

random  
act of kindness  
Francie



December 2017

Issue No: 323



# National Francie Day

Thinking of my dear friend  
Francie Sorem and sending  
her love on National Francie  
Day

National Francie Day was held on Nov. 22nd, the day before Thanksgiving. This day was determined by the National Francie Day Committee as the perfect time of year to celebrate Francie! To celebrate National Francie Day, Francie fans committed to performing a "random act of Francie," (aka random acts of kindness) in her honor. The random act of Francie did not have to happen on National Francie Day but on Nov. 22nd, fans were asked to text or email Francie letting her know what they did to spread love and kindness in honor of her.

The committee noted that we all have been blessed to receive love and kindness from Francie in our lives and determined that it was time to show her and others how far and wide her love reaches and all the happiness it inspires. Brett Sorem kicked off the day with a special Facebook video (<https://www.facebook.com/brett.r.sorem/videos/10102678733897708/?pnref=friends.search>) talking about the idea and sharing his act of goodness. Bryce also sent an amazing video (<https://www.facebook.com/bryce.sorem/videos/10108874343825731/?pnref=friends.search>) which allowed more than just the family a chance to chime in.

Reported acts of kindness were different for everyone but included ideas such as: celebrating a sending notes of love to others, offer- man" acts of love, sending flowers, cooking for others, etc. You get the idea. I did not hear of anyone promising free haircut (probably for good reason). Happy National Francie Day, our first official No-

ing to do "handy

## NATIONAL FRANCIE DAY

Today at 8:02 AM

Many friends have walked in and out of my life. None have made more of an impact than you  
I am grateful for your friendship and love for 46 years.  
On this national Francie day I honor you. You are one in a million  
Love and prayers to you every day little buddy  
Sheryl

November event for the Riel calendar that has had a history of no events in November! Thank you, Francie, for being our inspiration to kick off the season of giving in a positive and significant way! We all love you!



Hey Everybody,

December 06/2017

I have escaped the tunnel of radiation, and have landed on my Dad's Birthday. I'm sure he would have had a funny story to go with that.

Radiation is tricky, because all the effects snag you later when you are not suspecting it. My skin is burned and peeling, what a bonus it's only my spine and head. They strap you down on a table, including your head and go after the monster that is holding me captive. My legs are very weak. Walking is not too bad, but climbing stairs is not so great. Now we come to the scary part. My brain has turned to mush! I can't remember to do anything I set out to. I feel like I scare the people I am around because I get lost in sentences. And I fall asleep standing up mid task. Not a pretty picture. I loved having Judy, Michelle, Leah and what's her name over for the weekend they spoiled me rotten (oh Yeah, Debbie).

Then came Monday and I'm not in such good shape. My blood counts have spiked or tanked, my meds seem off, had to go in for new blood draws, Tuesday morning again and then again on Wednesday. Kidneys are looking a little wimpy, hopefully it's an abnormality in the testing. I have a tumor on my chest they area going to irradiate today. Oh goody, bring me everything you have. I love being a lab rat!!!!

Now don't feel all sad and sorry for me, I am having a great time, Though I am peeling everywhere from the "sun burn" I've gotten over the last 18 treatments. My friend Cindy and I start the day with the doctors and end up at all sorts of places. She has been my superstar, don't know what I would have done without her. And thanks to you too Julie for stepping in at the last minute to give me the ride, that was very cool of you!

So, what's next you ask? Me too!!!!!! Biopsy results will be in in about 4 or 5 days that will tell us about cancer. Also there is still a Host versus graft disease issue and the jury is still out on that one.

If my cancer level is low they will start me on chemo, and I will skip along my merry way. If not, they will make me a little cocktail out of Brett's stem cells and we'll do it again.

We won't talk about other things because they are not pleasant and who wants to ruin a perfectly nice day. Let's be honest here we all know the outcome and it's not a great one, but the days between then and now will be good ones. I am enjoying my life though I can't believe how fast time goes when you are retired. It seems like I never have enough time to get everything done. I guess going to the Doctor's office everyday or more, does put a cramp in my style.

12/07/2017

Looks like we will be starting up chemo after the radiation to my chest is done, that lump is getting bigger and we want to zap it for 5 treatments. Much better laying on your back then on your face!!! And I may do a cocktail from Brett's stem cell's as well.

The bone marrow did not look good, but it depends on how good a strand we got of it. I will keep buzzing along and do what they tell me to. Meanwhile, if I haven't cleared up everything for you, let me know and I will add an addendum on. Enjoy your Christmas as I plan to and we will see you on the other side of the New Year!!!!!!

Me





# Happy Thanksgiving

Once again, the Riel clan gathered at Bud and Margaret's home in Encinitas to celebrate Thanksgiving Day. The weather was very cooperative and in fact was a little warmer than we reasonably could have expected but that's what you get when you live in beautiful San Diego.



Family and friend gathered at the home between 11:00 and noon; all spending time talking and catching up on the latest news. Many family members used this time to have their family pictures taken (as has become the tradition at this event) while the little ones were still fresh and excited. Many of these pictures can be seen in this article but there are more on Robert's Facebook page.

But as Grandpa Frank would always say “It’s time to eat” so shortly after noon a magnificent dinner was served up by our hosts. Lots of Turkey and Salmon were available as well as many side dishes of stuffing, potatoes and salads (brought by the various family members). It didn’t take long for the family to make short work of all the food and soon the only thing left that was stuffed were the guests!

Everyone enjoyed their time together and we thank Margaret and Bud for opening up their home once again (this is the 23rd year in a row if anyone is counting) for this traditional event!





## A New Zealand Thanksgiving

We had Lauren's family over to our house for a Kiwi Thanksgiving. Our NZ family were all excited to participate in their first Thanksgiving feast. I cooked a 5.5kg turkey (12lb) and Lauren's family made traditional Thanksgiving dishes.

Holden and Gray got to meet their new 2nd cousin, Avi, and after the meal we took out Lauren's cousin's boat around our bay. We all missed Margaret's house and uncle Bud's Turkey, Salmon, and my Mom's Orange Sh\*t, but were glad to be able to celebrate the American holiday with family. Miss you all!





# WREATHS — across — AMERICA

*This family has been putting a wreath on dad's grave for the past 3 years. They love doing it in his honor and it always makes my heart smile.*

*Birdy*

Dear Birdy Hartman:

With National Wreaths Across America Day just one week from today, we are writing to let you know that Simran Noon has arranged for something very special for you this holiday season that provides vital support for Miramar National Cemetery and Linares Chapter DAR. Each December on Wreaths Day, our mission to Remember, Honor and Teach is carried out by millions of Americans that sponsor Remembrance Wreaths and participate in wreath-laying ceremonies honoring our fallen heroes in over 1,500 locations worldwide. Here is your gift that makes our mission possible.

This year, Simran Noon has sponsored a wreath that he/she will lay on the grave of Your Loved One at Miramar National Cemetery to honor and remember his or her service and sacrifice to our Nation on National Wreaths Across America Day. The wreath is hand-crafted from all-American balsam and hand-tied with a red velvet bow, and when it is placed, all ceremony participants are asked to “say your loved one’s name” to ensure that his or her legacy of duty, service, and sacrifice is never forgotten.

Here is a personal message about your gift from Simran Noon:

***We are sponsoring a memorial wreath for your Dad's gravesite in honor of his service and in honor of you being such an awesome teacher! Best wishes this holiday season! Love, Simran, Bill and Ian Noon***

We hope that you treasure being a part of National Wreaths Across America Day, and we wish you the happiest and safest of holiday seasons. If you would like to learn more about Wreaths Across America, please click [wreathscrossamerica.org](http://wreathscrossamerica.org) to visit our homepage. Or, if you would like to volunteer to participate in a wreath-laying ceremony on 12/16/2017, please click [Ceremony Information](#) to participate at Miramar National Cemetery or click [Search for Participating Locations](#) to search for a [participating location](#) near you.



# Escaping to San Francisco



By Birdy Hartman

Have you ever thought that it would be fun to just jump on a plane for a day of adventure and then come straight back home? Well that is exactly what I did at the beginning of November with two close friends of mine from Uni. High School, Diane Walsh and Tracy Bareno.



Off we flew to San Francisco for the sights and sounds of this fast-paced city. To my delight, the weather was Birdy friendly. No wind and about 70 degrees with beautiful sunshine. It felt more like a summer day than late fall. We did a lot of walking, talking and sightseeing. For lunch, we decided that we needed to hit the wharf and have some clam chowder with some crusty bread...hmmm. And then it was time for more walking and talking.

We did a funhouse maze of mirrors that truly had us walking around in circles. And we walked up a huge San Francisco hillside to reach the Salt and Straw Ice Cream Parlor. Now this place is no ordinary 31 flavors kind of place. Oh NO....this place is known for making five new holiday-inspired flavors each month. With it being November, you might think that we were in for pumpkin and/or apple pie versions. However, you would be completely wrong! For the month of November, we could get a sample of Sweet Potato casserole with Maple Pecans, Buttered Mashed potatoes and Gravy, Persimmon and Walnut Stuffing, Salted Caramel Thanksgiving Turkey and Spiced Goat Cheese and Pumpkin Pie.



I was not brave enough to try them all but I did have enough courage to sample the Salted Caramel Thanksgiving Turkey...ugh....let's just say that turkey flavor is great on a warm plate but not so good at being ice cold in a bowl. The sample was all I needed to know that sweet ice is more my cup of tea! But we loved laughing our way across the city on this whirlwind trip. We had a nice dinner on the water and toasted the golden gate as we flew back home. Good friends, ice cream and a journey...all the makings of a wonderful day in the life of this bird.



# Big Al Turns 70!

By Brett Sorem

Big Al decided to visit his favorite son, Bryce, in New York for his BIG 70th Birthday. I however, being the underdog, would not go down without a fight for missing out on the highly coveted title. So, I decided to fly out to New York to surprise Big Al for his Birthday illustrating my commitment to stealing the title.

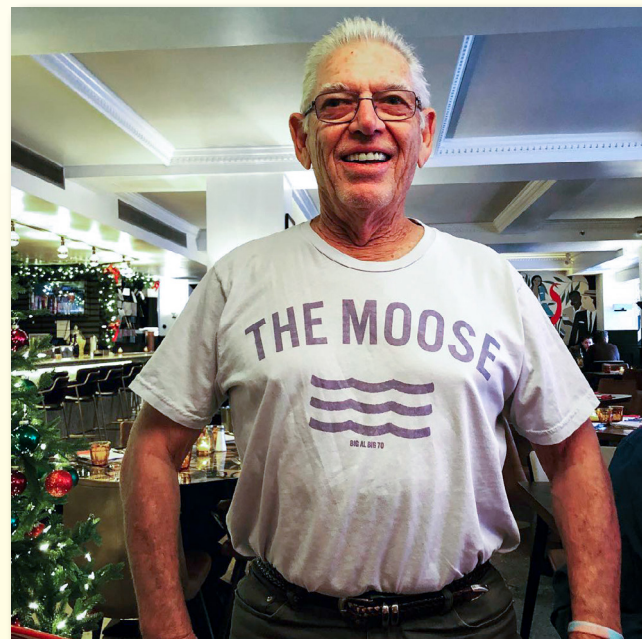
Sure, Bryce had Big Al into his new fancy restaurant, and serenaded him all weekend. (if you are confused, when you serenade Big Al, you don't do it by song, but only with food for his belly) Bryce also created a dish made specially for him on the menu titled "Big Al's Holiday Ham." And yes, Bryce also took Big Al on a bike ride along the Hudson river, yeah yeah, yeah, whatever.

So, I had a lot to go up against. Luckily, I had a secret weapon, my buddy and owner of Sol Angeles clothing company was up my sleeve. We designed custom Big Al shirts, my favorite one with their popular Waves logo and Big Al's newish Moniker THE MOOSE written above it, but that's a whole other story.

At the end of the day, the trip was great. We got to eat at Bryce's new Restaurant, Greenwich Grille and taste the infamous Bryce's California Breakfast Burrito, stroll around the city, and catch up with Friends. While the trip was short and sweet, it celebrated the long, awesome, life Big Al has lead, with lots of beer :)

While Bryce still remains Big Al's favorite, I put up a pretty good fight. Though watch out Bryce, yeah your the top dog now, you got married this year, and you feed Big Al delicious meals that makes him happy, but next year we got another Euro Trip! I look forward to a re-match!

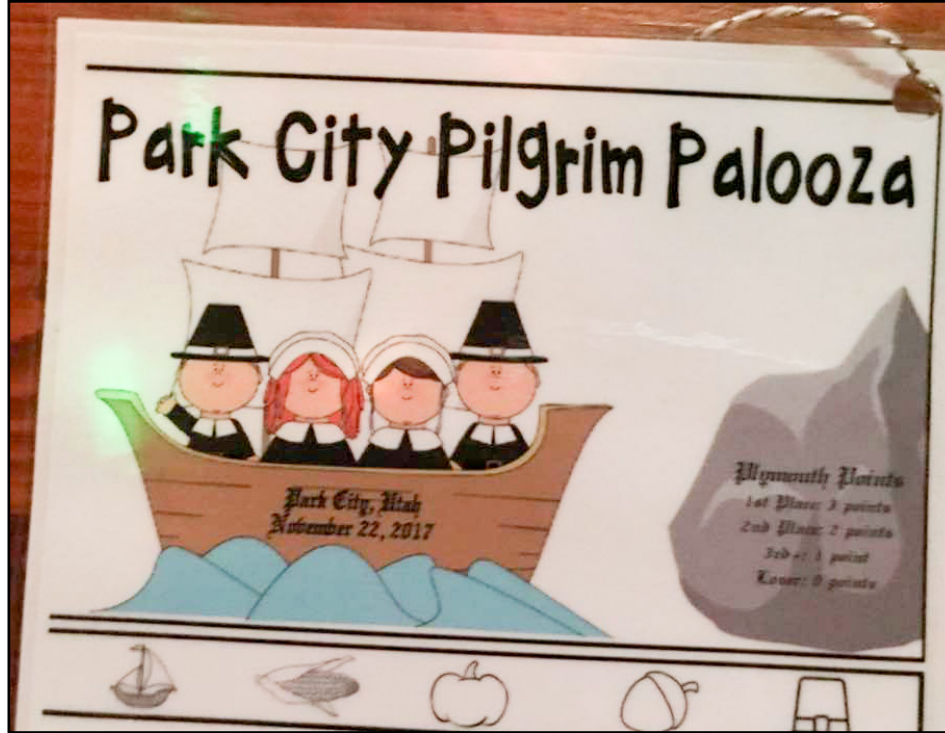
Happy B-Day month Big Al!



By Birdy Hartman



My wonderful friends, Greg and Cindy Velasquez, invited me to use their Park City, Utah home for Thanksgiving. My own kids could not make the trek but my second family, The Gillingham's and the Pantons agreed to come with me. So we packed our bags for the cold weather of Utah and away we went for our Park City Pilgrim Palooza (as named by our event coordinator, Annie Gillingham).

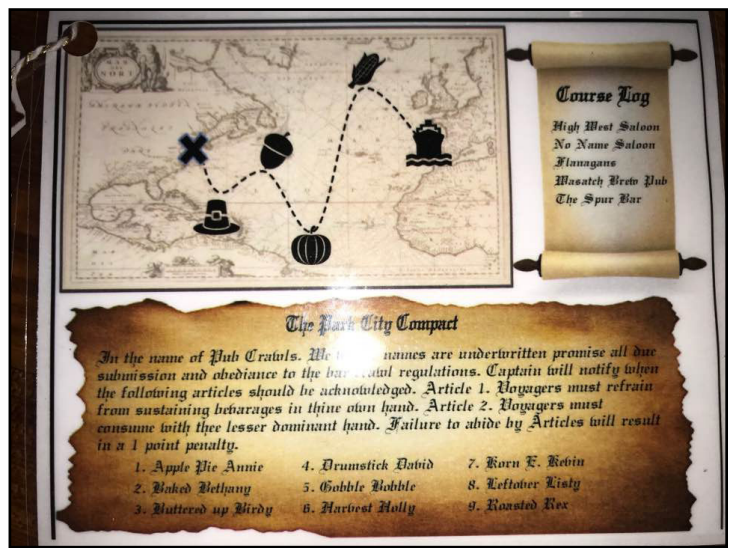


We were excited to see that there was snow on the ground and up in the mountain tops as well. Our home away from home was over 4,000 sq. feet, fully equipped with a ping pong table and outside spa. We got to live in luxury and enjoy the beauty of an unobstructed mountain view of the snow topped hillsides. We experienced indoor tennis and had round robin style matches. We also enjoyed excursions like a Trailside Disc Golf course, on a mountain top hike, thanks to Kevin. And we got to do an amazing Bar Crawl, Pilgrim Style, due to the creative juices of Annie Gillingham.

Now if you are not familiar with one of Annie's Bar crawls you truly are missing out in life. She creates these amazing task/game cards that you need to complete to become the trophy winner of the evening. We were tasked with going to five bars in which we had different games or challenges to attempt. The winner was awarded 3 points. Second place got 2 points, third 1 point and losers got nothing. But that was not all! We could also get points (for the betterment of our settlement) by collecting one of each of the following:



1. Selfie with a skier
2. A coaster from a bar
3. A stamp from a bar
4. A selfie with Santa
5. Something with a turkey
6. A necklace
7. Selfie with a snowman
8. Sing a karaoke song
9. Make toast to the whole bar
10. A item with "Park City" on it
11. A flag



Needless to say, this competitive group soon started to find creative ways to gather these items in order to beat out the competition. It was a fierce activity that only Grandpa Riel would have excelled in but we all rose to the challenge while drinking heavily. The winner of the night was Leftover Listy with 20 points. Buttered Up Birdy came in as a close second while Gobble Bobble hardly made it on to the score board.

We also enjoyed a great Thanksgiving dinner prepared by Listy (with Bruce overseeing everything in spirit). We ended our trip with a visit to see the famous Mormon Temple of Utah. Apparently we just happened to be there for the first lighting of their Christmas lights. It was an impressive lighting of over 35 acres and fun to be part of this holiday tradition that the entire city of Salt Lake City comes out to enjoy. It was a nice way to end our visit.





Following our trip, I invited the Velasquez family over to recap our adventures and to thank them for our trip. We had a Park City Palooza reunion and invited them to try out some of Annie's incredible bar crawl games. I truly can't thank this family enough for giving up their mountain top escape from



reality for us to use this Thanksgiving. It meant the world to me. I also have to thank my second family Bob, Listy, David, Bethany, Annie, Kevin, Holly and Rex! Traveling with you all is a memory I will enjoy forever. And a special thanks goes to Annie Gillingham for organizing all the fun and for never giving up on my search for a feather on Thanksgiving Day. As you can see, I truly do have so much to be thankful for!