



May 2014

Issue No: 279



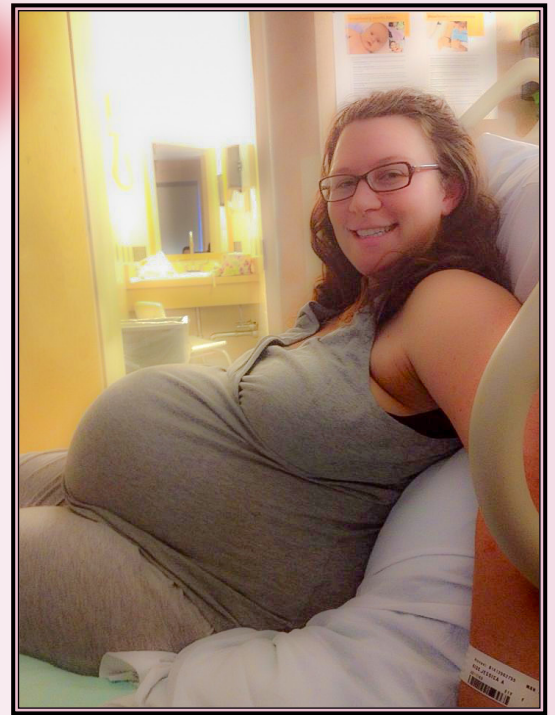
Another Generation of Riel Twins!

Welcome Sofie and Matty to the Family

THE 3RD STRAIGHT GENERATION OF TWINS JOINS THE FAMILY

By Jessica Rios

May 1, 2014 was an unexpected, yet momentous occasion for the Rios family. Sofia Luna, weighing 4lbs 15oz and measuring 18 inches long, was born at 3:47p.m. One minute later, her brother, Mateo Alexander, entered the world. Although younger, he sure appeared to be the big brother, weighing 6lbs 9oz and measuring 19 inches long. The twins came out kicking and screaming.



Tears flowed from everyone, including Grammy and Grampy who were still on the plane. After a couple of hours of recovery, Big Brother Ben and all four Grandparents got to meet the newest members of the family. Benny gave each baby a kiss and sang a lullaby to Sofia. It was surely an unforgettable moment. The twins have an AWE-SOME big brother.



Unfortunately, the whole family was only together for a short time. Mateo started showing signs of respiratory immaturity and was quickly whisked away to the NICU. We were all sad, but we knew with time everything would be fine.



Sofia was still with us, while Mateo went on CPAP (Continuous Positive Airway Pressure) for 48 hours to help his lungs adjust to life outside the womb. Much to our disappointment, Sofia missed her brother so much, that she decided to join him in the NICU. She lost too much weight and needed an IV to con-



trol her blood sugar level. Although the twins were only three weeks early, the Neonatologist assured us that both problems stemmed from immaturity and would have no lasting effects.



Leaving your children at the hospital is devastating, but Miguel and I knew it was for the best. Sofia came home after nine days,

which gave me some much needed healing time, and Benny a little more time to adjust to the reality of having two new siblings. Mateo comes home today, May 12th, after 11 days in the NICU, so we are about to experience having both of them at home together for the first time. It is a little ironic that as a NICU nurse, all three of my children would spend time in the NICU. It definitely helps me empathize with my patients and their parents.



The first 2 nights with Sofia at home have been blissful, but exhausting. She still has her days and nights confused (Grammy says she is following in her mom's footsteps). It is already clear that Sofia is the feisty one and Mateo is a bit more laid back...at least for now. We are having a hard time fathoming what nights will be like with two newborns, but we will soon find out. I'm sure we'll figure it out soon enough and have some great stories to tell in future newsletters.

Miguel and I cannot express enough gratitude to all the people that have wished us well and sent their love, especially Grammy Carol and Grampy Jeff for dropping everything and flying to New

Jersey to help us through this huge transition. Sofia and Mateo cannot wait to meet their big, loving Riel family. We hope to visit San Diego soon!



Riel Easter 2014



Riel Easter Celebration Returns to Lake Murray



After several years of temporary exodus from Lake Murray the Riel family returned for this year's Easter celebration. The main reason for the return..? The (great) Grand kids are getting old enough to enjoy the park!



For years we would always meet at the park so that our kids could enjoy the outdoors and play games with each other. There were the Easter egg hunts, then soccer, football and even kite flying, but as the kids got older there became less of a need to play and more of the need to just get together and talk. So the party was moved to Francie's home back in 2006 and she has hosted it for the last 7 years.

With all of the (great) Grand kids growing up so fast, it was decided that it was time to return to our old tradition of meeting at the park. So beginning around Noon on Easter Sunday, we gathered at the park and we were even lucky enough to get our usual space that we used so many years ago. The park hadn't changed too much, but there was an addition of a concrete walkway and some new playground equipment, which was put to use by the family.



As usual there was plenty of food and drink to go along with good conversations as the different family members got caught up on all the news. The Gillingham's and the Alpine Riel's got accolades for perfect attendance of all family members showing up. Grandma Edith was there enjoying her very large family and remembering all the time we have spent at this park. Including the time we all decided to hike to the top of Cowles Mountain (that was 14 years ago).

Brett, Nate, Jason and David played a spirited game of bocce ball while the next generation of kids were satisfied with playing with their parents and grandparents. It won't be long before we return to

the parents vs. kids soccer games of long ago. More importantly, it will allow this new batch of "cousins" to develop the life long bonds that their own parents now enjoy with their cousins.

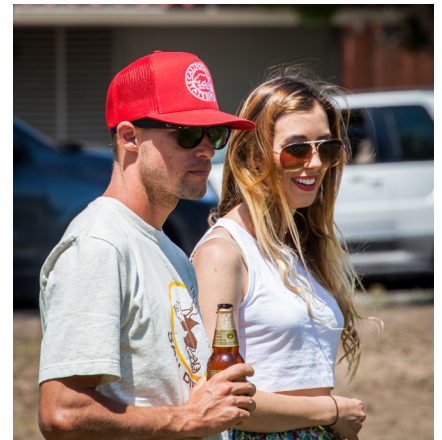


As Grandpa Frank learned from his mother's family and then later passed along to our generation, these get together events are more than just a reason to play. More importantly, they provide an opportunity for the different family members to interact with each other and develop the strong bonds of friendship and family. All the so called parents vs. kids games we used to play, cemented the relationships between the cousins and made them as close as they are today. I am always very thankful for how close our family is. The cousins are almost more brother and sister than anything else. I truly believe this is due to all the family gatherings and how as young kids they formed a bond fighting a common adversary... us parents!

I don't believe our kids would be as close as they are without the family activities that we all attended so many years ago. And even now as they have all grown up, many even starting families of their own, they remain in touch and are truly friends with each other. I think this was one of the best gifts we could have ever given out kids!

And now with the next generation coming along, it is very satisfying to see the tradition continue. This Easter party really reminded me of all the fun we had watching the kids grow up. Now it's starting all over again and we are all really thankful that our kids will now get the same joy we had while playing the "adults vs. kids" games of so long ago.

This year's Easter party may not have had many group activities for the (grand) kids but they are just starting out. As they get older and more plentiful it won't be too long before the adults are banished to the side lines and the "new kids" take over. Ain't Life Grand!!!!



And while some of our family couldn't join the festivities at the park they were still in our hearts! Below are some of their Easter celebrations as well. We all had a great day and enjoyed being able to share it with each other either in person or via the many pictures everyone sent in.



WORK TRAVELS

BY CRAIG HARTMAN

This is my first RFNL reporting and while I am a mechanic, language mechanics is not one of my areas of expertise.

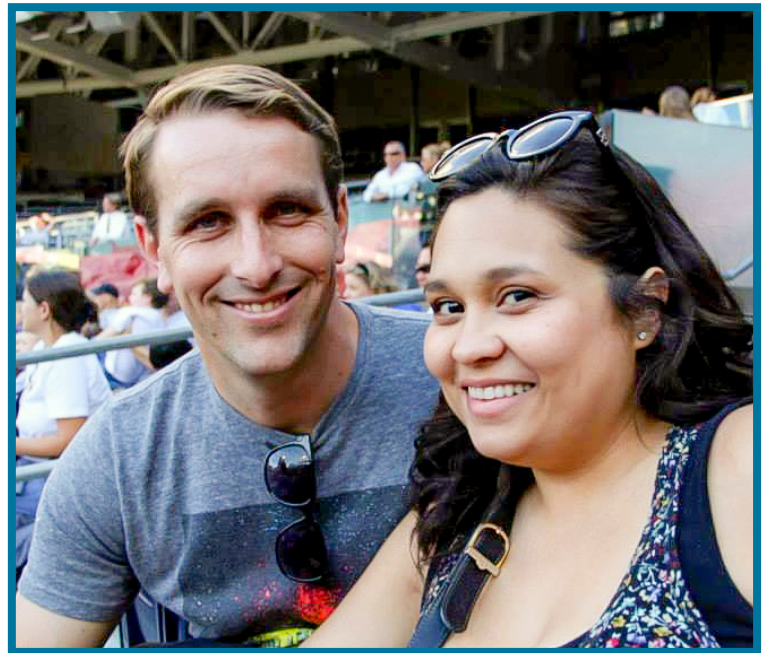
I'm writing this while still here in Kwajalein Atoll for another week, ending a long 25 day trip. Kwajalein Atoll is a very small island in a group known as the Marshall Islands, just east of Micronesia. It is an army base best known for the Ronald Reagan Missile Defense Site. This is my second time here working at the power plant wiring the new panels and commissioning the upgraded engines. The work isn't too physically demanding which is a real blessing considering how unbelievably hot and humid it is in the plant. There have been days that I've downed gallons of water and not peed once. (I know, TMI). We're winding down now and will just be doing final testing next week and I will fly home the 9th of May.

The island is really pretty and tropical. Luckily we've had a few days off and I've been able to do some really excellent snorkeling in the warm and crystal clear water. Last Sunday, myself and two locals were lucky enough to be snorkeling in some of the deeper water when we were suddenly surrounded by about a dozen nurse sharks. It was really cool.

The first day off we had when I arrived, three of the mechanics and I went out on a 4 hour fishing trip. It was really rough out on the water, it poured most of the time we were out and we didn't catch anything. But drinking beers, cracking jokes, and watching the least liked mechanic spend most of the trip "chumming the water" made it a pretty fun trip.

They strictly limit cars on the island so everyone gets around on bicycles which is probably my favorite part of being here. Unlike riding bikes in San Diego, which is a constant game of chicken with the cars on the road and even bike lanes on busy roads feel dangerous, Kwajalein has full sized roads with basically only bikes. It's really fun and relaxing, unless you get caught in one of the extremely common but short lived downpours.

They have two free movie theatres on the island, one has a roof while the other is outside. Every Sunday and Monday night they play a movie, usually something that was in theatres about a month ago. I watched Anchorman 2

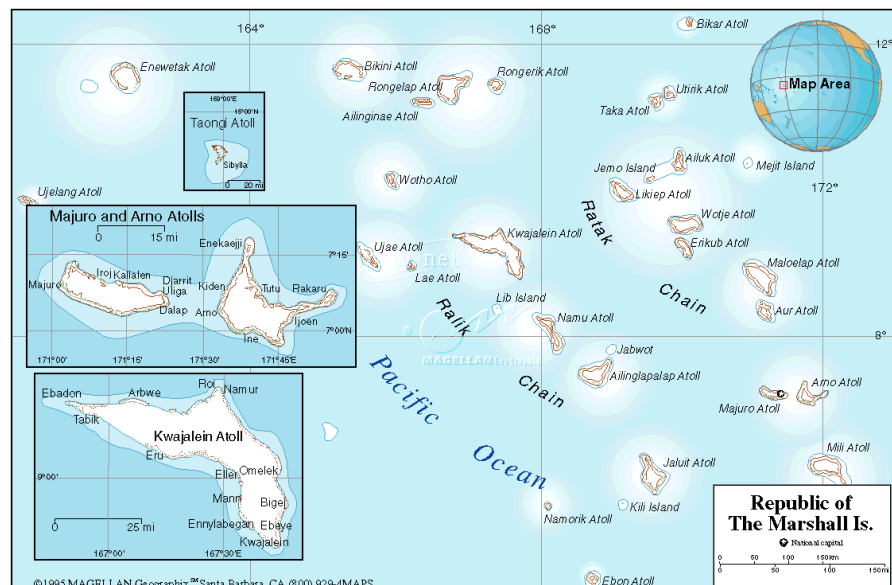


last week but left just before it ended because it started pouring down rain.

The local bar known, as the "Snake Pit", is quite a ridiculous place to hang out because Kwaj is such a diverse place. The people watching is excellent, and the \$1 beers and \$2 whiskey/cokes really help the fun.

Because the island is so small, no one here appreciates the beautiful coast line. Today I spent most of the day on the beach behind my hotel room reading and didn't see a soul all day. It was really nice.

I know most of that sounds great but it's really hard not being able to share any of this with the people I like most. I really miss Ana and my beautiful kids and am really looking forward to this coming Friday, when I finally get to come home. Thank goodness for the invention of video chat but it is a poor substitute for actually getting to hold Josephine or kiss Ana. That's it.



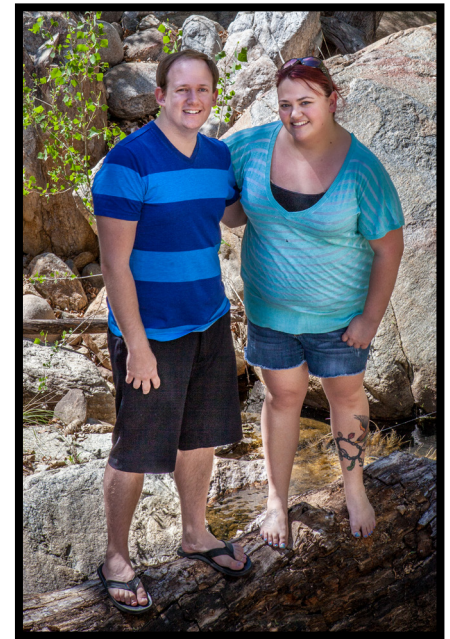
It's hard to believe that 25 years have come and gone since the birth of our youngest but here it is a quarter century later and instead of walking down a hallway to see him, we had to travel 6 hours in the motorhome just to be with him. Due to scheduling conflicts we had to go out 2 weeks early to celebrate this auspicious event but nobody seemed to mind the premature activities!

We arrived on Friday night right after a small rain shower. The weather was perfect, 70's in the day and 50's at night, best of all the price of gas was only \$2.23 per gallon. We towed the Jeep behind the motorhome so as soon as we

Brian Hits The

**BIG
25**

**Celebrates
With Friends
And Family In
Tucson**



got set up it was off to see Brian at his apartment, then later dinner at the Sushi Garden, a very popular spot with the college crowd.

The next day Brian, along with his friends Pete and Daniel, joined us for a day of adventure. First stop, Sabino Canyon, where we took a tram to the end of the canyon and hiked the 4 miles back to the entrance. Good thing it was mostly downhill! Next it was up to the top of Mount Lemmon which rises about 9,000 feet above Tucson and

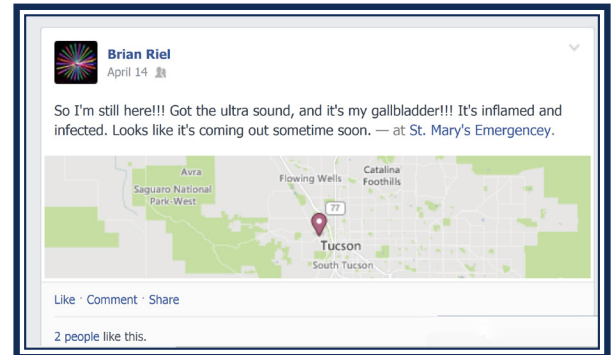
gives you a wonderful view of the surrounding area. We enjoyed a picnic lunch then headed back to get ready for Brian's birthday dinner party.

Karla had made reservations at a very nice restaurant called the Hacienda Del Sol which is just to the north of Tucson. She scheduled our dinner so that we were seated just in time to see the sun set which was spectacular. We all toasted Brian and wished him a very Happy 25th even though he had a few more weeks before he actually became an "old man"!

However, at that time there was no way for us to know that just after his birthday, Brian would be admitted to the hospital...

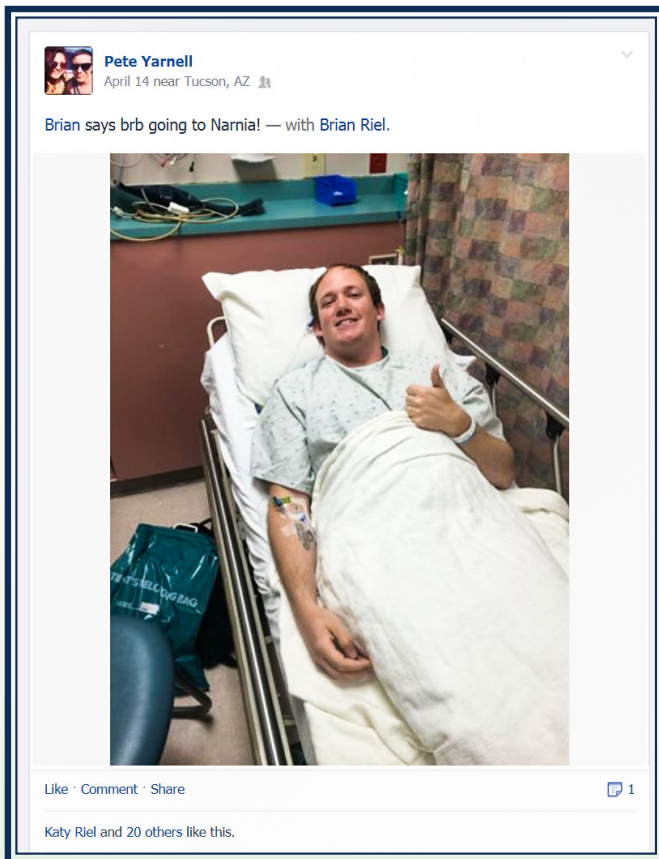


Just so it's clear to all you 30 something kids and below... This is not the way to let your parents know you are in the hospital!



Seriously? And then two people actually liked this post?? You have a phone, you're in the hospital, you're told you will need emergency surgery and what is your first thought?? Hey I think I will post this on Facebook! OK maybe **after** you call your parents but this is the wrong way to let them know!!!

But I digress... Yes Brian was in the hospital and had to have his gallbladder removed. He has had a history of gall stones and finally one got stuck causing the infection. I wonder if this is hereditary as I had the same thing happen to me a decade or so ago.



Fortunately, Katy was monitoring her Facebook, via cell phone, and called Karla to let her know, who, in turn, called me. So in all fairness I guess the system worked but really, do you think we're not going to want to talk to you directly to get all the details?? Hint to all readers, a cell phone's primary role is for direct voice communication, not texting or even selfies!

After talking with Brian and finding out it would be some hours before he went into surgery, Karla left work and drove to Tucson to be with him. But, by the time she got there Brian had already "gone under the knife" and was already in recovery. Fortunately, Brian's friend Pete had driven in from Phoenix and was with him the whole time.

Brian was released late the following day and Karla drove him back to our home in Alpine where he spent the next few weeks recuperating under the watchful eyes of mom. If there was a silver lining to this episode it was that Brian was here

for Easter and it was very nice to be able to have the whole family together for the Riel celebration at Lake Murray.

Brian is back home in Tucson and doing fine. There are no real lasting effects from having a gallbladder removed other than the 4 little scars on his stomach. Life has, for the most part, returned to normal, with just one major change in his lifestyle. From now on... CALL YOUR MOTHER!





SOREM EURO TRIP IV

By Alan Sorem

I have a few days at home in Phoenix so thought I would send you a little something about the Sorem Euro Trip #4 coming up this summer.

Yes, we are going again to Europe. Back in 2004 the boys and I traveled to Italy, France and Spain. Then in 2008 we traveled to England (to watch the Chargers lose), and then on to Scotland to play "The Old Course." In 2010 we hit up the FIFA World Cup in Germany. All of these trips were planned ahead and we knew where we would travel from day to day. Airfare, car, hotels and hostels booked ahead of time so we had to pretty much keep to a schedule, although we changed it on several occasions. Once so we could play one more day of golf at St. Andrews.

Anyway, this year's trip is also going to be for FIFA World Cup. I know, I know the World Cup is in Brazil. Airfare tripled, hotels quadrupled, and travel in Brazil is a nightmare. So Bryce had the brilliant idea of going back to Europe, try to be in the country that is playing that day and we could party with the "locals."

Great idea, except for one thing..... We will not know who is in the Round of 8 until we land in Milan on July 2nd. Kind of makes it hard to plan where we are going to go. Hopefully several of the European teams will be in the final 8. Here is our possible list.....Spain, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Belgium, France, and of course the USA.... there are many scenarios so you can see our dilemma.



Here is a pic from our last trip to London....probably a little more of this happening this year

We land in Milan on July 2nd and will be going straight to Torino to stay at Mandy's brother's home. That will be the night we sit around and figure where we should travel for the first 2 games as the results will be in and we will know who has made the final 8. We are hoping Switzerland and Italy will be in the first two games or possibly Belgium. Spain and Germany are ranked 1, 2 so again hopefully they will be in the next two games and we are planning on Spain being in the final so our last several days hopefully will be in Spain. While we are in Barcelona we are hoping to meet up with Annie so she can show us the best restaurants and bars.



Here we are in Cologne, Germanyour last FIFA World Cup Trip

Now if that doesn't make your head spin..... We can't wait until July. It should be one of our best Euro Trips ever.... Really who wouldn't be excited about not knowing where you are going. Some of the best places we have been to were when we were lost....

Alan, Brett, Bryce, Mandy and Bridget.....





After living in a hotel for the past three months, after losing virtually everything we owned to fire damage, after saying goodbye to our beloved feline family member; today, we get to say hello to the next chapter of our lives as first time homeowners. I am so grateful for the incredible kindness of friends, coworkers, family members, and even strangers throughout this journey. I could not have made it through this without the unwavering love and support of my better half - I love you David Gillingham. PS we bought a house! - Megan



FAMILY SHORTS



Afaa Michael Weaver, winner of Claremont Graduate University's 2014 Kingsley Tufts Poetry Award, talks to Kevin Riel and Jeffrey King following a ceremony in Weaver's honor in Claremont on Thursday, April 10, 2014.

Bud is a new Grandpa and has been adapting to his new role with a lot of enthusiasm. In fact we understand that he has gone back to school just to learn the basics once again. After all, there may be new techniques that have come around in the last 30 years or so since he actually changed a diaper. Notice he is showing off his school spirit by wearing a sweatshirt from this higher place of learning!



Once again Francie is expanding the "Final Cut Hair Studio & Tranquility Lounge" by taking over a small office that was recently vacated. Of course that meant father and son team, Ed & Nathan Riel, were called into action. Nathan, the new family electrician, relocated a power panel, added some lights and reworked the power outlets for the new area. While Ed, of course, did everything else. Be sure to drop by soon to see the latest expansion.



Birdy and Bruce took the spring break seriously this year by taking a short trip to Las Vegas. As you can see Birdy's, idea of gambling is to hit the malls in all the casinos. As she explained to Bruce, "it's a win-win situation, I don't lose money I save it by shopping at all the sales". Bruce knowing the old saying "happy wife = happy life" just agreed with her.



Miss You Dad