



November 2013

RFNL 273



HALLOWEEN COSTUME CONTEST RESULTS



His mom did surf
 His dad did dive
 And so in the sea
 This one would thrive

A light in their world
 He did brighten
 And so they called him
 The sea king Triton



Halloween in high school isn't easy to get a team of such diverse thinkers together in one setting to dress in theme but there was nothing despicable about this group of minions found at Patrick Henry High School's quad. The admin team took on the main characters while the teachers decided to be the minions (no type-casting intended). Go Patriot Power!



Look....up in the sky....it's a bird, it's a plane, NO...it's SUPER TEACHERS! We have the powers to do amazing things that most folks never dream of doing. We take non readers and open up their minds to reading. We take non writers and give them the gift of creative writing. We take nervous souls and teach them that school is a place to love to come to...and are saddened when the weekends come. And if that is not a super power...I don't know what is!

However, I would like to step aside for a moment and nominate someone else for best costume of the year. My nomination would go to Bruce Hartman. For he is the real superman in my family. I may have the red cape but his powers go beyond my imagination. He has had the roughest year ever but if you were to see or talk to him, you would never know it. He wears his super mask of smiles and tells you that he is perfect. He gets out of bed every day, puts on this secret invisible cape and somehow goes to work with all of the burdens that his health has given him. I don't need to recap all that is happening in his life. But I can share with you from my point of view. Many of my family members worry about me. But I want you all to know that Bruce makes my world a wonderful place to be. He never lets his health issues slow down our family life. We are blessed with many grandkids that give us constant joy and reasons to celebrate life. So my vote goes to the guy that uses his secret power to make those around him feel so cherished and loved...and loves us right back!



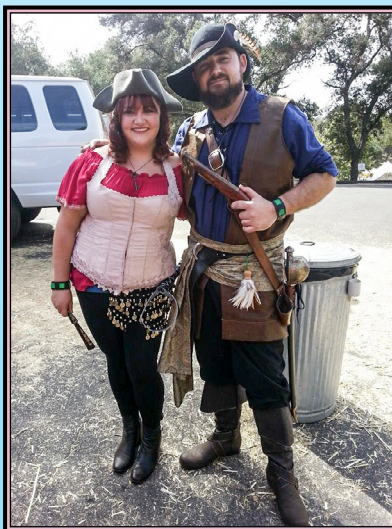
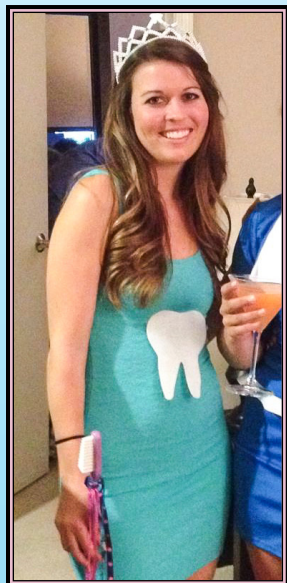
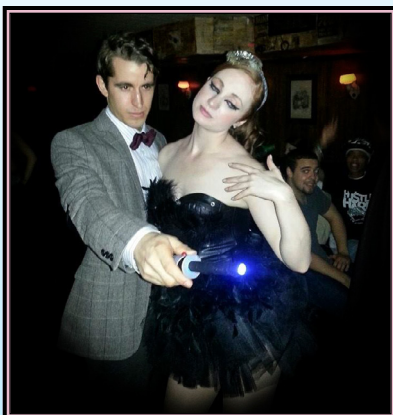
RIEL HALLOWEEN 2013

This year's batch of Halloween entries was the best ever! With the fourth generation of kids coming on, we can look forward to more and more, great entries. This year's contestants included a few pirates, a tooth fairy, Mrs. Potatoe Head, Tigger and many more.

It was very difficult in picking this year's winners with so many great costumes. But we did find two that stood out among the rest. Bruce won the over 18 division hands down. Let's face it, he works at perfecting his costume 7/24/365 and most of us don't even know he is wearing one.

And Owen wins for the under 18 division, but it was a close call between him and Jose. She looked like a real doll and could fool almost anyone if she sat still long enough. But the "King" was a real eye catcher and the descriptive poem helped him tip the scale for the win.

Thanks to all that dressed up this year especially the Pointy Haired Boss who is shown on the cover of this month's issue. And yes, I really did walk around work in that get-up!





Keeping Track of the Second Generation...

It has certainly been an eventful few months in the Benesch family!

Little baby Noah has become a big part of our lives. With Chavva going back to work, Jason is sharing his daytime baby raising duties with Grandma and Grampa. Carol gets Mondays and Noah goes to the office with Daddy and Grampa on Fridays where Jeff gets to play with, feed and change him. He is a smiling machine and is growing quickly, already at 12lbs! Or as Jason likes to say, "He is an expert at eatin', poopin' and sleepin'..." We say: "Like Father, Like Son!" Fortunately, Chavva gets to work from home on Wednesdays, so Noah gets mommy-care several days a week.

Jason continues to grow his Real Estate Tomato company and spends many, many hours a week keeping over 500 blog sites up and running. He continues his outside interests in beer



brewing, software development and soccer. Chavva has developed a real talent in recruiting IT Specialists for a company based in Carlsbad.

Dustin, Lauren and Holden have a lot going on in their lives starting with their move back to San Diego. They live in a small historical cottage 3 blocks from the beach in Sunset Cliffs, while most of their excess goods reside in a free storage facility in San Carlos. A real plus to this new arrangement is Grandma and Grampa being able to see Holden on a regular basis. We are having lots of fun being his Mimi and Pop-Pop.



Since Dusty still works for Virgin America, he commutes to the Bay area four days a week. He rides his Vespa to the airport every morning and catches a flight to SFO and reverses the commute in the evening. Lauren is busy kicking off an on-line fashion line, manufacturing taffeta skirts while blogging regularly on Fashionable Motherhood (Holdenonbaby.com). Actually, most of her free time is sharing daily San Diego adventures with Holden, his favorite spot being the beach.

Benny has started Spanish pre-school while Jessica begins a reduced work load, one or two days a week as a NICU Nurse at Beth Israel Hospital in Newark. Miguel keeps busy with his karate dojo, firehouse duties and various home improvement projects. Jessica and Miguel are now able to spend more time with Benny going to museums, aquariums and other places of interest. Grammy and Grampa make regular visits to Edison to join in the fun!

Other big news will follow these hints...

What makes Ed unique among Riel siblings?

What do Dear Abby and Ann Landers have in common, other than advice columns?

What a certain sports team in the upper Midwest is called?

Following in Grandma Yaya's footsteps...



RFNL "Runny Nose" Update

By Bruce Hartman

10/28/2013

Runny Nose? That's the understatement of all times! It seems that over the course of the last six to eight weeks I seem to be going full circle on many of the ailments that I thought were permanently behind me!

Two years ago I had a couple spine surgeries to decompress my spinal cord. During the first surgery they installed some metal rods and bolts to secure a lumbar fusion. It had been relatively pain free up until a few weeks ago when, upon standing up from the side of my bed, I felt like a gunshot ripped through my lower back creating so much pain that standing or walking was nearly impossible. After several days of agony I contacted my neurologist who scheduled an MRI. When he got the results he called me to say that as a "nerve and muscle guy" there wasn't anything he could do to help me and referred me to physical medicine so that I could be seen by "Interventional Pain Management", a part of the anesthesia group. He also sent a note to my back surgeon urging him to review my MRI. Pain Management injected my spine under fluoroscopy (live x-ray) and got me a little relief. The physical medicine doctor saw me for one consult and decided he couldn't help me and agreed with neurology that I needed to see the spine surgeon. Two weeks later I finally got in to see the back surgeon. He looked at the MRI and told me that he was unwilling to operate on my back because there was no clear path to correcting my back and that it was entirely too risky to operate on me given my current health. The risk / reward ratio was unfavorable. So from my perspective the way this shakes out is: The Neurologist says it is "a bone thing", the Physical Medicine doc says it is "a bone thing" and the "bone guy" says he won't touch it! Okay, I have to admit, I was pissed off! I asked the spine surgeon what I was supposed to do now. The best he could offer was to say "live with it" and work with the pain management group as needed.

My foot that has been broken since November 2011 has been nothing but a pain in the butt (figuratively)! I had a follow-up appointment with my foot doctor a week after seeing my spine surgeon only to learn that the break is as bad as or worse than it was at the last visit in August. He decided that he wants to look at it again in six weeks and, if it looks this bad, said there is no choice but to do the surgery again. They will pull out the screw they put in originally (1.5") and put in a longer one (2" or 2.5") at a different angle running the length of the bone.



What is Lupus?

Lupus is an autoimmune disease where the body's immune system becomes hyperactive and attacks normal, healthy tissue. This results in symptoms such as inflammation, swelling, and damage to joints, skin, kidneys, blood, the heart, and lungs.

Under normal function, the immune system makes proteins called antibodies in order to protect and fight against antigens such as viruses and bacteria. Lupus makes the immune system unable to differentiate between antigens and healthy tissue. This leads the immune system to direct antibodies against the healthy tissue - not just antigens - causing swelling, pain, and tissue damage.

(* An antigen is a substance capable of inducing a specific immune response.)

Who is affected by lupus?

According to the Lupus Foundation of America (LFA), 1.5 to 2 million Americans have some form of lupus. The prevalence is about 40 cases per 100,000 persons among Northern Europeans and 200 per 100,000 persons among African-Americans. Although the disease affects both males and females, women are diagnosed 9 times more often than men, usually between the ages of 15 and 45. African-American women suffer from more severe symptoms and a higher mortality rate.

What causes lupus?

Although doctors do not know exactly what causes lupus and other autoimmune diseases, most believe that lupus results from both genetic and environmental stimuli.

Since lupus is known to occur within families, doctors believe that it is possible to inherit a genetic predisposition to lupus. There are no known genes, however, that directly cause the illness. It is probable that having an inherited predisposition for lupus makes the disease more likely only after coming into contact with some environmental trigger.

Of course they blame this on me being a bad healer and having bad bones...there never seems to be any discussion that involves fault on the part of Kaiser Permanente! Those ramps that Bob Gillingham so unselfishly built for me to run my scooter in and out of the front door of my house might be getting a lot more use very soon! After two years of walking on what feels like broken glass it will be nice to get it fixed...assuming they can fix it!

While that was going on, and over the course of the past year, I have been dealing with daily nose bleeds. It was getting worse and turning into multiple daily nose bleeds so I decided to get it looked at. Figuring the worst, I went to my primary doc. She looked at the tumor in my nasal cavity and didn't like what she saw and referred me to Head & Neck surgery. They biopsied it and cultured it and determined that it was not a malignancy and that it was yet another manifestation of Lupus. They also found that I had a staph infection. They started me on an antibiotic and told me I would have to learn to manage the daily nose bleeds since there was nothing they can do for the autoimmune disease eroding the sinuses.

Before I had a chance to finish the course of antibiotics I started having horrible skin pain on my left side affecting my face, neck, shoulder and rib cage area. I went in to see the doctor again and she felt certain that the staph infection was the problem due to my suppressed immune system and started me on a second antibiotic. The two antibiotics together seemed to be working since my labs & everything except my skin pain was improving and I was able to gain control of my blood sugar further indicating the infection was under control. By the weekend I started showing a rash of blisters and the pain was terrible. I went into urgent care and found that I had Shingles on top of the damned staph infection.

I am now two weeks into shingles and I can tell you that it is just like the television ads suggest...Very Painful! They put me on an antiviral medicine that is supposed to help shorten its run. My suppressed immune system tends to allow things like this to gain a lot of traction and ravage me a little more than the average person. I hope this medicine helps because I can honestly say this is a son-of-a-bitch!

Late Update November 9, 2013:

Bruce spent some time in the hospital since he wrote the above article. He was admitted for what they thought was a possible intestinal blockage. Then thought that he might be bleeding internally, and ultimately sent him home when he got better without really knowing what caused all the issues to start with.

Bruce has truly experienced the fact that doctors practice medicine, but sometimes don't really know what's going on. We are happy to report that Bruce is back to work and watching what he eats from now on.

The autoimmune crap, aka Lupus, Polymyositis and Rheumatoid Arthritis are bumping along. The flares have been manageable and though there is an aggregate of collateral damage to liver, kidneys, core muscles etc., there is nothing that is out of control right now. The Pulmonary emboli have taken their toll on my heart. The added strain the lungs have created have made the congestive heart failure much more symptomatic. I find myself short of breath just getting around the house or taking a shower...admittedly this sucks but I'm not one to whine! There is nothing to do for it for now...I'm not bad enough for electronic devices (pacemakers or pumps) and because of the diseases I am not a candidate for a donor heart...there seems to be a theme here..."Live with it"!!!!!!

I am beginning to think I am living the perfect Country/Western song! My Mom died, if I get a dog and it runs away and my pick-up truck breaks down then I KNOW I am living the perfect Country song... It has to start getting better, it couldn't possibly keep going on this trajectory. If I were to croak today with all this going on the eulogy would have to be painfully short and go something like: "Well...the poor bastard just couldn't catch a break!" I try to stay wholly optimistic and see the glass as completely full; half with water and the other half with air! Somewhere in all of this there is humor. The challenge is finding it and keeping it all in the right perspectives.

Francie and Lyle Visit Hawaii

By Francie Sorem



Kaulaulau Lookout, a spot that is not always sunny but the sun came out for us to commemorate that day 10 years ago. Love you Lyle, seems like just yesterday!

Alaska became the 49th state on January 3, 1959, only seven months before Hawaii became the 50th state, on August 21st, when I was just 7 years old. Not only would it become the only American state to be attacked by the Japanese during World War II, but it would later become the mecca for those looking for rest and relaxation from their crazy worlds of stress.

Lyle and I took such a trip to the Island of Kauai recently to prepare for the onslaught of the holiday season. We were joined by some good friends from New Zealand and spent a week and a half trying to get very good at doing absolutely nothing. Being highly successful we are proud to report that you can play golf, swim with the fishes and eat gross amounts of food and survive to tell about it. The only drawback is that you all were not there to share the experience with us.



Notice how the unsuspecting Lyle and Clive have foolishly turned their back on the tide going out and the growing wave building behind them. This portends a situation that will most definitely leave you wet!!!!!!!



So fun to watch!!!! Nice going guys!!!! We continued on to see the Grand Canyon of the Pacific where Lyle and I got married 10 years ago. Remember this spot Bud and Margaret? We missed you !!

To Our Riel Family Veterans

Thank You For Your Service !

Dear Dad,

Not a day goes by that we do not think of you or remember all that you have taught us. Your courage, tenacity and enduring honesty has branded us with your indelible gift. Your piercing eyes and imperceptible nod is something that we feel every day.

You would be so proud of Mom. She has moved forward carrying you in her heart and being a Mom and Dad to all of us. She takes good care of herself and each and every day she strengthens her resolve to continue in the life you have always led her to live.

All of your children continue to support Mom the way you cared for her, each one taking on of a part of her life that you so aptly and lovingly provided for her. We somehow feel closer to you when we are with Mom for no one was closer to you than she was.

She still loves to hear us talk about the memories we have of you and loves to see your pictures. You are never far from our conversations, nor have we forgotten the memories we made with you those last couple of years. You endured it all with grace and dignity and I will never forget that when you said goodbye to me you said, "Francie, it's all been good". And it has.

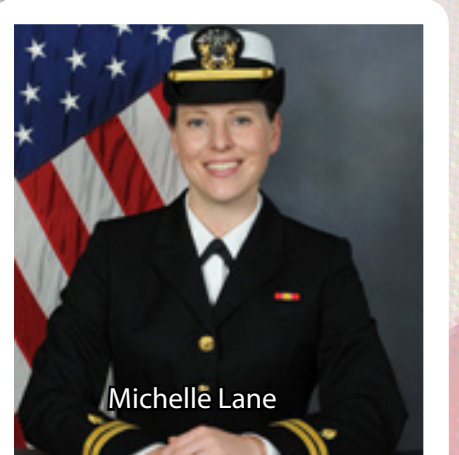
Thanks for the memories and we will all continue to honor that memory by making you proud.

I miss you Dad...

Love,
Francie 11/11/13



Dave Lane



Michelle Lane



Bud Mehan



Frank James Riel



Curtis Hartman

FAMILY SHORTS



Miguel and Benny recently visited the New Jersey, Aviation Hall of Fame. It sure looks like Benny is right at home in the cockpit of that jet. Who knows, maybe he will be a pilot someday. In the meantime he probably should just concentrate on learning how to ride a bike!



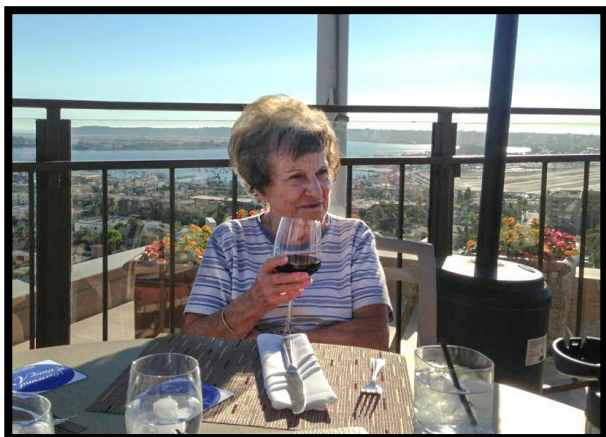
Richard, Liz and Frank (along with other friends) visited Disneyland last month. And as luck would have it, they even got to pose with the same Riel mascot that has adorned our family photos memorializing visits to Disneyland for decades.



Grandma Edith is enjoying the good life with happy hours celebrated at "Mr. A's" and the Saturday lunches with the kids and grandkids. Look even Nate joined the fun at Merrill Gardens, the free lunch also was a good deal too!



Dustin and Holden went out for a power lunch a few weeks ago with Holden deciding it should be a "black tie" affair. However, Dad just couldn't get his tie on right so he just went "Business Casual." Here we see Holden showing his displeasure in his dad's obvious lack of attire.



 A decorative banner with a purple background and a row of six colorful leaves (orange, yellow, red, orange, yellow, orange) at the top.

The Extended Riel Family Happy Thanksgiving Day

Thursday, November 28th, 11:00 am

Margaret and Bud's Home

Bud and Margaret's Travels

By Margaret Riel



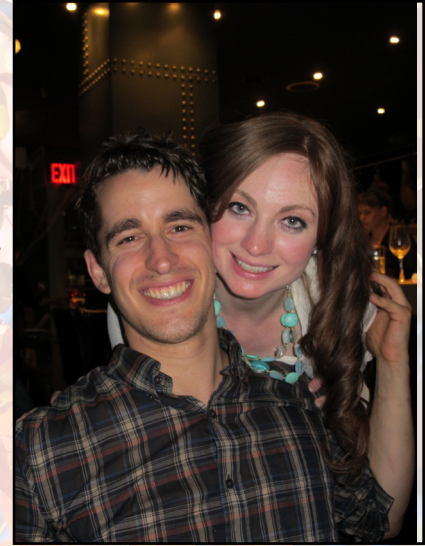
Margaret and Bud parlayed two recent business trips into opportunities to visit with nieces and nephews. Margaret was helping to organize a staff retreat using learning circles for iEARN—an educational non-profit organization in Montclair NJ on October 7-12.

After those meetings were over, Margaret and Bud did some sightseeing in NYC—and then spent an evening visiting with Bryce, Bridget and Jessica at Salumaria con Cocina—the West Side version of the restaurant Bryce works in on the East Side. There we enjoyed watching Bryce display his knowledge of Italian cuisine, matched dish-for-dish, word-for-word by Jessica—who had spent a year abroad in Tuscany. We also had a great time learning more about Bridget, Bryce's girl friend, who, like many others in the family, is a classroom teacher. We hope she will be here for the holidays as we know everyone will enjoy getting to know her.

The dinner was fabulous but we came away with a deep appreciation of an observation that Dad (Frank Riel) made when he said childhood was fun, but what he really enjoyed more was watching each of us find our way in the world. Watching the next generation transform is really a joy.

Next, Bud attended the annual meeting of the National Academy of Education (an honorary organization composed of researchers who contribute to educational improvement) in Washington DC on October 24 and 25. As soon as that conference ended, Margaret and Bud visited Michelle, David, and their new baby, Owen, in their lovely home just north of DC in Maryland.

It was such a treat to share the joy that David and Michelle experience with Owen—and to dine on their excellent cooking. The meal was perfect, and served with such confidence and skill, that it just seemed like the most natural thing in the world. Owen was so considerate—he actually let both parents eat with us. He is a lovely little boy and we hope he comes home to San Diego often.



Grandma's Brag Sheet

Last months Answers:

A - 5, Carol/Noah B - 2, Birdy/Mathew C - 5, Birdy/Owen D - 1, Edith/Megan E - 3, Edith/Brice F - 6 Birdy/Cora



Riel Bowl Fantasy Football

Dustin has climbed to the top of the leader board by winning 5 games in a row while also claiming a playoff berth in the process. Frank has slipped a bit by losing his last two games but still has enough wins to guarantee him a slot in the playoffs. It also looks like Mike has allowed his game to fall off by losing his last three games, but who can blame him with a baby on the way. And then there's Alan... Well "Big Al" let's just say everyone is glad to play you.

There are only 3 weeks left until the playoffs and only 8 teams will make it, even Alan still has a chance. Stay tuned as the next RFNL issue will report on the first round of playoffs!

Rank	Team	Manager	W-L-T	Points For	Streak
1	Big Daddy	Dustin Benesch	9-1-0	1,361.02	W-5
2	Frank 'N Berries	Frank Riel	8-2-0	1,035.76	L-2
3	Rivers' Cowgirl	Kevin Riel	7-3-0	989.94	W-2
4	Morning Woodhead	David Gillingham	6-4-0	1,086.64	W-2
5	Band Wagon Robbers	Brett Sorem	5-5-0	1,187.86	W-1
6	Charger Bob	Robert Riel	5-5-0	1,127.76	W-1
7	Its not a Fluker	Chris Riel	4-6-0	1,248.88	W-1
8	RG3PO	Jason Benesch	4-6-0	1,212.58	W-1
9	naterade	Nate Riel	4-6-0	1,131.28	L-1
10	Deadweight	Mike Mehan	3-7-0	1,200.18	L-3
11	Brodega	Bryce Sorem	3-7-0	1,007.40	L-2
12	AZ Devils	Alan Sorem	2-8-0	1,123.16	L-1