such a wonderful party and allowing the Riel and Cooper families the opportunity to share a very special time together. And of course the practice drinking didn't hurt either!



Sung to the tune of "The Lion Sleeps Tonight"

In their marriage, their lovely marriage,
There's nothing they can fear.
This sweet couplet,
This daring doublet,
Was started with a beer.

A Stella yes, A Stella yes, A Stella yes, A Stella yes,
They've learned a lot but most of all not with a Stella beer to mess.
A Stella yes, with great success, they both agree that it's the best.

In their marriage, their awesome marriage,
Mistakes they'll make it's true.
They'll be forgiving,
Enjoying living,
Just don't touch Lauren's brew.

A Stella yes, A Stella yes, A Stella yes, A Stella yes,
They've learned a lot but most of all not with a Stella beer to mess.
A Stella yes, without regrets, they're better beers, but what the heck!

Hush my darlings, don't fear my darlings,
great joy you both will craft.
Know that Curtis,
Is like a puppy,
unless you take his draft.

A Stella yes, A Stella yes, A Stella yes, A Stella yes,
They've learned a lot but most of all not with a Stella beer to mess.
A Stella yes, it is the best, let's put this silly phrase to rest.

In your marriage, your lifelong marriage,
We hope you'll be good buds,
Save the last drink,
Don't cause a great stink,
And never take their suds.

A Stella yes, A Stella yes, A Stella yes, A Stella yes,
They've learned a lot but most of all not with a Stella beer to mess.
Congratulations!





Curtis and Lauren's Wedding Ceremony June 16, 2012 Safari Park San Diego, California

Editor's note: the following is the complete text from Reverend Listy's I.O. (Internet Ordained) Wedding speech. She did such a beautiful job that, any other words about the wedding would pale by comparison.

In this setting tonight it seems so fitting to start with a quote from the Lion King because I could swear we are in the middle of a scene from it right now.....

"Can you feel the love tonight? The peace the evening brings The world, for once, in perfect harmony with all its living things." Can you feel the love tonight? You needn't look too far stealing through the night's uncertainties Love is where they are...

Together at last...in the same city...ready to commit to each other... On behalf of this special couple, it is my distinct honor to welcome everyone here today as we gather to celebrate the wedding of Curtis and Lauren in these beautiful surroundings.

You have come here to share in this formal commitment they make to one another, to offer your love and support to this union, and to allow Curtis and Lauren to start their married life together surrounded by the people who have been most important to them throughout their lives.

Many of you may know that Curtis and Lauren met at Craig and Ana's wedding over four years ago. But what you may not know...is that there was another woman who brought them together....(don't you love intrigue?)

I often wondered?... Was it Curtis' charm that caught Lauren's eye...or Lauren's quick wit that is hard not to love from the first time you get a chance to really talk to her? But what I found out during my vast research... It was Stella who truly brought them together...

It started with Curtis who was trying to impress Lauren with a few dance moves and noticed she might need another drink.... when he inquired what she might like to drink, she asked for a Stella and he commented, that's what he was drinking as well....

As luck would have it, when he went to order a round of Stellas for them both...he found himself in a quandary....only one Stella was left in the bar.... He thought of doing the noble "Hartman" thing and giving it to Lauren...but then he decided to offer her a Heinekin instead.... As Lauren remembers it....

"As he handed me the Heineken he announced, he got the last Stella and proceeded to take a sip from it. I can't remember our exact exchange of words but it was something along the lines of me making a sarcastic comment about him taking the last Stella when I had asked for one and not giving the last one to me and laughing about it....That moment is what drew me to him, I just felt like there was an instant chemistry there, that I had never felt previously... plus he challenged me, which I liked."

This fits into what we know about Curtis growing up. You see....some kids his age wanted to be a baseball player or a rock star....but anyone who knew Curtis would remember his dry sense of humor that always carried a unique response... for he wanted to grow up to be a dictator... (I guess that's what you get out of future history majors.)

In fact...his perfect world was a place he dubbed "Curtopia," where he would be the ruler/king (hence the Lion King reference) and all subjects would bow to him...a far cry from joining the army where he learned that drill sergeants would really rule his world....and now that he's getting married, he'll have a new shared ruling with Lauren at his side...

Actually, this love story goes a little deeper in that both Curtis and Lauren enjoyed a relationship with a doll named Cricket. Lauren got this talking doll for Christmas probably the same time our daughter Kristy got one as well. They both shared a love for the doll and had fun in different cities listening to her read stories and sing songs to them.

The Wedding Procession:
Listy
Curtis and Birdy
Cindy and Jennifer
Heather and Brian
Michelle and Dave
Ana and Scott
Kendra and Craig
Ana Sofia and Corbin
Lauren and Phyllis





Unfortunately for Kristy....cousin Curtis had his own idea about this shared love of a toy. For, one day....I think Curtis was about 4 years old...He decided to take a sharpie pen to poor Cricket's face and he scribbled all over it....when asked why...Curtis gave the typical boy response... "Ah....I don't know."

Uncle Bruce, known as "the fixer of all problems"; solved it by giving Cricket her first face lift....he used sand paper and scraped the pen marks from Cricket's cheeks....giving her a rough-and-tough look (just what Kristy wanted I'm sure).

Unfortunately...poor Cricket was never the same...so Lauren...be-ware...don't ask Curtis for help with your make up or anything that

has to do with a permanent marker and a face....it won't be pretty....

I believe the most incredible thing about this relationship is that it appears to be boundless. Most relationships that have to endure separation are troubled at best....but this one took a tiny spark from a two-week leave and found a way to keep the coals lit with a 6,000-mile separation....Lauren in S.D. and Curtis in Korea. Yes...there were some sacrifices....Like Curtis spending \$250-300 a month on an expense he liked to call "talk-ing-to-Lauren."



But in hindsight to all of us...it was a bargain because it is that time spent together that kept them both close and paid off dearly when Curtis returned and they were able to spend some quality time together on the same continent. Of course, deployment wasn't enough for either of them as they chose to be sensible this year, and take another separation while Curtis finished his degree in Wash. DC and Lauren lived in Long Beach starting a new job.

Wedding ceremonies are typically filled with symbolism and fun stories. When I asked Curtis to name one object that would repre-

sent their lives together he stated it would have to be Lauren's jewelry box...He noted...

"Lauren only had a small wooden box for a while, and needed something much larger to keep her jewelry from taking over the top of her dresser. So she looked around for something cheap online, and found a Chinese wooden jewelry box from the 50's or 60's on E-bay. She had me look at the picture and it seemed reasonably well-built and was only \$30 or so, so I told her to get it.

When it arrived, it became clear that the condition of the item had been somewhat overstated. The wood finish was in disrepair, the hardware was a mess, and it had been owned by a smoker, so the felt cloth on the interior filled our apartment with the delicate aroma of stale cigarettes. Lauren thought about throwing it away and calling the venture a loss, but the box itself was reasonably well-carved, and made entirely of hardwood. So I convinced her we could fix it.

We immediately went to home depot, and bought sandpaper, a chisel, stain and finish, and hooks and hinges. We spent most of the remainder of the day carefully pulling the old felt out, using the chisel to scrape off the glue residue and sanding down the interior and exterior. We then put a new finish on it, cleaned





the old hardware and put new hinges in it, along with a chain so the lid didn't open too far.

Lauren had never done anything like this, and so I taught her as we went along and she ended up enjoying the process. The end product may not be perfect, but it is something we both value for having spent time working on it and making it ours.

In many respects, that jewelry box mirrors our relationship. It started off as something far from the ideal we were both looking for. Who on earth seeks out a long distance relationship? But there was something fundamentally sound about it that made us both willing to work on it. After lots of work, it is something we are both proud of.

Lauren and Curtis, marriage is perhaps the greatest and most challenging adventure of human relationships. No ceremony can create your marriage; only you can do that – through love and patience; through dedication and perseverance; through talking and listening, helping and supporting and believing in each other; through tenderness and laughter; through learning to forgive, learning to appreciate your differences, and by learning to make the important things matter, and to let go of the rest. What this ceremony can do is to witness and affirm the choice you make to stand together as soul mates and partners.

Curtis and Lauren...

Today you are surrounded by your family and friends, all of



whom are gathered to witness your marriage and to share in the joy of this beautiful occasion which you'll undoubtedly cherish as one of the happiest days of your lives. You each bring to this marriage your own unique personality, and together you'll form a union created of friendship, respect and love.

I'd like to invite Kristy and Seamus Keith to share a poem and reading which captures the essence of Lauren and Curtis' feelings on this day...



Kristy Reads...

MY LOVE
~ Linda Lee Elrod ~

When I met you, I had no idea how much my life was about to be changed... but then, how could I have known?

A love like ours happens once in a lifetime. You were a miracle to me, the one who was everything I had ever dreamed of, the one I thought existed only in my imagination.

And when you came into my life, I realized that what I had always thought was happiness couldn't compare to the joy loving you brought me.

You are a part of everything I think and do and feel, and with you by my side, I believe that anything is possible. (this day) gives me a chance to thank you for the miracle of you... you are, and always will be, the love of my life.

Seamus Reads:

MARRIAGE JOINS TWO PEOPLE IN THE CIRCLE OF ITS LOVE
~ By Edmund O'Neill ~

Marriage is a commitment to life, the best that two people can find and bring out in each other. It offers opportunities for sharing and growth that no other relationship can equal. It is a physical and an emotional joining that is promised for a lifetime.

Within the circle of its love, marriage encompasses all of life's most important relationships. A wife and a husband are each other's best friend, confidant, lover, teacher, listener, and critic. And there may come times when one partner is heartbroken or ailing, and the love of the other may resemble the tender caring of a parent for a child.

Marriage deepens and enriches every facet of life. Happiness is fuller, memories are fresher, commitment is stronger, even anger is felt more strongly, and passes away more quickly.

Marriage understands and forgives the mistakes life is unable to avoid. It encourages and nurtures new life, new experiences, and new ways of expressing a love that is deeper than life.

When two people pledge their love and care for each other in marriage, they create a spirit unique unto themselves which binds them closer than any spoken or written words. Marriage is a promise, a potential made in the hearts of two people who love each other and takes a lifetime to fulfill.



Curtis and Lauren, no minister, priest, rabbi or public official can truly marry you. Only you can marry each other by making a mutual commitment. The vows you are about to exchange represent your pledge to each other. For, it is not the words that bind you together as one, but the love and commitment each of you feel deep within your soul.

Curtis...please face Lauren and take her hands in yours as you give your wedding vows... Curtis, do you take Lauren to be your wedded wife? Do you promise to love, comfort, honor, and respect her? Do you promise to give her the best of yourself and to ask of her no more than she can give? Do you promise to respect her as her own person and to realize that her interests, desires and needs are no less important than your own? Do you promise to share with her your time and your attention and to bring joy, strength and imagination to your relationship? Do you promise to keep yourself open to her, to let her see through the window of your world into your innermost fears and feelings, secrets and dreams? Do you promise to grow along with her, to be willing to face changes in order to keep your relationship alive and exciting? Do you

also promise to love her in good times and in bad, in sickness and health, with all you have to give to her and all you feel inside in the only way you know how...Completely and forever?

Lauren, do you take Curtis to be your wedded husband? Do you promise to love, comfort, honor, and respect him? Do you promise to give him the best of yourself and to ask of him no more than he can give? Do you promise to respect him as his own person and to realize that his interests, desires and needs are no less important than your own? Do you promise to share with him your time and your attention and to bring joy, strength and imagination to your relationship? Do you promise to keep yourself open to him, to let him see through the window of your world into your innermost fears and feelings, secrets and dreams? Do you promise to grow along with him, to be willing to face changes in order to keep your relationship alive and exciting? Do you also promise to love him in good times and in bad, in sickness and health, with all you have to give to him and all you feel inside in the only way you know how...Completely and forever?

The vows which have been exchanged are but words that are fleeting, and the sound of them is soon gone. Thus, the wedding rings become an enduring symbol of the promises which have been made. May your rings be always the symbol of the unbroken circle of love. Love freely given has no beginning and no end. Love freely given has no giver and no receiver. You are each the giver and each the receiver. May your ring always call to mind the freedom and the power of this love.

Curtis, will you repeat after me: With this ring, I thee wed, as a symbol of my commitment and love to you... forever and ever.

Lauren, will you repeat after me: With this ring, I thee wed, as a symbol of my commitment and love to you... forever and ever.

Lauren and Curtis, no one can understand commitment and compromise better than you two ...as you both have already sacrificed a lot to be together. I have a special gift for both of you to help you survive your first year of marriage. It's a six pack of Stella. And I'm giving you this with the idea that you'll use it wisely...

I'm also not going to divide it up or give a certain number to each of you, but I am going to make one rule that you have to abide by in order to open one together...Both of you have to agree that the other one has truly earned it by keeping the spirit of the commitment you made today alive in a special way...and you'll have to decide what act of kindness will qualify...we already know that Curtis knows how to keep Lauren happy...as he reports:



"Lauren hates mornings. The only way to ensure a happy Lauren in the morning is to follow the plan of:

- 1) Let her sleep in till roughly 9 o'clock,
- 2) Just before 9, make coffee and pancake batter so it is ready for her when she does get up,
- 3) Wait until she is fully awake and up before you actually make the pancakes, so she does not feel rushed to enjoy them, and
- 4) Wash all the dishes from this ritual so she does not have to.

If you follow this simple 4-step plan every weekend you are guaranteed a happy Lauren. Please note: Occasionally substituting eggs and toast for pancakes does keep it interesting.

Since Curtis has this figured out, he can't use a Stella for that act of kindness, because that is part of their established relationship....sorry Curtis...Curtopia rules do not apply either... Nope...these Stellas have to be saved for something either one of you do that is truly of worthy note....and you'll both have to agree, otherwise...it doesn't count...

Lauren describes Curtis as her soul mate....which led me to our closing ceremony before the big celebration begins. As I found a quote that stated:

"A soul mate is someone who shares our deepest longings, and our sense of direction. When we're two balloons, and together our direction is up, chances are we've found the right person. Our soul mate is the one who makes life come to life."



So in honor of this quote and Lauren's statement...I have two balloons and some sharpies (Curtis....please don't use this on a doll's face). Each of you are going to write on this very small, unfilled balloon your greatest hope and pledge to each other (no novels please...it is a small space)... And...since the Wild Animal Park opps...sorry The Safari Park... doesn't like releasing balloons...we will fill the balloons up later...with helium and release them on the same date you will be heading back to Long Beach...letting your dreams rise up and take

flight together...as you and Lauren are also taking flight with this new adventure of becoming husband and wife forever...

It would have been more dramatic to do it now....but rules are rules...so you'll just have to trust that we'll do it and imagine the balloons taking flight later...

And as we began the ceremony....we officially end the ceremony with the Lion King's words...

"Can you feel the love tonight? You needn't look too far stealing through the night's uncertainties Love is where they are..."

Finally...our wedding would not be official unless we included a famous family quote from a special women we all love and adore, Edith Riel...

"May God Bless YOU....everyone"

Curtis and Lauren, it is my greatest pleasure with the power that has been vested in me (from the Internet), to now pronounce you husband and wife. You may seal your vows with a kiss.

And it is also my extreme honor to be the first to present to you: Mr. and Mrs. Hartman, our newly-married couple as husband and wife.



FATHER'S DAY AT FRANCIE'S



Father's Day weekend was a record for Riel events. On Friday was the rehearsal dinner party, Saturday the wedding and on Sunday it was time to gather at Francie's home to celebrate Father's Day with Grandpa Frank being the center of attention.

This was a very casual event in that being the 3rd consecutive day of a family gatherings, most of the "catching up" conversations had already taken place. But we all enjoy reliving the wedding and the really great party afterwards.

It was really wonderful to see Grandpa Frank walk in using his new 3-wheel walker he received as a Father's Day gift. He really got around well on it.



Next, it was time for lunch which included sandwich fixings, salads and an assortment of fruits. It was a really good way to end a very active but happy weekend. Francie was a wonderful host and as usual a good time was had by all.

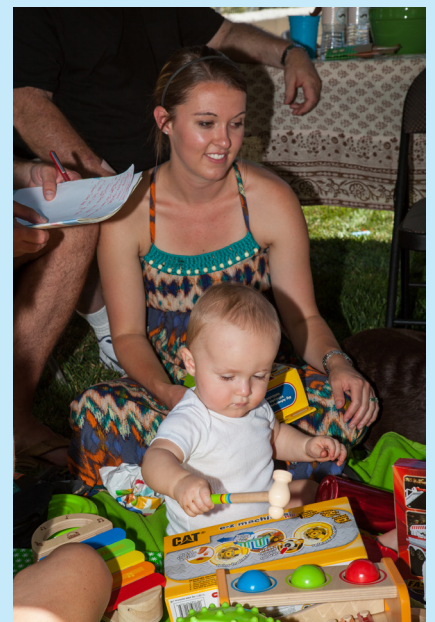


LIAM CELEBRATES HIS 1ST BIRTHDAY

On July 24, the family, along with some friends, were invited to Shamus and Kristy's home to celebrate their "little man's" 1st birthday. In fact, the theme of the party was the little man. Everyone was given mustaches to wear, and the cake had a big chocolate mustache for Liam to put on his face, which he did.

Lunch was served which included fruit, Doug and Kym's famous baked beans, sandwiches and salads. If you wanted to enjoy a fine cigar with the little man, there were chocolate dipped pretzel sticks to enjoy. And of course we all indulged in some cake and ice cream.

Next it was time for the main event, the opening of the gifts. Liam didn't like the sound of paper be torn off the packages but he sure did like what was inside. He got many wonderful things from his loving aunts, uncles, grandparents and friends. As Kristy tells us he has a stack that we get something new for him each day, he might get through it all by next month!



FAMILY SHORTS



If not for modern technology, Francie and Lyle might have missed their wedding anniversary. Francie tells us that with all the weddings and parties in June, she might have forgotten but fortunately her cell phone reminded her.

When she called Lyle to wish (remind) him

a happy anniversary, he was right on the spot saying "of course I remembered!" And to prove it flowers were soon delivered to the shop.



Michelle tells us that "after months of thinking & waiting for the right time, we finally did it!! Our new car... made the deal last Friday & picked it up yesterday. This diesel Jetta Sportwagon gets an average of 32mpg in the city and around 47mpg's on the highway! We love it & plan on it getting us through the next 10 years or so no matter where in the world the Navy sends us... we are so blessed..."

Grandpa Frank Back in Hospital

Grandpa Frank was back in the hospital at the beginning of July due to falling. This was the fourth time Dad has fallen in the last 4 weeks. The first time was at "senior sneakers" exercise with only a bit of dizziness. The second time he had go to urgent care then to the hospital to have his head stapled to close a head wound. And what they missed was that he had cracked his ribs. The third was a small fall because of pain. The fourth fall was more serious and they discovered the source of the pain troubling him over the past week, he had three cracked ribs. He was taken by ambulance to the hospital.

The family was quick to respond and he had visitors in the hospital throughout each day. Tim was in town and it really lifted Grandpa's spirits to see him. Tim taught Ed and Margaret the chorus line of his smart mob dance which will take place in San Francisco to celebrate his 30th birthday. Grandpa almost smiled as we worked to entertain him.

The family is doing the best we can to keep grandpa's spirits high. He has trouble standing or walking, but since there is not much that can be done for cracked ribs but rest, he was released to a nursing home. The family agreed the best place was a nursing home in Mission Hills not far from where the family started, on a canyon. His room has a glass wall with a sliding door to the outside and there is a bird feeder with lots of happy birds to watch. The nurses and staff have been exceptionally nice to him. It is a double

room but they have been trying to keep the other bed empty to make it easier for all of us to visit. And the placement nurse said they will try to find a good partner for him when it is necessary. They have been helping to make him as comfortable as possible. We all wish Grandpa a speedy recovery and pray that he may go home soon.



Kevin is now teaching "Skip the wonder dog" how to surf. Soon Kevin will be riding the waves with his dad, brothers and Skip a true family of surfers!



Listy, along with some of her fellow teachers from her school, were in Washington DC at the beginning of June, to accept an award for "Advancing Excellence in the Middle Grades" given by The National Forum. Congratulations to Listy and her staff for achieving such a high standard.