

R E F N I

West Bix

Catch The News



April 2018

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**The Family's
Newest
Tri-Athlete!**



West-Bix

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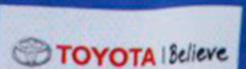
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THE PARCEL



News from New Zealand

By Dustin Benesch



Hi Family,

We had an active March in the NZ Benesch household. Holden competed in the Hibiscus Coast Weet-Bix “Tryathlon” with a few thousand other young Kiwis. Weet-Bix is the New Zealand Wheaties, and they put on a great event for 7 through 15-year-olds all around New Zealand, and our local race happens to be a few blocks from our house.



Holden swam 50m in our local bay, rode his bike 4.5k, and ran 1.5k without stopping once. The event is not timed, and it makes for a really fun atmosphere for all the kids involved. Holden did an amazing job and we were extremely proud of him.

Over the Easter weekend, I had a fun experience coaching a group of under 15 boys in lacrosse against a team that traveled to Auckland from Melbourne, Australia. The team I coached is part of the National New Zealand Lacrosse Association who is trying to get younger kids involved in the sport. It was a challenge as there are no lacrosse leagues for kids under 15 other than the high school programs, so half the boys had never played a game before. We had three games in two days, and although we lost the games, the boys played really well against a more experienced Aussie team. I've been asked to continue to coach the group as they try and schedule future games against different Australian clubs, so there should be some fun opportunities in the future.

We also had a nice, low-key Easter. The kids woke up to find that the Easter Bunny had left chocolate eggs throughout the backyard. After breakfast, which consisted mostly of chocolate, we went on a hike through our favorite regional park. Then, we came home for a nice family BBQ.

We love and miss everyone and hope the family had a great Easter!

Dustin, Lauren, Holden, Grayson, Lawson, and baby #4



Thanks for all those that HOPPED over to the Gillinghams!

By Listy Gillingham



Easter Sunday seems to always provide us with great family time in a low-key kind of way. This year was no different as the sun was shining, the kids had time to play, the food spread was ample, and we had a good showing of siblings, innocent bystanders, grandkids, and great grandkids!

The party started at around noon and slowly but surely the parking lot filled up as we added more and more people to the party. The furthest to travel here was Alan Sorem and the LA crew was a close second in that Brett and Corinda had traffic to contend with that made them feel as though they lived in Arizona.



Listy and Bob got the prize for having the highest representation of kids and grandkids with 100% in both categories. Amazing what happens when you host the party and all your kids live in town (smile). Though we don't have the record for the largest brood of grandkids (go Carol and Jeff), we held up our end by having them all there for the Easter Egg hunt. Corinda and Brett got the prize for the most amazing shopping story where they had police activity to save them from a crazy person. You'll have to ask them for more details (see what you miss when you don't come to the party)?



The kids played on the tennis court and around the house, and the adults sat around outside enjoying the beautiful weather. David and Bethany gave pool house tours showing off the newest kitchen as Bob continues to renovate this old house on Lemon Ave.



Next up on the docket is stucco repairs (so fun) and then putting an outdoor kitchen where the swing and slide set is (they are up for grabs, so run right over if you need an outdoor play set). The final event for the day was the traditional Easter Egg hunt where we lined up Liam, Breaden, Riley, Emily, Maddie, Noah, and Addy to collect some prized eggs that were planted around the backyard. They all seemed to enjoy filling their baskets up and getting to play with their cousins.



Eventually, we will have a chance to get their competitive juices going by adding a family game of soccer or basketball as these little grands begin to grow up. They will have to handle the senior division in a game of skill but we still have a ways to go before that can happen. Overall, it was a great party and we appreciated everyone chipping in to bring food and drink to keep it merry.



Tennis Tuesday Fall (Fail)

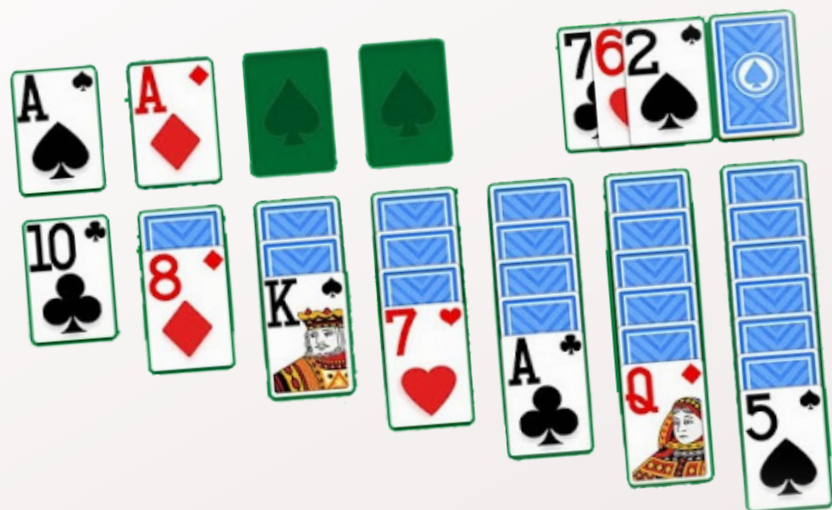
By Birdy Hartman



Rumors are out that I took a nasty fall on our Tennis Tuesday this last month. The rumors are true, but the outcome is not as bad as I was worried they would be. We were celebrating spring and the brand new shiny tennis lights that Bob had installed with the help of Lyle Hall, who provided a very snazzy lift to complete the project. The lights were beaming, and we were just getting back into our game after many weeks of few lights or none.

I was playing with my twin sister, a dynamic duo if I must admit. She had hit the ball from the back court and I was playing the front. I saw the ball sailing right back to me for a perfect smashing return when all of a sudden, my feet got tangled and down I went. Luckily, I made my shot before I hit the ground, which is all any player wants to be able to say.

I knew I was going to hit my knee, so I tried to roll a bit. However, that really did not buy me any points as a survivor because it just doubled the amount of ouches my body received that evening. Turns out I shattered my knee cap, bruised my elbow, broke one fingertip and hurt my two thumbs. The good news is that when I hit the knee, everything stayed in place. I just cracked it a bit, but my knee is in perfect alignment. This ultimately means, NO SURGERY for me! I do have to wear this bad ass splint for the next month or so but that is small potatoes next to the idea of being out of school for three or four weeks.



My doctors just told me to slow down (how am I going to walk around the lake?) and relax a bit. BUT the worse news of all was that I can't drive for the next few weeks. Ugh....I have a feeling that my uber bill is going to grow quickly.

So that is my sad story. Anyone up for a good game of solitaire?

Grandparents Day at High Tech Little Explorer

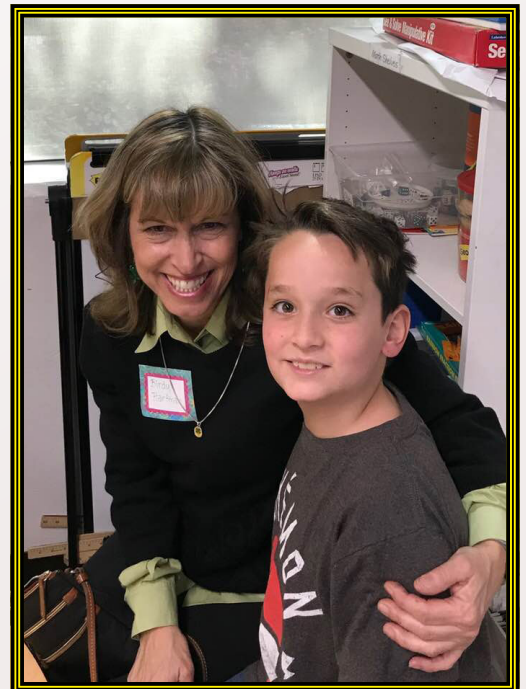
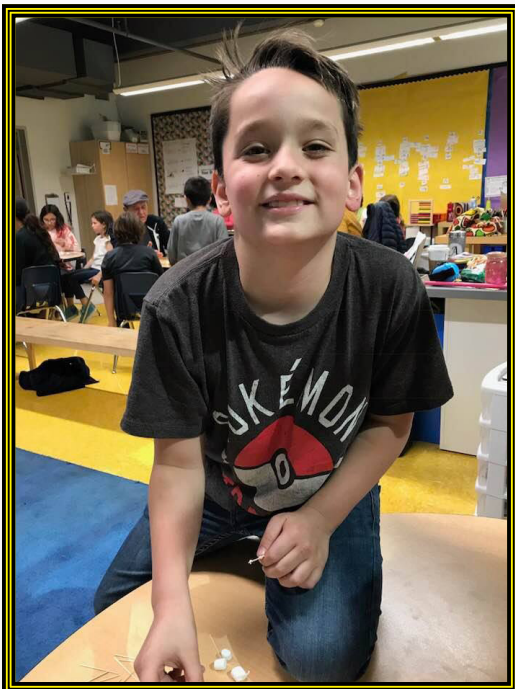
By Birdy Hartman

On March 16th, I was invited to Corbin's school to enjoy some learning fun, third grade style. As I walked into the classroom I heard a sweet "Hi Grammy!" across the room. Our eager eyes met, and I was happily sitting at his table. Soon afterwards, I walked Corbin's other grandmother and she quickly joined us for some grandparent fun.

We were given the task to take 20 marshmallows and 25 toothpicks to attempt to build a structure as high as we could make it go. The only catch was that it had to be able to handle earthquake jolts from a shaking table created by his teacher. Ugh! So we split up into two groups and started creating. The kids had learned in school that a triangle makes a very strong base and so off we went to creatively guide our tablemates into making the perfect structure.

I must tell you that this is a challenge Bruce would have loved, as well as Grandpa Riel. They would have been very proud of their grandson because Corbin's team was successful in their venture. However, the challenges did not stop there. Our next task was to use our towers by shoring them up a bit so that they could have enough strength to have a book rest on top. This was a bit more interesting. To "sweeten the pot" she added some big marshmallows and took off the amount restrictions. Again, our team prevailed!

It was a fun game and we loved watching our sweet Corbin use his powers of strategy to build each structure. He was good natured and helpful to his table mates. It was fun to see. We also got to watch Corbin read and he shared some of his school projects with us. It was a very delightful Grandparent's day for us all!



ON THE ROAD WITH ANNIE AND KEVIN

By Annie Gillingham



In February, Kevin and I travelled to Guatemala to see my high school friend get married! We flew out of the Tijuana airport using the Cross-Border Xpress Bridge which was amazing! I would highly recommend checking out flights out of TJ because they are so much cheaper and the bridge is super easy to get to and cross.

We arrived in Guatemala City, Guatemala in the morning and took a private shuttle to Antigua, a world heritage town. It was about an hour trip and was really easy. We stayed at a super nice Airbnb house in Antigua with its own courtyard with a hammock and a rooftop deck. In Antigua, we saw many original plazas and churches and colonial style houses. We stopped for lunch at a place that had clay pots full of delicious smelling stews, which is the typical food. At night, we had Guatemalan beers and watched the sunset over volcanoes surrounding Antigua from a rooftop bar.



We only had one night in Antigua because of the short nature of our trip but I would absolutely recommend more time there! The next morning, we were picked up by our private shuttle (super inexpensive and easy to arrange) to head to Lake Atitlan, where my friend was to be married. This was a longer trip, about 4 hours. But, absolutely worth it. The lake sits right in the middle of volcanoes and mountains and is the most picturesque place ever.

Here we also stayed in an Airbnb but it was more like a mansion. It was a 5 bedroom house and 10 of us stayed there, my other high school friends and their significant

others. The house had hammocks on the roof, overlooked the lake, had an infinity pool overlooking the lake, a sauna, cooks who made us breakfast every morning and a "house boy" to coordinate anything else we needed.

The house sits on the top of the hill so naturally the house boy arranged for us to jump in the back of a truck to drive us up. Transport in the bed of pickup trucks is so common there that they have benches and bars built so it is actually quite nice. We spent a lot of time, that wasn't wedding related, just enjoying the views of the lake at the house and hanging out. But, we did venture out too.

You can arrange for private boats to take you to other towns on the lake, each with its own unique charm. Most of the towns were incredibly colorful and boasted amazing hand woven clothing and blankets. You can also tour coffee plantations but we did not have time to do that. We were also able to hike around the lake and get a better view of the volcanoes surrounding it. As we hiked, we passed through onion fields that were so lush and green it felt unreal. Really the entire place just seemed to beautiful to be true! My friends wedding was so gorgeous and a great celebration of culture and families coming together. We had an amazing trip and I would absolutely recommend a trip to Guatemala and checking out Lake Atitlan!





Here is a short story I have written for the San Diego Public Library first annual short story contest. I along with 49 other writers are waiting for the judges decision on May 1st. - Rich

THE GREATEST STORY EVER TOLD

In the beginning, there was Jerry, a self proclaimed gift to the human race from the right hand of God. Jerry was designated by himself as the Messiah of Right and of all things American. Jerry believed that God had created him in his own image and Jerry

being thankful returned the favor. Jerry as the delegate of God was gifted with the ability to know all things American and the desire to impart this wisdom to all who would listen. When Jerry designated something as right, only liberals, communists, traitors and or fools would dare dispute the wisdom of Jerry. Those with the temerity to challenge Jerry were subject to the wordy exposition of Jerry on their error. Jerry, not one to be confused with the facts, would make his statements speaking with the Divine authority of Jerry secure in the knowledge that facts contrary to his statements were creations of the devil. When you are the self proclaimed messenger of the God of right, you can in your own mind do no wrong. Jerry saw his duty to God to tour America and preach the gospel of Righteousness. He found many sheep to shepherd, and sheared many with his clever words and assurances that it is better to get it written and right then be left with the other communists.

Jerry would preach to all who would listen his understanding of all things American. When some heathen would dispute the wisdom of Jerry, Jerry would brand him as a liberal, communist, traitor and or a fool or such combination as appealed to him at the moment of his harangue. Jerry was secure in his citadel of omnipotence, assuring all that America would be doomed for failing to adhere to his pronouncements. His message was received by right thinking brethren as the word of God. Jerry preached that God in his goodness had made America, the second amendment and sent them Jerry. Jerry believed that when God is on your side, only devils will dispute you.

One day a man of virtue, character and intelligence named Les than perfect, dared to confront the Messiah of Right. Where Jerry would make statements as if fact, Les would reason with facts. There was acrimony everywhere for the two were constantly confusing others with opposing thoughts on America. Jerry would assert by virtue of his office as Messiah of Right and divine guidance that Les was in error of the truth. Les was fearless in his understanding of America and refused to allow Jerry, the gift from God, statements to stand unopposed. Where Jerry traveled Les was there to act as an advocate for quiet reason.

Back and forth the battle for the hearts and minds of America went, with Jerry promising doom and Les than perfect reasoning something less than doom. Finally, a man of the people, Ira the irreverent, arose to mediate between the two. The debate between what is right and what is left ranged for days. Angels and devils placed wagers on the outcome. It was said that Daniel Webster was moved

to tears by the eloquence of both men. The eyes of America as well as its hearts and minds were focused on the two. You could go nowhere and not hear of the Armageddon being fought out before Ira the irreverent.

On the final day and moment of this contest of right verses what might be right, Jerry as Messiah of the Right for America said, "I am my own authority and you cannot mediate you can only agree." Les than perfect, closed his argument with "the time to do right is always right, the problem is what is right?"

Ira, deciding that what the world needed was more lesbians and less discord, shot Jerry where he stood and told Les to go and sin no more. Les was stunned and asked Ira how he could perform such a cruel and heartless deed.

Ira replied, "when a man knows everything, he needs to help God, I simply sent him back to his maker so he could point out to God all of his failure's."

It must have worked for all was quiet and America continued on under God but without Jerry.

Jerry, late of an interaction with Ira the irreverent, had been dispatched to his maker to share his wisdom.

God, preoccupied with preparations for the second coming did not accord Jerry the welcome Jerry had anticipated for his loyal devotion to the far right wing of the Republican Party. Jerry, even being in heaven, was Jerry and was sure that God was unaware of the conspiracy to overturn his righteous reign of right wing reeducation.

God being God listened to his creation, all the while marveling at what a great job he had done in balancing arrogance, fantasy and bombast in one spirit. When Jerry had exhausted himself, the moment of silence was a balm for the millennia.

Jerry being Jerry and just short of being divine was sure that God had something planned for him. Jerry was not the least bit surprised when God told him he was sending him back. It was, however, a surprise when God stipulated he was going back as a clone. The Spirit Jerry was appalled by the thought of a clone Jerry. "WHY GOD WHY DID YOU MAKE ME A CLONE" he asked with anguished soul searing pain.

God, who was not without a heavenly sense of humor, replied you want the short answer or the long answer?

Jerry thinking to himself that the long answer was the best answer asked for it.

God smiled and explained the difference between being a spirit and a clone. A spirit in a clone is a non corporeal being hosted by the clone. The spirit has no voice or control over the actions of the clone. He merely observes the life of his clone. In the context of the spirit world what the clone writes, thinks and does is measured against the cruel reality of truth. The spirit is aware of the truth while the clone merely attempts to perceive the truth. In effect you will watch your clone attempt to discern truth while you will already know it.

It was at the moment that Jerry merged with the clone he realized that he was in hell. He knew the truth and it was not what the clone believed. He called to the lord, why have you condemned me to hell? God smiled and said Hell is forever you are just in purgatory. Jerry thought about it and asked God, "what was the short answer?"

God shrugged and said "Why not."

The moral of this story is "to know God is right is not enough, you must be right."

FAMILY SHORTS



Lyle and I attended the Cancer for Dancers Event that Dr. Mayling Hutchenson put on as a quest to raise money for cancer research in the name of Francie Sorem at the Mission Brewery. The good news is that she has already made enough money (\$50,000.00) to name Francie as a recipient! It was a fun event with Cloggers and Flamingo dancers. There were stories from cancer survivors telling us to live for today.

One gentleman reminded us that life is short (as we learned from our dear sister) and that we all need to stop and appreciate what we have. He told us to drink good wine, take that trip you have always dreamed of now and tell the people you love most everyday how much you value them. It was a strong message

and we all took it to heart. Francie was certainly present at this event. Her photo filled the room and we tearfully toasted her memory. We want to wish Mayling Hutchenson the best of life as she continues her fight against cancer as a doctor. Francie may be gone but her spirit lives on in the work that Mayling does in her honor.



Katy and Lyle both got new rides last month. Above is Katy with her Nissan Versa while below Lyle is showing off his new jaguar 400 sport car. Pretty cool wheels



Katy Riel appeared at the Gaslight Gathering Carnival in Mission Valley as steampunk fortune teller and was shown in a photo by Nelvin C. Cepeda / San Diego Union-Tribune along with an article that can be found here:

<http://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/communities/san-diego/sd-me-steampunk-convention-20180408-story.html>

