



...And a good time was had by all!



20 Years of Thanksgiving Days Riel Style!

20 years ago Margaret and Bud opened up their seaside home in Encinitas to the Riel Family for what would become the first of many Thanksgiving day celebrations. 21 and counting to be exact! They have created a true Riel tradition with so many good memories It would be impossible to list them all.

In these past 20 years we have seen our family grow to almost double the size it was in 1995. In addition, the family “footprint” now extends clear across the United States from the just up the coast a few hours to San Francisco to New Jersey, down to Washington DC, across to Boulder Colorado and down to Phoenix Arizona. So not surprisingly we no longer have the pleasure of everyone attending like we did back during the first few years.



In fact, even when some of the grandkids were out of state at college, or for work, an effort to include them was made by using a computer connection with video and voice. I’m not saying this was the reason they created Skyping but...

Another “Riel Tradition” that Grandpa Frank started during these Thanksgiving gatherings was the taking of family photos. He wanted to have some way of documenting the families as they expanded over the years. His goal was to print them in the RFNL each December so that we could all see the changes and in some cases force at least one family photo a year. I have taken up his tradition and have tried to take as many family pictures as is possible each year. This year’s batch takes up a lot of space but then again, we have much bigger families these days.





Nate Graduates From The Electrical Apprenticeship

A few years ago, a little over 5 to be exact, Nathan (with some prodding from his father) came to me to ask about getting into the union's electrician apprenticeship program. He knew that I had gone through the program and wanted to see if I could help him with the steps it takes to be selected for the program.

My life had come full circle ... About 25 years prior I had asked Karla's dad to do the same for me. I was honored and proud that Nathan had chosen the same field as I had and that he was willing to put in the effort it would take to graduate from this 5-year program. Oh I knew he would do good because I told him I would know his test scores and evaluations before he did and if he was not putting up 90-100% scores, I would be talking to him.

First off he had to meet the requirements for the program, Graduate from high school, Check. Passed at least 1 semester of algebra with a passing grade, Check. Be able to distinguish colors of wires, Check. And finally be over 18, Check.

Next he had to pass a test that evaluated his skill level in both Math and English. This is a standard test that anyone who has graduated from high school should have no problems passing. Interestingly enough only about 50% of the ap-

plicants actually pass the test! Nathan however, passed with flying colors and was scheduled to be interviewed by the selection committee.

This is where the committee interviews about 400 people in various stages of their careers for about 30 - 40 positions in the apprenticeship program. Nathan was applying for the electrical program but I sit on the committee for the low voltage apprenticeship so I have some Idea how these things go. And while I wasn't there for Nate's interview I can tell you how it must have gone. You come in and are faced by 8 members of the committee, since they have so many to interview you really only get about 3 - 5 minutes of their time. They have already reviewed your file and most importantly your high school transcripts (yes that permanent record everyone is always talking about). If you have bad grades you are in trouble right off the bat! You basically have just a few minutes to impress the members into giving you a high score on your evaluation.

Well Nate must have done a fine job because he did get selected and was indentured into the program. He spent his first year working at Dynalectric (my company) which allowed me to keep close tabs on him. But as it turned out I never had to worry, Nate made a name for himself in a very short period of time. I would get reports from his journeymen and every one of them told me he was a great kid and would make a fine electrician someday.

The apprenticeship requires that each apprentice be rotated to new employers every 12 month or so and soon it was Nate's turn to be rotated. After that he spent the next 4 years going to school (2 nights a week) and working his way through the program. All the reports I got on him were positive and I have to tell you, the guys in the trade do not



just give a pass to everyone. They are serious about having nothing but the best people making it through the program. I am here to tell you that I believe Nate is one of the best!

A few months ago Nate completed the program and was promoted to Journeyman Wireman status. His actual graduation will take place next June (10th 2016) and Karla and I have already shifted our vacation just so we can attend. In the meantime, the training center normally just mails the graduation certificate to the graduate's home address. But I managed to intercept Nate's so I could give it to him personally which was done during the family Thanksgiving party at Margaret and Bud's home.

I was very honored to be able to give him his graduation certificate, having gone through the program myself I understand how hard it is to finish. Nate is a very, very, good electrician and will most likely go a lot farther than I ever did. I understand he has just been promoted to foreman's status and is running his own jobs now for Baker Electric. I hope all of you will attend his official graduation next June and wish him well on his career. Because who knows... Someday your son or daughter may want to follow in his footsteps.



Below and on the following pages I have reproduced some of the pages from the *20-Year History of the Riel Bowl* and also the front page article from the RFNL, December 1995. I thought they might provide some prospective on how the Thanksgiving tradition has evolved (also I needed the content for the Newsletter, Hint, Hint).

Thanksgivings in Encinitas

Since 1995, Bud and Margaret have invited the entire family to their home, in Encinitas, for Thanksgiving Day celebrations. Sixteen years of turkeys and all the side dishes that go along with the traditional meals.

In the early years, there was always a soccer or basketball game pitting the adults against the grandkids before the meal. Eventually, and as the grandkids became more proficient and the adults got older, the games gave way to less competitive things such as trying to watch the football games on the 12



inch (at least it seemed that way) TV they had. It should be pointed out that for the first 10 years of Michael's and Megan's lives their parents (Margaret) had successfully convinced them that there was only one channel, PBS. So there was no need to have a big TV.

Of course now they have a high definition big screen TV with surround sound, digital video recorders, Wii Game consoles and a room dedicated just for their "Entertainment Center." My, my, how time changes things.



Thanksgiving gatherings at the Mehan's home while similar in many ways to the Riel Bowls, had some significant differences. The menu for one thing; while I never worried about the fat content or the healthy factor of the food we served, Margaret always made sure that there were always "health conscious" items served. This is not to say the food wasn't good, quite the opposite, but even on Thanksgiving she was still trying to look out for our well being. I often wonder if her cranberry salad wasn't the culinary equivalent of the PBS story she gave to her kids.

The Mehan house is the furthest North home and our home is the furthest East. So during the holidays there were many miles put on the family cars, except for Bob Gillingham who would ride his bike to both events. But he always managed to show up before the food was served and then Listy would drive him (and his bike) back home.

With young children and other families to visit, it sometimes got pretty hectic with all the coming and going of people throughout the day. But Margaret and Bud always were gracious and understanding. As the years went by, and the grandkids got older, things settled down a bit. However as the Grandkids started to become mobile (getting their drivers' licenses and more importantly their own cars) the arrivals and departures in Encinitas rivaled O'Hare International.



As I mentioned before, the distances between our homes resulted in a long (almost an hour) drive to the Mehan home. Something that became a tradition with me, Karla and the kids (after they were older and as we drove to the Thanksgiving bash) was to listen to the song "Alice's Restaurant" (the long version). Somehow this song is associated with Thanksgiving and is played on all the radio stations during the holiday. For those of you who know the song, I think you will understand why I associate it with Margaret (and to some degree Ed) as I knew them when I was very young. I'm not sure why, but I find this song very fitting and I think of Thanksgivings in Encinitas every time I hear it.

Margaret, and Bud, the effort and love you put into hosting Thanksgivings every year have become a tradition that will be treasured and remembered by all. All of us siblings remember the traditional Thanksgivings on Lyndon Rd. Starting with the football games in the street, the setting of the table in the dining room using Grandma's prized silverware, to Grandpa wheeling in the turkey on that old serving cart they had. These are the memories of our generation when it comes to Thanksgivings.

However, the grandchildren will have the wonderful memories and the tradition of being at your home for Thanksgiving. From the soccer games in the morning, the holding of hands saying grace, to the wonderful meals and times that were spent with their uncles, aunts and cousins. You two have provided the next generation of Riels with something that will never be forgotten, something that will live on with them forever.

The Tradition of a Riel Thanksgiving.



The Riel Family Newsletter
 Catch the News
 December, 1995

FAMILY ENJOYS FUN, GAMES, FOOD ON THANKSGIVING DAY

MARGARET AND BUD HOST '95 PARTY

Thanksgiving '95 was celebrated in Encinitas, and all who attended enjoyed a special day. As usual, there was lots of turkey and ham, along with salad, sweet potatoes, rice, and stuffing. Prior to all this food, however, the early birds enjoyed coffee and rolls, to get the celebration started. Then most of the group took off to Cardiff Park, where the annual soccer game was organized. The composition of the two teams varied, as participants came and went, and several claims were made for the winning team. No clear decision could be made, but there were several great scoring plays, and lots of fancy ball handling. Fortunately, there were no injuries, although Annie did get hit by a flying ball. Fortunately Mom was available for immediate first aid, and no harm was done. The hungry crowd then went back to the home and the food was passed out, buffet style, as usual. Finally, dessert was served, (pumpkin pie, of course). By that time things were a lot quieter, and as shown in the adjoining photo most were quite content to take in a TV football game. The football haters mostly sat around and talked, although some of the kids still had enough energy to play on the back yard trampoline or shoot baskets in the driveway. The only unhappy circumstance was that Grandma was not her usual self (see details in next item), and had to go home early. However, it was a great party, and we all thank Margaret and Bud for letting us share their home on this holiday. Also, we thank all who brought the great food, and Francie for providing haircuts for those in need.

RUNNY NOSE DEPARTMENT - GRANDMA HAS PNEUMONIA

On the morning after the Thanksgiving party Grandma felt so sick that she was taken to the urgent care facility. After a long wait, X-ray

SOME TIRED OUT SOCCER PLAYERS ENJOYING A FOOTBALL GAME ON TV

GRANDMA AND HER FIVE FAVORITE DAUGHTERS ENJOY SOME CALIFORNIA SUNSHINE

SEASONS GREETINGS FROM ALL OF US TO ALL OF YOU

PAGE 1

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November 25, 2015



To the best mothers and fathers in the world,

First of all, I wanted to extend my love and gratitude to you for allowing Bryce and I to tie the knot! We could not be happier, especially since we both get to join each other's family and become one even bigger happy family. I already know that Sorem's/Riel's and McCarthy's know how to have a good time, so this wedding will be spectacular! I also wanted to thank you all in advance for the support and help you will provide Bryce and me in this endeavor. We want you to know that we are also chipping in and saving up because we want this to be as easy on everyone as possible.

Yesterday, my dad and I went to meet Gary, the man who owns and lives at Red Maple Vineyard with his wife. They met at the Culinary Institute of America, and now they not only have weddings on their beautiful property, but also run a farm-to-table catering business- Corner Stone Caterers- the one that will cater our wedding. I put down a deposit and secured our wedding day, June 2, 2017!

This will be a rustic-chic wedding since the ceremony is on top of Deer Hill overlooking the Hudson Valley, the cocktail reception is in a refurbished barn and outdoor area, the wedding reception is in a decorated outdoor tent, and the post-party is also where the cocktail party is set. There are vineyards, horses, a tree swing, flower gardens, vegetable gardens, and herb gardens all set in a secluded tree lined street. Not only do we love the natural and rustic atmosphere, we love the idea of farm-to-table catering from chefs who clearly know their stuff (this one is for Bryce). I know that you all will love the place and Gary just as much as we do!

Now for the good stuff- Since Thanksgiving is tomorrow, I thought I'd get you salivating sooner with the sample menus and food options. Just keep in mind that it is comprised of choices; it's not everything we will get. I'm also attaching other information about the wedding that you may want to look over. Remember, it is just a proposal and nothing is set in stone. Menus and prices can change. We can customize it to our liking and budget. If you go to the link below, you can browse many other items about the wedding, including past wedding photos. Something really cute is that the wedding favors they offer are mini hot sauce and maple syrup jars, which I thought is so appropriate for West Coast meets East Coast wedding!

The countdown begins! One and a half years! Sounds far off, but it will be here before we know it. Francie- We will also have to plan a San Diego wedding party, so we can discuss that too!

Happy Thanksgiving everyone! Wish we could all be together.

Love you lots, Bridget and Bryce

RFNL Editorial

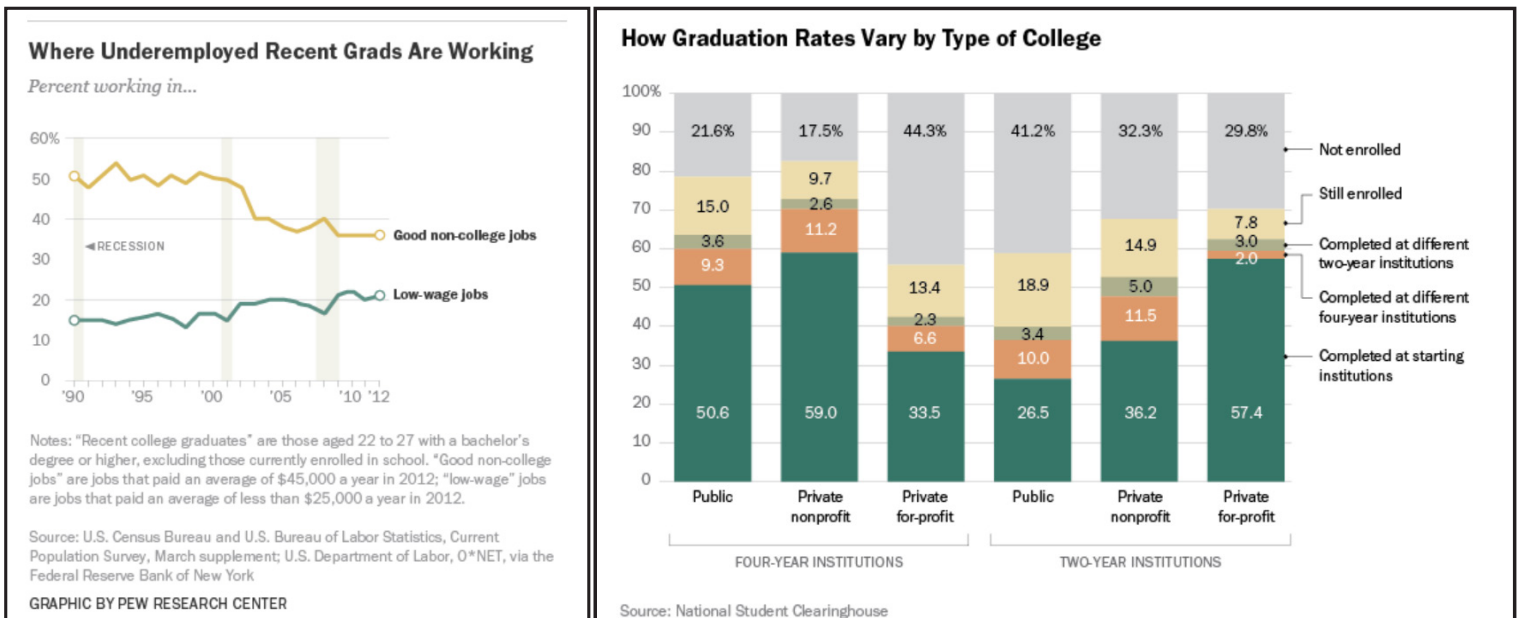
High School Education – Does it make the grade?

With a family full of educators and many friends also in the “business” I would have hoped that the above headline caught your attention. But even if you’re not in education you may also have some fairly strong opinions about it. Well as it just so happens... I do have an opinion and it’s one that may not be popular but I think it’s time to put it out there for the rest of you to comment on. After all, if I can’t get you to write articles maybe a little controversy will shake things up! So here goes and this is with apologies to the hardest and most dedicated individuals in the country, our school teachers.

I believe it’s time to change the mentality of education to reflect our ever changing society. Many of you may have heard me say from time to time that College is not the answer for many of our children. OK, OK, I might have actually said that College is a big waste of time! But I also think that some of the statistics we are seeing today might actually support the idea that going to college is **NOT** the best thing for every high school student.

Recent studies indicate that High School Graduates and Dropouts (about 2.9 million youths age 16 to 24) who graduated from high school between January and October 2014, only about 2.0 million (68.4 percent) were enrolled in college by the following October. While this is good news to some degree (a majority are going on to college), we still have about 900,000 kids that have now graduated and are hitting the job market with very little real world skills.

But it gets worse, of this 68% of students that enroll in college less than half will actually graduate and earn a degree. Next we have statistics that indicate that of the remaining, call it 35% of students that actually graduate, less than half will actually wind up in a job that is related to their degree. So if I have done my math correctly, and granted I am not a college graduate, somewhere around 17% of high school students will actually become employed in a job requiring a college education. Fine! But what about the other 83%?



As the above graphic from PEW Research Center indicates about 35% of college graduates are employed in jobs (not related to a college degree) that pay on average \$45,000 per year. Not bad, and one could even say that while their degree wasn't required for the job they have, it certainly may have separated them from other candidates that did not have a degree. I'll buy that, so let's just say it was worth it for them as well. This would raise from about 50% to about 85% of college graduates that were properly prepared for entering the work force in a decent paying job. One could even say that colleges for the most part are doing a good job at preparing individuals to be successful.

But the same cannot be said about high school. There are the 32% that never went to college and the 34% that will never finish college, translating into about 66% of all high school graduates who will not graduate from college. Add into this number the college graduates that end up in low paying jobs and the number increases to just above 70%!

If you are one of the many that believe high schools are there to prepare students for college, then you would have to admit that high school education has failed more than 70% of its students. Again I will stress that it is the curriculum not the instructors that has failed to meet this goal. Which brings me to my next point. What exactly is the goal of education?

That is a hard question to answer and it varies by the type of institution you look at. But if you take education at its most basic form I believe its first goal is to teach you how to survive within your own environment. Parents are the first teachers of their children. They give their children the basic skill sets required to be able to communicate and live within the society structure they occupy. Next we enter a more structured education system geared toward teaching the basics, Math, English, Science and the Arts. But at some point we have to ask what do we want this type of education to accomplish? What is the end goal? Education by itself is always a good thing, but to what end? I believe the goal of education should be to prepare every individual to become a valuable member of society doing something they like to do.

While preparing a presentation for high school students I ran across a report on average pay for college graduates based upon degree. It had pay scales for the first 5 years of a career and then a mid-career pay scale as well (see the tables in this article) but it also had what I will call a societal satisfaction rating (SSR) for each career as well. It came as no surprise that the bottom paying careers were mostly related to lower education and that these careered had relatively high SSR scores (mid 70's and above). But then surprisingly it showed that the highest paying careers had SSR scores averaging much less.

Rank ▲	Major	Degree Type	Early Career Pay ②	Mid-Career Pay ②	% High Meaning ③
1	Petroleum Engineering		\$101,000	\$168,000	71%
2	Nuclear Engineering		\$68,200	\$121,000	58%
3	Actuarial Mathematics		\$58,800	\$119,000	48%
4	Chemical Engineering		\$69,500	\$118,000	61%
5	Electronics & Communications Engineering		\$65,000	\$116,000	55%
6	Computer Science (CS) & Engineering		\$69,100	\$115,000	43%
7 (tie)	Electrical & Computer Engineering (ECE)		\$67,000	\$114,000	53%
7 (tie)	Systems Engineering		\$67,100	\$114,000	60%
9	Aeronautical Engineering		\$65,100	\$113,000	61%
10 (tie)	Computer Engineering (CE)		\$68,400	\$109,000	48%
10 (tie)	Mining Engineering		\$71,500	\$109,000	79%

Rank ▲	Major	Degree Type	Early Career Pay ②	Mid-Career Pay ②	% High Meaning ③
309	Special Education		\$35,500	\$47,800	74%
310	Biblical Studies		\$34,900	\$47,100	75%
311	Social Work (SW)		\$33,200	\$45,700	74%
312	Elementary Education		\$34,300	\$45,500	67%
313	Youth Ministry		\$32,200	\$45,400	67%
314	Human Services (HS)		\$34,100	\$43,400	78%
315	Early Childhood & Elementary Education		\$32,900	\$42,300	81%
316	Counseling		\$32,300	\$40,900	81%
317 (tie)	Child & Family Studies		\$30,900	\$39,600	64%
317 (tie)	Child Development		\$31,500	\$39,600	72%
319	Early Childhood Education		\$30,300	\$38,000	77%

I'm not sure exactly what this all means but I will say there is strong evidence that for some, money is not the only motivator in a career. This is why we cannot overlook the "fun factor" of a job. Additionally, I believe that the vast majority of successful individuals love their jobs! This leads me back to my premise that the goal of education should be to prepare every individual to become a valuable member of society doing something they like to do.

Unfortunately, the ability to accomplish this goal can be very difficult. I believe that one way to make this a reality is to make fundamental changes at the high school level. Students need to be better informed on career choices and at a much earlier point in time. I do not believe in evaluating students and sorting them into careers based upon some kind of test. The student needs to be exposed to different opportunities right from the first year of high school and then allowed to make a choice (or choices) on what interest them most. Then their education should be geared toward helping them accomplish that goal.

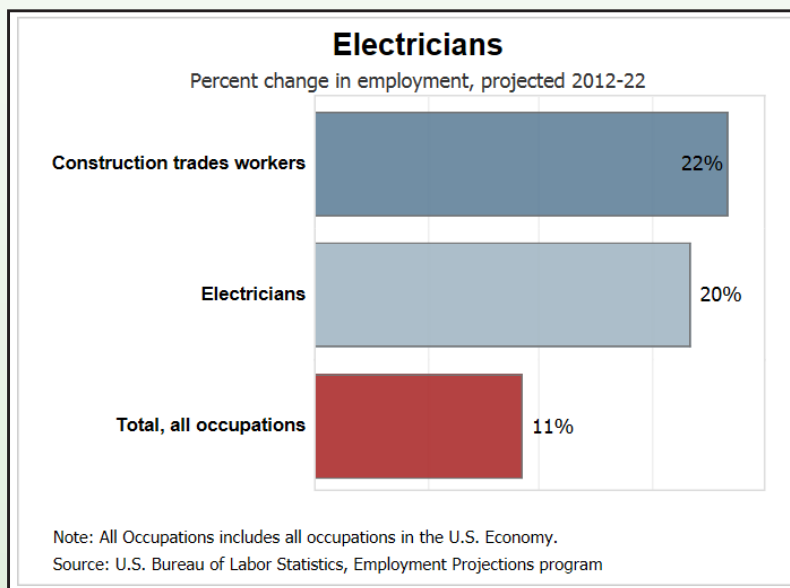
Information is the key to helping students figure out what they want to do with their life. Information like job projections, satisfaction ratings, pay scales, cost of education and the future of the career itself should be presented (after all how much longer will we still need bank tellers for example). High schools need to do a better job in presenting these choices.

I'm am not saying nothing is being done and in fact, over the last few years we have seen "magnet" type high schools dedicated to "other than college" careers. But the reality of it is that main stream education still pushes college as the best option for its students and that needs to change. High schools need to work hand in hand with trade schools, businesses and even the community colleges to channel their students into training that will provide the student with the skills they need to obtain a job in the field or career they want.

There are those out there that will say it takes money to make these changes and to some degree they would be correct. But... there are a lot of industries, businesses, and trades that have recognized they are facing a shortage of workers in the near future, and would be more than happy to present these other options to students at no costs to the school districts.

Recently while speaking to a group of school counselors at an event at the electrical training center one of them suggested I watch a video on this very same subject and sent me the following link:

<https://vimeo.com/67277269>



I found the video to be very interesting and it does follow a lot of the things I have been pontificating above. I will warn you that the end becomes more of a commercial for community colleges than anything else, but still, the first part of the video does present some interesting ideas.

Well there you have it, that's my opinion. What's yours?

FAMILY SHORTS

Congratulations to the Rios Family!

No they are not having quadruplets (at least as far as I know). No, we congratulate Miguel for making Captain in the Jersey City Fire department. And we congratulate Jessica for earning her Black Belt! Jessica had the following to say:

Sensei/hubby,

when you suggested I join the dojo shortly after we met, I was truly unsure if I would like it. I was nervous that I would suck and would want to give up right away. I was worried that I would disappoint you in what was one of your life's biggest passions.



and mental accomplishments (although, I'm pretty proud of those too). But this journey, 7 years in making, means a lot more to me. I know you say that black is just another belt color-and that's true-but it also signifies a crazy road I've been on. There have been set backs and frustrations as well as joy and fun and so many challenges. Today was a huge milestone for me. The road still continues to wind ahead of us but I feel a bit more sure on it now.

Thank you Sensei, for teaching me and encouraging me. Thank you husband, for giving me the strength to continue and including me in your life's work. - Love you.

