



April 2013

RFNL 266

God Bless You Children!



Riels Celebrate Easter at Merrill Gardens



Easter 2013 featured somewhat of a change of pace from the normal celebration at Francie and Lyle's home. Since they were on vacation "down under" the celebration was moved to Merrill Gardens where Grandpa Frank and Grandma Edith hosted the event. Actually, Merrill Gardens also provided some support as they provided a free brunch for all who attended!

Listy, Bob and David Gillingham started off the morning by taking Grandma and Grandpa to church at Saint Vincent De Paul. After mass, they brought them back to enjoy lunch with Ed, Jan, Kevin, Nichole, Nate, Chris, Margaret, Bud, Carol, Robert and Karla. Many enjoyed the feast provided by Merrill Gardens while other had brought





their own food to eat. But all participated in the free champagne, especially Grandma Edith.

After lunch Birdy and Michelle came by to join in the family celebration. The Riel boys, Kevin, Nate and Chris, played a few hotly contested games of pool while the rest of us got caught up on the latest news from the family.



Later as the party started to break up, Margaret and Bud took Grandpa and Grandma next door to play bingo (which as many of you know is one of the top ten pastimes for Riel families). Others took the opportunity to tour Merrill Gardens as it was their first time there.



It was a wonderful afternoon filled with good food, conversation and the love that our family so easily shares. We missed the other members that could not attend but they were always in our thoughts. Getting together with one's family is certainly one of the best things anyone can do and it is even better when you can do it on Easter, traditionally the celebration of life and Family. We are very fortunate to have Grandma and Grandpa host this event and we thank them for their continued love and support.





Rocky Mountain Escape from LA

By Brett Sorem

Amanda and I flew to Denver a few weeks ago to attend a wedding in Beaver Creek. But we fled hazy Los Angeles a few days early so we could meet up with Michael and Ashley and go snowboarding in Vail.

We stayed at their friend's condo in Dillon, Colorado for two nights. The first night, Michael picked us up from the Denver airport (which is out in the boonies) and took us straight to the Dillon Brewery. Great beer, good food, awesome atmosphere, felt like we were true mountain folk. Not quite used to Colorado prices as compared to Los Angeles, (I'm beginning to notice the perks of living in the middle of nowhere) I quickly picked up the dinner and drinks bill, telling Mike, I got this!

The three of us (Ashley had to work) went snowboarding in Vail the next day. Fresh off a broken wrist from snowboarding seven weeks prior, Amanda got right back out there and rocked it on the mountain the entire day. She's a keeper. Later that night, Ashley, who drove up after work, joined us.

We all hit the slopes the next day. It was pretty damn foggy and icy in the morning and it was probably not the best idea for me to be wearing a pair of crazy dark sun-blocking goggles, all I could see in front of me was white. Luckily enough, we all made it out safe, I did manage to break a binding strap, but that is a lot better than breaking my pretty face!

We met back up and took a nice break at lunch for great burgers and bloodies. Then Amanda and I parted ways with the married couple so we could see another couple, Amanda's friend Stine, walk the plank. It was a beautiful (catholic) wedding (had to throw that in there for Yaya so she would approve). After too many whiskey and rocks, and dance numbers we called it a night.

The next day we were reunited, hangover and all, with Mashley (from now on that is my nickname for them) and they took us back to their humble abode. I would have never guessed the Boulder Folk loved the color blue so much! The outside of the house is light blue, the carpets are an off color blue and the walls are blue. It is a really cool setup with three stories and a large backyard. The only thing it really needs is for Mike to paint the moldings in the house gold to get some San Diego Chargers flare going on. That way those damn Bronco fans will know who they are dealing with.

All and all it was a great trip. Amanda and I are going to try to go back during the summer and do some camping. I want to thank Mashley for their hospitality, I couldn't be happier to be a part of a family that goes far and beyond out of the way for each other.

Grandpa and Yaya, you did a great job, Love you all.

Brett & Mandy

Desert Flowering Season

(Don't blink you might miss it)



The month of March is known for many things, St Patrick's day, Spring rains, Lent (giving up those desserts are really hard right YaYa?), and yes the annual bloom of wild flowers in our local desert. Every year Karla and I take a long weekend (Thursday through Sunday) and drive our motorhome out to the Borrego Palms Resort for what we hope will be a nice flowering season.

The trouble here is, you don't really know when they will blossom. So when you're making reservations in January, you kind of have to guess what weekend will be best. Most likely it will be the second or third week of March, but you never know. A lot depends on the weather. First you need a lot of rain to fall in the desert during January and February, and then you need a good hot spell in March. But most importantly you need these things to happen in the right order.



Unfortunately, this year we had only moderate rainfall and a hot spell followed by a very cold front that produced frost in the desert. This caused many of the ocotillo to bloom prematurely and then the frost killed off the bloom. Still the flowers came back yet it was evident that we were a little early for the real bloom.

No worries, we brought our jeep! Also we had joined up with some friend of ours, (Jim and Lorelee) who also have a motorhome and jeep. So we all took the opportunity to do some serious car hiking along with some real hiking during the mornings before it got to hot. Remember the hot spell I mentioned well it was that weekend, which included temperatures well into the high 90's. Still, we had a great time and the flowers finally started to show up just as we were leaving on Sunday.



So... No problem, Karla and I drove out the next weekend thinking we should hit it just right. But unfortunately we missed it. Because there was so little rain this year, there wasn't enough moisture in the ground to sustain the flowers for very long. We did hike up to the palm oasis and on the way back ran into a few big horn sheep, which was the first time we had ever seen any in Anza Borrego Park. Also on the way home, while passing through Julian, we noticed that the daffodils were blooming. So all in all, we had a lot of fun on both of our visits to the park.





Michelle's Beautiful BEEE Shower

By Birdy Hartman



Michelle was delighted with a unBEEliveable shower hosted at the Hartman Hive on March 30th. We want to thank everyone for BEEing there. Our home was buzzing with family and friends that came to make Owen feel like the king of the Honey Pot. Lunch was served with the help of Joanie



Hartman, Holly Panton, Kym Farkas and Listy Gillingham.



Kristy Keith designed the most BEEutiful diaper cake and Ana Hartman created a wonderous banner to welcome our new ba-BEE! We feel so fortunate to have such sweet friends and family who jumped



into help whenever needed! Grandma Ya Ya was the lucky winner of Bumble Bee Bingo designed by Ana! And Michelle walked away with quite an array of love from all.

Now we just hope that Owen will BEE-have and BEE on time for a great BEEday in the busy BEE month of July! And remember, Owen, the key to a good life is to just BEE Happy!





Annie is literally on the run again, this time in Madrid as she finished the Madrid half Marathon. As her sister Kristy put it "Since when did you even own a pair of running shoes?!" But Annie continues to be our amazing race girl and is always out front in everything she does. There is some rumor going around that she may even be coming back home soon... We all hope it's true!



FAMILY SHORTS

OK, here's the deal if you're going to dress up for St Patrick's day, a green Viking hat does not work, even if it does say Ireland on it. And Bob, what happened here, everyone knows this is a beer drinking holiday... Wine? Seriously?

At least Seamus and Liam know how to properly celebrate St Patrick's Day. Shamus dressed in his Guinness shirt, along with Liam in his green shirt, no dumb hats and a perfect fist pump, that's about as good as it gets. No wine served here, just beer and Apple Cider!



Mathew and Corbin got to spend some time at WonderCon which was held in Anaheim last month. This is a offshoot from San Diego's more famous ComicCon but has much of the same flavor. We understand that R2D2 will never be the same after meeting these two boys!

Francie and Lyle took some much need time off and went "down under" for a cruising vacation in and around Australia and New Zealand. We should get a full report from them in next month's RFNL.