

# The Riel Family Newsletter

Catch the News

October 2012 RIFNL 260

## HOW THE RIEL'S SPENT THEIR SUMMER



2012  
VACATIONS



# Listy, Bob, and friends, Kym and Doug, spend two weeks with Annie and Ruben in Spain

By Listy Gillingham

We had an amazing time visiting Annie in Spain once again. Our travels this time took us to Lisbon, Barcelona, Pamplona, Estella, San Sebastian, and Frankfurt. We were lucky to be able to spend time with Annie and Ruben (her new boyfriend) while in Barcelona, but Annie also joined us in our car travels towards San Sebastian with Kym and Doug. Highlights from the trip included:



Ruben, Annie, and Doug at the Olympic Village

◇ Seeing Annie again (always the best part)



◇ Meeting Ruben



◇ Sitting on the beaches in Barcelona, Sitges, and San Sebastian!

◇ Going to Montserrat where the Black Virgin Mary is housed and getting to say a prayer and touch the magic ball

◇ Hiking the trails down from Montserrat (a beautiful mountain-top monastery and church) where the Black Virgin Mary was discovered in a nearby cave

◇ Shopping (always fun)

◇ Visiting the Barcelona Olympic Village from 1992 and seeing the water show in the evening

◇ Tapas, tapas, and more tapas....with clams, mussels, mushrooms....oh my goodness...so good!

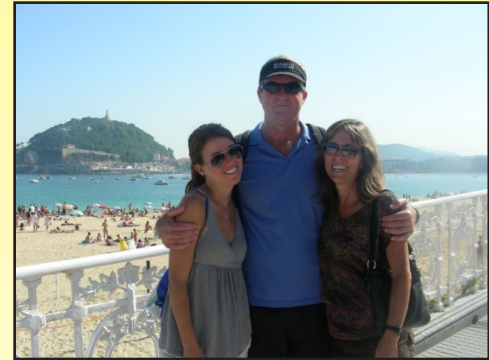
◇ Seeing the unfinished work of Gaudi with the Sagrada Familia church and gardens around it

◇ Walking down the La Ramblas

◇ Driving in a Mercedes Van across the north and seeing the many pueblos



◇ Stopping in Pamplona to see where they run the bulls and walking on the Camino de Santiago trail (a trail where pilgrims trekked from the French border into Spain...over 600 miles long....following the walk St. James did many years ago) .....could be a "must do" someday.....)



- ◇ Visiting a pueblo called Estella where they were having a festival and running the bulls in the early evening. Doug decided to try his hand with this crazy tradition. It was much more sane due to the smaller city. The bulls were smaller and best of all, the crowds too. But they were bulls with BIG horns (about 10 of them) and we got to experience on a smaller scale with front row seats an actual Spanish tradition.



*Actual Bulls Running...Run Doug! Run!*

- ◇ Walking along the Camino Trail to the monastery where they give FREE wine to the Pilgrims. You can pick aqua or vino but you have to consume it there (or so the sign says).
- ◇ The beaches in San Sebastian were a real highlight as well....beautiful! We hiked to the top of the hill where they had a statue of Jesus overlooking the cove. We swam in the Bay of Biscay.



- ◇ More shopping....loved the deals we found!



- ◇ The endless glasses of wine and canas (beer)
- ◇ Celebrating Annie's 25th Birthday and Kym and Doug's 30th Anniversary!
- ◇ Having our own personal translator everywhere we went....and seeing how easily Annie can warm up to the Spanish people by speaking with such ease to them as we ordered our meals or bought trinkets!
- ◇ Visiting Frankfurt to add one more country to the trip and get a feel for the differences between Germany and Spain



- ◇ Trying more tapas and beer...fabulous taste sensations everywhere we went...
- ◇ Seeing Annie, being with Annie, loving Annie, talking to Annie, shopping with Annie, and meeting Rubin too...smile

## Francie Visits NY City

By Francie Sorem

Since Brett's short film was one of only 15 short films selected for the Gotham City film festival in NYC, I felt like it was an excellent opportunity to attend the festival and hang out with the boys. Not having much available time, (I am leaving for Hawaii on Monday the 15th of October) I hopped on a plane on last Sunday night (the 7th), flew to NYC on the red eye figuring I would screen the film Monday night and return Tuesday night without missing a day of work, no harm no foul back to the salon on wed morning in time for my first client.

Unfortunately, the festival changed the day of the screening to Thursday, so I had to miss out on that but had a great dinner with the kids anyway. Here is Brett and Mandy and Bryce cooking for us at DANJI in Hell's Kitchen.



# Katy and Brian are Cruising...

By Katy Riel



This summer Brian, Petey, Janine, and I went on a cruise down to Mexico. The trip started out to be just for Janine and I but when Petey heard about all the wonders that cruising had to offer, we quickly turned the trip into his graduation celebration. Now Brian, Janine and I have all cruised before but this was a first for Petey, so we decided to go in style. Mom was kind enough to drive all of us and our luggage up to Long Beach in the RV. We started the morning with Mimosas and unintentional priority check-ins. From there we got on the boat, did one final check-in on Four Square (because we all are a bit nerdy), waved to the people still on shore, and started our vacation.



We went to two ports, Cabo San Lucas and Puerto Vallarta. We got to spend two days in Cabo; the first day we just enjoyed the beach and all of its viewing pleasures. Brian and I did go parasailing and it was amazing! Day two was just as fun; with our Sail and Snorkel tour. We didn't get to see any fish as the water was too cloudy but the sailing part was really fun, but anything with bottomless rum punches and tequila sunrises can't be bad!



In Puerto Vallarta, we all went tequila tasting with a day of shopping and a quick bus tour through town. Janine and I had already done this a few years back when we came before but we enjoyed it just as much as the boys did. We tasted over 6 different kinds of flavored tequilas and while some were better than others, we still all left feeling great!

During the two day sea cruise home, we celebrated Petey's graduation on formal night. We got him a cake and all made toasts at dinner. Our wonderful head server got the entire upper level of the restaurant to sing with us, which I think was Petey's favorite part.

We all had a wonderful time and we're planning our next cruise already; Brian's vote is for the Caribbean I think, but we'll have to see where the tides take us.



This summer I stayed Spain-side and did a lot of travelling up, down, and across the country. First, two of my high school friends came to visit in June so we jetted off to Valencia to hang out on the beach. It was pretty fantastic and great to see old friends.

Then, a few days later, I headed north to the Pyrenees Mountains to a small town called Bellver for summer camp. While it was work, we lived a pretty nice life. The camp put us up in a hotel for the month, with all meals prepared at the hotel as well. We worked 5 hours in the morning teaching English then headed back to the hotel for lunch. Lunch was a 2 hour, three course, ordeal with unlimited wine and sangria- yeah, we were spoiled. Then we had the afternoon for ourselves to go hiking, to the pool, play games, read, go for walks, it was amazing! The scenery there was unbelievable!

We also had weekends off from work so we took advantage of that time to visit Andorra (a tiny country between France and Spain), walk over the border to a small French town (we were really that far north), and go on longer hikes. I'm not really sure how it works out that on top of all that I also got paid, but I'll take it!



After my month at camp, my mom and dad came to visit!! Yayyy! And I'll leave it to her to detail that trip. I quickly headed back to Madrid after my grand adventures with my parents to do laundry overnight and then pack to leave the next day for... camp again! This

# TOURE DE SPAIN

By Annie Gillingham



time I worked as the Director of Studies at the camp in another small town called Ucles.

We lived and worked in a 15th century monastery along with all the summer camp kids! Pretty creepy stuff- but also pretty awesome experience. Finally, to wrap up the summer, I headed south to the beach for some much needed relaxation time. I went to Cadiz and other small towns around there, including Gibraltar to see the monkeys! It was beautiful! I still can't decide what my favorite day was- eating fresh cooked paella on the beach or getting 5 beers and a fresh seafood platter for 10 Euros. Tough call. :) Anyway, it was a great summer! But of course, I missed you all!



# BURNING MAN BRIAN

By Brian Riel

I went to Burning Man! Which (in a nut shell) is a weeklong art and music festival/camping trip in Black Rock City Nevada. I have been wanting to go for 6 years and I finally got the chance to go. It was absolutely amazing seeing all the art (over 250 installations)! The best part of the whole experience was seeing it at night. Everything lights up with more colors than you can imagine. It's an added bonus when the art cars have fire ex-

ploding from the tops and sides too! There are tons of other things to do, but I enjoyed just exploring.

Black Rock City is a city that is built in just a few weeks, and housed 53,000 bodies this year (7,000 people who bought tickets did not attend). The city has places to eat, shop, and hang out. I spent most of my time on my bike; just riding around looking at all the art! My favorite art structure was the Anubis statue that stood over 3 stories tall. You could climb all the way to the top and see the whole city. My favorite art car was a metal octopus that shot fire from its tentacles. I also enjoyed seeing the 2 main structures at the event; the man that is burned and the Temple. I really had a great time and can't wait to do it again. Please check my Facebook page for more pictures and let me know if you have any questions.



# Message From Bruce

It's with both great happiness and sadness that I tell you that my mom (Nat Hartman) passed away on October 3rd. She never wanted to be kept alive through extraordinary means or to live on machines. Steve and I were with her and watched as her stats continued to decline despite all the best medical treatment. At 12:15 AM (or so) as her organs were failing and her time was drawing near we asked that she be taken off the ventilator and all the drugs switching instead to comfort care. We held her hands and talked to her as her breathing slowed and eventually stopped. It all happened in just a few minutes and was very peaceful.

Her last few years have been difficult for her as the Alzheimer's continued to steal her memories of a happier time and from her inability to communicate caused by the collateral damage from strokes. It truly was her time and I know she is in a better place.

Love to you all from my mom... Bruce

***The following is what Bruce read at the service for his mom held on October 13, 2012:***

Mom

There are so many things that I would like to thank you for. Somehow you always seemed to understand what was really important to us, like on our first trip to Disneyland when I was 4 or 5 and I just had to have that stuffed Winnie the Pooh bear. Dad needed a lot of convincing but somehow you knew I just had to have it! I loved that stupid bear and for my whole life you have always referred to me as your Pooh Bear. You know, I still have that bear at 53 years old!

Remember that green Schwinn bike with the banana seat you gave me on my 6th or 7th birthday? That was the coolest bike ever! You probably saved my life on that deal since stealing Steve's bike generally ended very badly for me and Mike's big black bike would have led to my infertility had I continued to keep riding it since I couldn't reach the ground.

All my memories of growing up are happy ones. You made us your priority! From your choices in our schools to the family centered years of sailing and regattas with like-minded families. All of our camping together memories can never be taken away.

I want to thank you for all those years of sending us off to Walton's Grizzly Lodge for summer camp for weeks at a time. Those are some of the most wonderful memories I have. You knew the importance of that from your childhood memories of camp as well as your time as a camp counselor. I know it was a financial sacrifice to afford us those things but you wouldn't have had it any other way!

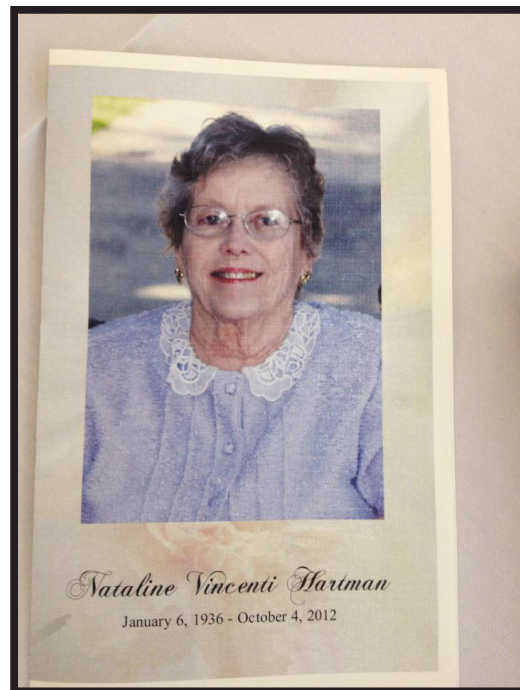
Do you remember the bicycle trips you found for us through American Youth Hostels? You may have reconsidered those trips had you known that there was little or no real supervision. For me at 13 years old to be riding bikes from Boston to Bangor Maine and camping all along the way with Mike was a real game changer in my life. We were on our own to figure out the world. I grew up a lot that summer. Responsibility was a gift you gave me whether you knew you were doing it or not!

In high school you always knew when to ask questions and when to help...and just as importantly when to leave us to our own devices. We didn't always make the best decisions but you were always there to help pick up the pieces. I never felt smothered but I always knew you were right there. Sharing a car with three brothers always had its challenges yet on those key nights like school dances or proms you always seemed to know when to offer up your car. You truly understood the mind of a teenage boy!

Do you remember how opposed you were to me buying my first house at 18 years old? At that time mortgage interest rates were around 10% and 11%. You thought the house I found in Mira Mesa for \$63K was way too much to pay for any house. I knew that the only way I was going to be able to marry the girl of my dreams was to nail down a career and a home...somehow you understood just how important that house was to me even though I didn't share the part about getting married soon. Against your better judgment you helped me buy that house by co-signing the loan docs. Years later you did admit that it was the best thing I ever did.

There are a million things that I want to thank you for. Fortunately for me I have had the opportunity over the years to do a lot of that. I am fortunate to have been able to live here in San Diego, never very far from you. You have shown me how to be a good father and husband by your endless, unconditional love. You have shown me how to keep people first in life and to show compassion. You have dealt with illness for much of your life and ever so importantly, you have shown me how to embrace the day no matter how badly you feel. The gifts that you have given to me throughout my life are what have made me into the man that I am today...There is no thank you big enough for that!

Mom I love you so much. It hurts to say goodbye but I am so happy that you are free and with the loved ones that have been waiting for you. Your loving son, Bruce



# BIG NEWS FROM KRISTY AND SEAMUS !!!

Dear Family,

Somewhere along the line I was told that good things come in threes. This has certainly been the case in the Keith household this summer. Thus, we are so excited to share our latest trio of good news in this month's RFNL:

Thing #1: After my Mercury Mariner died for the second time this summer, Seamus and I had had enough. We marched our little family over to the nearest Volkswagen dealership and traded our old car in for one that's much better suited for the needs of the growing Keith clan. That's right, we drove home that day the proud owners of...you guessed it, a minivan! Younger cousins, before you jump to conclusions too quickly, let me just share a few things: Bluetooth, THREE DVD players that can play three different DVDs at the same time, back seats that flip if you feel so inclined to tailgate in the trunk of a van, enough room to store more strollers and kids than you'll ever need, AND doors that slide open at the touch of a keychain button. If that's not the ultimate car, I don't know what is.

Thing #2: As Liam's growing collection of cars, pools, swings, trucks, tools, and clothes has started to force the walls of our house to bulge into the backyard, Seamus and I quickly realized that our humble house won't house us comfortably for much longer. We started a casual house hunt this summer, and wouldn't you know it, our house search was as successful as our house sale! After just four days of being on the market, we are already packing up and getting ready to make the trek across mission trails to our new home in Tierra Santa.

Thing #3: You may have already guessed what's coming next. With all these changes taking place, we stopped and asked ourselves: What to do with so much space in this new car and this new house? The only logical thing, of course! We are thrilled to announce that Baby Keith #2 will be arriving late May! It's still very early in the game, but we are beyond excited to share this news, and of course we welcome all your thoughts and prayers for a smooth and healthy pregnancy.

All our love, The Keiths





# GLIDING THROUGH THE GLACIERS

An Alaskan Cruise — By Margaret Riel

Bud and I took off from Vancouver on an Holland Line Cruise Ship to see the glaciers and to take a break from the tensions of life. When the ship was at sea, it was like being in a floating Las Vegas Hotel with non-stop food, entertaining shows, bars, dancing and singing. And as in Las Vegas, the constant invitation to spend more money was a part of every venue, but especially at the casino. I had a run of good luck at the roulette wheel and walked away with a pocket full of chips. But Bud won the raffle and he got a T-shirt with the logo of the cruise ship and a deck of casino poker cards.



We cruised through the Inside Passage and Glacier Bay and the best view were from the gym with wrap around windows at the top deck. There was a feeling that the treadmill was making the ship move forward. It was definitely a gym with a view.

When the ship docked in Katchikan, Juneau, and Skagway, we rode sea kayaks through a nature preserve; went whale watching on a small skiff led by an extremely knowledgeable naturalist who shared local history, folklore, and humor; and rode an antique train from Skagway to the Yukon Mountain. While most of the trip was smooth sailing...there was one evening of 100mile/hour winds that resulted in a night of fasting for most of the ships passengers.



All in all, it was a great trip and we really enjoyed the time together. Sometimes you just have to get away from all the technology and outside influences just to have some together time; and that's just what we got.



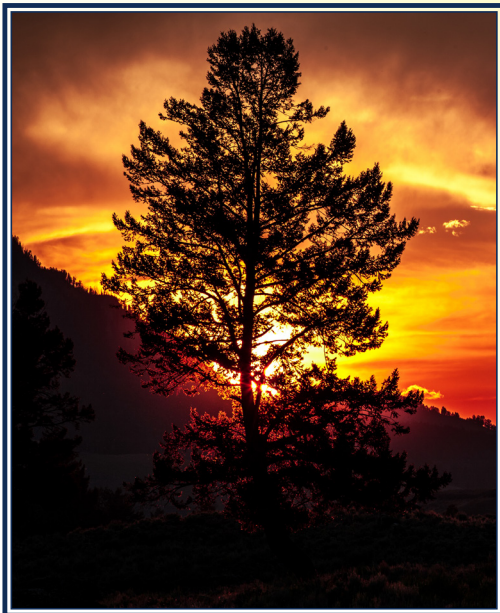


# RV Trip, 2012

By Robert Riel



Once again Karla and I were ready for our annual RV trip, however due to all the weddings we had to take it later in the year than usual. Also Karla had too much work backed up so she could only go for 2 weeks. So the plan was for me to drive to Yellowstone (a 3 day drive) and pick her up at the airport in Jackson Hole Wyoming on the following Saturday.



Off I go in the RV with our brand-new Jeep in tow. Through Las Vegas (first night and no Grandma I didn't gamble) then up I-15 almost to Idaho. Most of the Drive that day was through hot (90+) sunny weather. But just south of Salt Lake City I ran into thunder storms with the temperature dropping to below 50, hail, and even a small tornado; then just as quick as it came it was gone and it was back to the hot weather.

Yellowstone was in full blossom mode with many wild flowers and lots of animals. The bison were particularly mobile and many times caused traffic jams as they walked

up the middle of the road. I had more than one occasion where I had to drive away from one that started to charge my jeep. Later I found out that they can see their reflection



in black vehicles and will even charge parked cars! On one excursion there was a wildfire burning way off to the North-East and the smoke made for a beautiful sunset.

After Yellowstone and the Grand Tetons we were off to Glacier NP in Montana. We were very excited because every time we had visited the park before, the going-to-the-sun road was still closed due to snow. So... with it being later in the year we were hopeful that we could finally traverse this famed road. We quickly set up the RV in the campground, then unhitched the Jeep and off we went to cross one more item off our bucket list, only to be told that the road was closed due to a mud slide!

Unfazed we then decided to go white water rafting instead and had a great time. Also the good news is that we extended our stay a few extra days and were finally able to drive the road as they had just reopened it. At the top there was still snow and we even hiked in it (along with the mountain goats).

We also did lots of Jeeping (formally known as car hiking, but this sounds better) and really enjoyed all the different places we could go. On one trip we found a beautiful lake where we were the only ones around for miles. On our way home we stopped at Bear Lake Utah; where there are 100's of miles of jeep trails. We followed one all the way up Beaver Creek and really enjoyed the view.



We really had a great trip and can't wait until next year.



## FAMILY SHORTS

Bob and Listy report that they have a new (used but really cool) car. As Listy tells us it is kind of a fun car for both of them to use. Just think of driving up to the cabin with the top down and the sun. Or what about those shopping trips to the mall? No need to pop the trunk, just drop the packages in the back and off Listy goes to the next sale!



## Thanksgiving is just about a month away!

True we haven't even celebrated Halloween, but it's never too soon to plan for the Holidays. Once again we will be celebrating Thanksgiving at Bud and Margaret's home. Please be sure to contact them to find out the details and what to bring.

## RFNL Halloween Contest

With all the little ones (and not so little ones) in our family, the RFNL editorial staff has decided to hold a Halloween costume contest. Yes there is even a first prize (\$100) for the most original outfit with a Riel family theme associated with it. All ages are eligible. To enter, email a picture (high resolution) and a brief description as to how it pertains to the Riel family to Uncle Robert no later than November 4, 2012. All entries will be published in next month's RFNL with the winner being featured on the cover.