

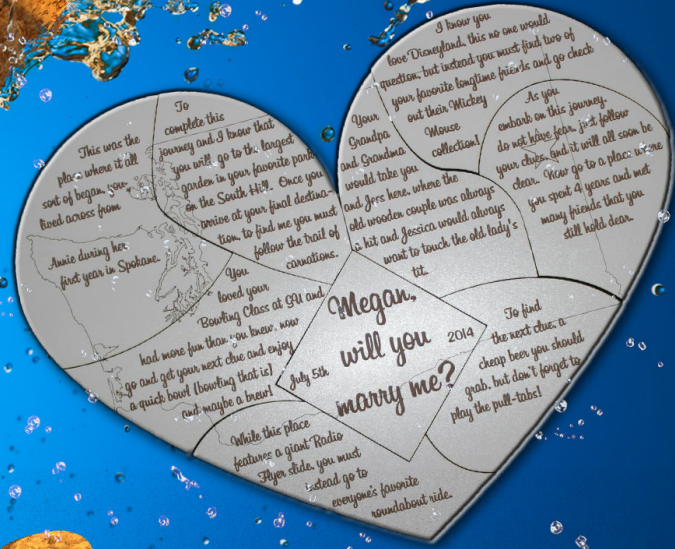
A Day to Remember



Megan,
July 5th will you marry me? 2014

David

Boys



The Question

By Listy Gillingham

David wanted to ask Megan the BIG question in a way that she would never forget. Because her entire family was going to be in Spokane for the July 4th weekend, he decided this was the perfect opportunity to surprise Megan and have a little fun along the way. He solicited help from his soon to be Mother-in-Law and other family members to help create a scavenger hunt around the places that meant the most to Megan growing up. He then hired a Limo and created a large 8-piece puzzle with clues to follow to get the missing pieces.



David pretended to go golfing with her Dad and left her alone to take family picture with her 3 other sisters and mom. At 2:00 p.m. on July 5th the limo arrived and the driver handed her the first clue. She was excited for the adventure and hopped into the car with her sister. The first clue took her to her high school where her best friend was waiting with clue #2.



From there they went to a bar and found her oldest sister waiting and ready to order a drink. After that they stopped at a favorite restaurant where her Mom was waiting. She jumped into the limo and off they went to the 4th destination (a carousal) where her next sister (she has 3 sisters) was waiting with her two kids and husband. Of course, they took a few turns on the carousal for fun.

The adventure continued down the road to add two grandparents and then a brother and friend at the bowling alley where Annie and Megan took classes during college (yes, we paid private tuition so our daughter could learn how to bowl). After a game or two of bowling and a few beers, they all jumped into the now crowded limo and picked up her Dad at Gonzaga University.



At that point, a campus police officer detained Megan to make sure everything was in order and she assured him that they were on the up and up and he posed for a nice photo and allowed them to continue on with the puzzle.



The last stop, was at the park where David left a path of carnations for her to follow. She was instructed to leave her family and follow the trail where David was waiting so he could privately, get down on one knee and ask her to marry him. A very classy proposal to say the least! Fortunately, after all that trouble, she said yes!



To celebrate they had a surprise family engagement party in Spokane style, as Megan's parents arranged a Spokane Trolley tour where 12 people can propel a bar on wheels around the city as they pedal. Needless to say it looked like a really great time.

We are so happy to announce that the date has been set for Labor Day Weekend 2015 in Spokane Washington. So start saving your pennies and flying miles if you want to attend this "sure to be fun" event in the Northwest! We are thrilled to officially welcome Megan into our family and celebrate with her family as well!



Please Cry for Us, Argentina

By Margaret Riel

Our trip to and from Argentina from late June to early July was a Stress Test: Just How much travel stress can Bud and Margaret tolerate on one journey?

Travel to Buenos Aires

We had more obstacles on this trip than on any other. The first problem that we encountered occurred when we tried to check in for our flight from Los Angeles to Dallas. We were declined because we did not have evidence that we paid the “reciprocity fee — a kind of airport use tax. The fee was substantial --\$160 per person. “Ok,” we said to the airlines clerk, “take our money.” “No, we can’t do that. The agent said, “You have to go to the international terminal.” So we rushed to the Bradley terminal only to be told that the business office had closed 3 months earlier.

Back to the AA counter and this time we were sent to the business center at a nearby Marriott Hotel. We took a cab there, even though we thought a hotel is an odd place to set up an international office. Once we arrived at was a regular hotel business center, and all we needed was access to the Internet and a printer. We had only minutes to get this fee paid and return to the American Airlines check-in counter.

Margaret helplessly appealed to the clerk to help her locate the form quickly, however the clerk was annoyed that Margaret had interrupted her conversation with Bud and left her to figure it out on her own. Two more extra large charges were levied, one for requesting the forms on the same day as travel and a second for having the forms printed in 5, rather than 15, minutes. We gulped, paid, and with forms in hand rushed back to AA in time to board the flight to Dallas.

Our stress test did not end there. At the gate, we were told we couldn’t board because we no longer



had seat assignments. We rushed to the assignment desk, got new seats, and boarded. Now, we thought, we could relax. Wrong again. The plane sat on the runway for 3 hours because of thunder storms over Dallas. By the time we arrived in Dallas, late at night, our flight to Buenos Aires had left (on time) without us. Our luggage, we were told would remain in transit to Buenos Aires on the next flight. So, we began a hunt for a hotel room. We think we got the last one in the Dallas area. There WAS one piece of good news. Because flights to South America leave in the afternoon, we were able to see a world cup game on TV. Needless to say, when we arrived in Buenos Aires, a full day later, our luggage was not waiting for us.



We DID have a great time in Buenos Aires. We toured the Delta and its canals, watched and listened to a beautiful Tango Dance performance. Since it was winter it was a bit cold but pleasant enough for wandering around. Our luggage ar-

rived in time for the trip to Puerto Madryn where the iEARN Conference was being held (the official reason for this trip). Somewhere between the packing and arriving at the next hotel, though, Margaret's travel jewelry box disappeared causing her much sadness and distress.



On to Puerto Madryn

Still more stress. When checking in to our next flight segment, we were told we had four, rather than two tickets. We needed to cancel one set, we were told, before boarding or pay for both sets. Margaret braved another long line to cancel the two extra tickets and we just made the flight South. (Turns out we had only paid for one, but we didn't want to take the chance we were wrong.)

The conference went very well. On our break day, we went whale watching on what was advertised as "a boat." The "boat" turned out to be a large rubber raft. We wondered who would win—the whale or this dingy if a whale got rambunctious. We saw "right whales" which were in the Sea of Cortez to breed. We were told the females control the breeding process—fighting off males at first but eventually relenting.

And Back Home

At the TSA counter for the return flight to Buenos Aires, agents said Margaret's overnight bag (with a change of clothes, toothbrush etc) had a weapon in it. They unpacked the bag, item by item, and rescanned

each of them, puzzled that they couldn't find the weapon. To add to the distress, sometime from the time Margaret packed her purse in the morning to the time she checked it before our flight from Buenos Aires to LAX, her wallet went missing. She is still uncertain how this could have happened, but it was gone.



We arrived home without our luggage, again, even though AA had 2 hours in Miami between flights to transfer our bags. We had to stand in yet another very long line to get American Airlines to trace our bags. They did return our luggage two days later.

So what do we learn from such an experience? Don't check baggage! Check and re-check seat assignments. Or maybe that all bad travel karma gets you on one trip. But the lesson we take home is: Enjoy life at home. In our case, we are glad to be back in Encinitas to share time with Megan (and her dog and cat), Michael, Ashley (their cat)—and of course, Emily, who is more vibrant and charming each and every day.

And we THINK we passed the Stress Test.





Emily's Firsts

By Margaret Riel

Emily Rose Mehan is only 6 months old, yet she has racked up an impressive list of “firsts” already. She competed in her first 5-K (well, Ashley competed; she pushed Emily in a carriage!). And recently she flew for the first time, arriving in San Diego with her cat Chico, and of course, her parents, Michael and Ashley.

Near the top of this list of firsts was her First Day of Summer celebrated by a party at Bud & Margaret’s house on June 21. A raft of second cousins, aunts, and uncles, as well grandparents on both sides and one great “yaya” were there to welcome Emily to Encinitas. The weather cooperated with sunshine, which is always a nice accompaniment to an outdoor BBQ. The house was full of babies and toddlers and everyone was happy to see all of them.

After the party, but during the next few weeks, Emily had her first trip to Fidel’s (a famous Mexican restaurant in North County). She also experienced her first trip to the Beach (Moonlight in Encinitas) and to swimming pools in north county. She made her first trip to Randy and Stephanie’s house where (with some help from Aunt Megan) she laughed with the same spirited joy that Michael expressed some 30+ years earlier. We were sorry to see them all leave, but soccer tournaments for Michael, and preparation for teaching, drew them back home to Colorado.

We are hoping that Michael will bring Emily back to Encinitas during the Labor Day holidays as we already miss her smiling face. And there are so many more firsts- for example that trip to the zoo or aquarium or our “almost ready”, new park that we did not fit in this time.



ADD THIS ONE TO YOUR “BUCKET LIST”



Almost smack dab in the middle of the country there is a museum that if you just drove by it you wouldn't have a clue what it was or might think it's just another “largest ball of string” type of attraction. But the fact of the matter is that this place is a gem of American history.

We found it a few years back when we were traveling through with the kids on one of our RV trips. We just happened to see an ad in the KOA camp guide about it and decided to check it out. This year we found ourselves wanting to see it once more so we made sure to swing by on our way back home from our trip.

I found a story from the Washington Post that does a very good job of describing the history and some of the contents of the museum and I have reprinted it on the following pages (adding the pictures I took while we were there).

To be sure Pioneer village has seen better days, it's just like a lot of other things “Americana” that have fallen on hard times. The roofs leak, a lot, it badly needs a face lift, and it's just plain old. But maybe that's part of the décor, my guess is that the last real upgrade to the place was well over 20 years ago.

But that doesn't mean it has no value, far from it, the more than 50,000 artifacts are truly a slice of American history. If it was made (in America) between the 1700s and the 1980s you most likely can find it here or at least something close. Just about every inch of space is filled with items some as small as the old button collections to as large as a train or a plane. But it's all here and I highly recommend a trip out of your way to see this place.

Pioneer Village in Nebraska, a blast from a highly inventive past

By Robin Soslow

Good thing I'd pulled off the highway for gas in central Nebraska, or I would have missed a terrific side trip.

"Anything nearby worth seeing?" I asked the cashier. At the midpoint of my first cross-country trip years ago, I was eager to reach the Rocky Mountains five hours west. But my legs ached for a break from highway driving.

Head down Highway 10 to Minden and look for Harold Warp's Pioneer Village, the cashier suggested. "Lots of amazing stuff!"

This detour took me to a time machine.

Highway 10, a.k.a. Harold Warp Memorial Drive, still leads to Pioneer Village, as I happily confirmed on a recent road trip. This isn't some Williamsburg-like reenactor production, but a 20-acre wonderland of once mind-boggling and still mind-blowing testaments to American ingenuity.

Harold Warp knew about ingenuity. At age 20, in 1924, he patented Flex-O-Glass, a translucent weatherproof plastic he'd invented to enclose the chicken coops on his Nebraska farm. (Flex-O-Glass was the precursor to Plexiglas.) Success enabled him to acquire things — not status symbols, but machines, vehicles and other inventions that propelled industry and culture forward.

Warp made his first big acquisition in 1948: the one-room schoolhouse he'd attended as a boy, complete with desks and books. Five years later, he opened Pioneer Village. These words



of his, displayed at the entrance, convey his goal and passion: "For thousands of years man lived quite simply. Then . . . man progressed from open hearth, grease lamps and ox carts to television, supersonic speed and atomic power. We have endeavored to show you the actual development of this astounding progress."

Pioneer Village's 28 buildings now hold more than 50,000 artifacts, from TVs to kitchen sinks, farm equipment to America's first fighter jet, an 1822 ox cart to electronics from 1975. It's billed as "the world's biggest private collection of Americana." Circling the grounds, I believe it.

Warp died in 1994. His great-neph-

ew Marshall Nelson now manages the nonprofit pantheon and shares backstories as visitors wander, mesmerized, around the cavernous main building.

Pointing to a curious vehicle resembling a wood-slat sled with wheels, a steering column and bucket seats, Nelson says that it's a 1916 Smith Motor Wheel speedster manufactured by A.C. Smith. It can transport two passengers at a speed of 25 mph. "When I was a kid, we rode it!" Nelson says. Long ago, he and his kin played with many priceless collectors' items.

Overhead, a silver Curtiss Aeroplane dangles from the rafters. "It's the first plane to carry air mail and the first



to fly from New York to Philadelphia and back in a single day,” Nelson says. Aviation pioneer Glenn Curtiss used the plane’s central framework and engine in his lighter Golden Flyer to win the speed prize at the 1909 Reims Air Meet in France.

A red Heath Parasol kit airplane was made in 1931 by Edward Heath of Chicago, the first person to produce a successful kit airplane. It was the only plane that could be assembled at home from a factory-built kit and be licensed by the FAA. This sleek Model V was popular, cheap to build and operate, and easy to fly. Too bad production ceased in 1935.

Different models of various inven-



tions are arranged chronologically to show their evolution and effect on American life. Touching’s permitted. Well, within reason.

Some retired creations seem like they’d be useful today. The fold-up boat would stow easily between outings. The cherry-red 1964 Amphicar reached 70 mph on the highway and 7 mph in the water. Mirrors placed beneath the amphibious marvel reflect its propellers.

Shelves safeguard delicate glass lamps, miniature rocking horses and other antique yet timeless toys. Taking in the sea of mechanical piggy banks, musical instruments, cameras and other floor-to-ceiling treasures, my eyes spin like pinwheels.



Outside, authentic furnished period buildings ring the “Village Green”: a train depot with a hulking locomotive, a general store, a land office where early settlers filed homestead claims. The steepled prairie church, built in 1884, holds Sunday services.

One outbuilding shelters a late 1870s steam-powered merry-go-round with spectacular carved animals. Two-story super-

sheds hold hundreds of vehicles plucked from farms and streets. Some motorcycles, cars, trucks and vans are in mint condition, others dusty and rusty; many are rare.



Warp’s invention, Flex-O-Glass, appears near a spinning wheel that Nelson’s late mother used for 40 years for on-site demonstrations. Other sightings hurtle me back into the past: the Bakelite radio, the 78 rpm phonograph, and the kitchen rimmed with metal cabinets could have come from my grandparents’ house.

American art is represented in by-gone landscapes painted by “Picture Maker of the Old West” William H. Jackson and plaster “Rogers Groups” figurines mass-produced in the late 1800s by sculptor John Rogers for the nation’s rising middle class. I get delightfully lost in vintage postcards picturing costumed puppies and pastoral countrysides that you can still see here in America’s heartland.

It makes sense to find Pioneer Village in this heartland. It’s the midpoint of cross-country routes, including a modern interstate, historic Lincoln Highway, even the Oregon, Mormon, California and Pony Express trails. And there’s land aplenty for a citizen to create a 20-acre shrine to American ingenuity

It’s the kind of detour that turns into a highlight of a trip.

THE FRANKY

After more than 23 years of editorial prowess, recognition of the family newsletter is coming soon. At the family Christmas celebration we will be handing out the first highly coveted "FRANKY" awards. The design is under development at this time and the resulting trophy will be a tightly kept secret until December when it makes its debut.

These awards will be selected by RFNL subscribers, and the categories are now being developed. We would like to hear from all of you with an idea for one of these awards. Robert suggested "Best news that wasn't really news". We could have best issue of the year, best sport story, Best photo, Best speech (I'm nominating Curtis by the way!), etc. etc.

Please send us your ideas, so we can designate the categories. And then, let the competition begin.



All entries that are published in the newsletter in the 2014 calendar year are eligible, and the top 5 will have a run off in November.

So keep those vacation, business, and baby stories coming, who know? You might just take home a FRANKY.

Please email me your ideas for categories so we can send them out in the next newsletter. Then, everyone can start emailing in their nominations. You can send the emails to: Franc1111@aol.com

Jeff and I will compile the suggestions and announce the resulting categories ASAP. Can't wait to hear your ideas,

Francie

FAMILY SHORTS



Blake is only ten months old yet he has already been to the east coast (New York), had fish tacos on the beach, examined butterfly collections, gone to an arboretum, dressed up as the Easter Bunny, is a BIG Charger fan and even does baby yoga. Just think what new thing he will do even before his first birthday!!!

I blinked and now my beautiful baby girl is 1! Right now it's all about walking, laughing, screaming, chatting, singing, and dancing. She is just about the noisiest and friendliest baby ever. Josie LOVES all food (especially if someone else is eating it)! She also loves the water, playing with the big kids, reading, and playing pat-a-cake and peekaboo.

Nursing has become an exercise in my patience because she is so busy looking around and talking to her dad and brothers. Her brothers could not adore her more and she already knows how to work them to get what she wants. She is the apple of her Daddy's eye and has him completely wrapped.

She brings so much joy to our lives! Happy birthday little miss!
-- Ana



Growing up my mom used to put out a birthday tablecloth first thing in the morning on someone's birthday & it would stay on the table through dinner. This was such a great start to the day because you knew there was something special about it from the very beginning.

I have searched high & low online for a b-day tablecloth but to no avail. They are either too girly, too themed or made of paper. So I'm making my own. A bright, happy, "birthday-confetti" tablecloth (hopefully) in time for Owen's first in a couple weeks. I still need to iron on the "confetti" and stitch the edges for good measure, but I'm almost there. Will it be perfect? No. Are my confetti circles perfectly round? No. But I did my best & hopefully this is a birthday tradition my kids will always cherish.

-- Michelle



The Sorem Euro Trip IV is well under way and Alan, Brett and Brice have been traveling the continent in search of that perfect beer. Using the World cup as an excuse to drink beer in multiple bars throughout Europe, they have come across many a tasty brew. But the search is not over as they find themselves having to sit through yet another soccer game just to taste some German beer. I'm sure we will get a full report when they get back.

Brett Sorem - I will be producing, directing & editing *The Road Between*. This will be the first short film I have written as well. A lot of responsibility falls on my shoulders, but thankfully I have a great team to support. However I could use your support please visit the following link for more information.
<https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1922587346/the-road-between>



So with all the talk about the world cup, soccer seems to be a hot topic. But Mike is actually participating (not just watching) in a tournament back in Bolder Colorado. It appears that they have made it to the quarter finals but surprisingly enough Mike doesn't seem to be smiling about it. Maybe it's just his game face!



Grandma yaya, got to meet her newest Great Grand Children, Matty and Sophie thanks to Jessica's visit to San Diego as reported in last month's RFNL. The Rios family is spending the next few months here with Grandpa Jeff and Grandma Carol.



Unfortunately, Miguel has to fly back and forth from New Jersey to San Diego as he still has to work. But they are all having a great time enjoying the summer sun in San Diego and are wishing the days would not go by so fast!



So Michelle tells us that she is slightly more advanced in the way she is carrying Baby #2 (how's that for being PC?). There are several theories as to why she has this temporary condition. Twins maybe? Her due date was miss calculated? My personal guess – She got shorter so it just looks bigger! But it really doesn't matter as she is still in great shape and is looking forward becoming even bigger than she is now.