

# R F N I

July - 2020

Issue No: 354



Welcome to the family,  
Emery Jane Hall



## EMERY JOINS THE CLAN

By Cindy Hall

On June 27th, our little girl Emery Jane Hall entered the world. 6 pound 9.5 ounces, 20 inches long. Emery was born at UCSD Health La Jolla campus, where we stayed for 3 more nights after her birth to get care and training from the nurses. The experience was unforgettable and the staff we encountered were all so nice and extremely helpful.

During the delivery, there was a moment when I felt exhausted and falling behind, the nurse tried to cheer me on by shouting at me: think about little Emery, you'll soon be able to tell her all the stories, like how crazy that she was born during a global pandemic! That's a moment when I gained my strength back. Emery was certainly born at a special time, that's part of the reason we decided to name her Emery - meaning brave and powerful. We don't know what the world will look like for her in the future, but one thing we are certain is to wish her courage and strength to adapt and enjoy the journey ahead of her. And we as the parents will love and support her with our whole heart.

Despite the fact that Emery is lucky to be born with an awesome story, she's truly lucky to be born into a great and loving large family! Special thanks to Grandpa Lyle and Birdy, though they were not allowed into the hospital, their cheerful phone calls helped us power through this rough but remarkable time. Everyone's support was greatly needed, especially that my parents were unable to fly out for baby Emery's birth. Lyle Allen and I are greatly appreciative to each and everyone in the Riel and Hall families. I am especially thankful for Lyle Allen's help during the first week after the birth, not only for taking on the majority of the baby duties, but also for caring for my recovery, I could not ask for a better companion during this time!



# I'VE GOT GRANDBABIES

By Lyle Hall

Two Grandbabies in three months, how can life get any better? I have always dreamed of joining the ranks of grandparenthood and now that the day is here, I can't stop beaming. I can't wait to hold them both! This Covid thing can't end soon enough. Big Al is also diligently waiting for the numbers to go down so that he can fly out to see Keiran. It is such a strange time for us new grandpas.

We, Birdy and I, were lucky enough to see Emery Jane (from a distance) the day after Lyle Allen and Cindy got home. We drove to their place to drop off dinner and some gifts for our newest granddaughter. Lyle Allen, Cindy and Baby Emery stood in the doorway as we peered through our masks. They may not have seen our glowing smiles, but they certainly could feel the heat in temperatures as we beamed at that baby. I forgot how tiny they are at that age. A true miracle!

I am over the top happy!



# David and Bethany are Married!

By Bethany Gillingham

February 13, 2020



Have you ever seen the episode of *The Office*- the one where Pam and Jim get married? The two characters go through these feelings of wanting to elope, then decide they want a big wedding, then the day of the wedding have a moment where they realize the day is filled with people that they love, but they realize that everyone is driving them crazy. So, they hop on a boat to Niagara Falls, and ask the captain of the ship to marry them. They return to their wedding and then have their big ceremony with all of their friends and family. (Season 6, Episode 5)

At the beginning of our engagement (November 11, 2018), we talked about an episode of *The Office* and resolved to find

our own “Pam and Jim Moment:” A time for just us to reflect on the purpose of our relationship and honor our friendship, respect, and care for one another. We discussed many ideas including; getting a tattoo (Sorry Bob and Listy), going on a secret trip to Valle de Guadalupe and eloping, and going to the courthouse and getting legally married. After a year of wedding planning, and putting down deposits on vendors, and finally finding the perfect venue (Mission Trails), I looked at my passport one day- and freaked out! The passport was set to expire in May, one month before the wedding. With the hope of travel, and the promise from David that we would honeymoon on a beach in Mexico with a mezcal margarita, we knew what we had to do.

After new years 2020, Bethany booked a date, before a 4 day weekend and close enough to Valentine's day that there would be decorations at every courthouse





from here to the Valle. I bought a new dress, David a new suit and tie. We invited our two friends who are like family to be our witnesses, because when you invite one Riel or Gillingham it quickly adds up and becomes 100! (Which is something we love, but not what we wanted for our “Pam and Jim Moment”.)

We said our vows, laughed when the judge said “for richer or poorer” as we stood there are two lowly teachers, not looking like we were going to win the lottery any time soon. Looking over the San Diego Bay we cried the whole time, as we spoke promises to each other to take care of each other in sickness or health. We exchanged rings, took some photos, and then partied like newlyweds in Little Italy! We didn’t think to make dinner reservations anywhere, but when Ironside heard that we just got married, they opened up a table for us and treated us to champagne!

Weddings are typically things that are shared, and we wanted to share this with the world as soon as we were legally married. We made the choice not to share it immediately because we did not want to make you, our family, feel left out. However, when we made the decision to postpone our big wedding due to COVID-19 and prioritizing safety for our friends and family over a day of celebrating, we decided to share it with our families. They were all relieved that at least we got to celebrate for ourselves, shared such kind words and sentiments, and definitely agreed that we got our “Pam and Jim Moment”.

We are very much looking forward to our wedding on June 26, 2021 and are extremely grateful to be married and call each other our legal partners. Thank you all for your kind wishes and celebrations for us! We look forward to having a wedding where all of our families and friends can be there to help us usher into a new stage of life!

# THE RIOS FAMILIA HIT THE ROAD!!!

By Jessica Rios



As all of us know, 2020 has been a difficult year! Miguel and I both spent a few tense months working tirelessly during the initial stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to my regular nursing job at the hospital, I also worked at a COVID field hospital in an especially hard hit area. Meanwhile, Miguel continued his work as a firefighter as we both endured the torture of homeschooling 3 kids. (Teachers of the family, we applaud you!)



After the stress of repeated exposure and multiple COVID tests (all negative - phew), we decided a vacation and time with family was needed more than ever! Since we love spending our summers in San Diego but flying is pretty much a non-option these days, we bit the bullet, purchased a 32ft motorhome that sleeps 10, and began an epic, cross country family adventure.



Night 1 - **Pennsylvania:** We left later than expected on Monday, June 22nd, and only got half way through Pennsylvania. Fortunately, we happened upon a beautiful campsite on a lake. It was the perfect first night. Our family will definitely visit that campsite again!



Night 2 - **Indiana:** Through Harvest Hosts (an ingenious program that lets you stay at vineyards, museums and other private property for a small purchase of their product), I found a woodworking shop that looked promising. Miguel loves woodworking and was very excited. Upon approach, I noticed an extraordinary amount of

horse and buggies, farms, and bicycles. Turns out we stumbled into Amish country Indiana! We stayed with a lovely Amish-Menonite family with plenty of horses and a couple of Boston Terriers. Ben, Sofi, and Matty explored the workshop while Miguel and LaVerne, the shop owner, traded woodworking tips. The shop was filled with beautiful, handcrafted baskets, cutting boards, and puzzles. It was a wonderful learning experience for all.

Night 3 - **Iowa**: This is when I started learning the art of picking and choosing campsites. Night 3 was a beautiful lake in Iowa. It was first come first served, but arriving late, left only a few sites to choose from. It was a beautiful campground, a bit removed from the highway, with full amenities. However, between setting up before nightfall, getting the children fed, and breaking down early the next morning, there was little time to relax and enjoy it. Lesson #1 learned. When picking a nice campsite, arrive with enough time to enjoy it. Lesson #2 quickly followed. Never try to park a 32' motorhome while hungry and cranky.

Night 4 - **Nebraska**: Not to relive the previous night, we picked a location in Nebraska we could arrive at with plenty of daylight to enjoy it. I chose a spot on a lake with full hookups that had a great website and lots of amenities. Lesson #3. Don't trust campground marketing. Always read reviews. This was practically a dust bowl with a disgusting "lake", biting flies, and plenty of highway noise in the background. The bright side? After 4 days of camping, our kids were now dirty enough, that they fit right in.



Night 5 & 6 - **Colorado**: Finally, Colorado! We were looking forward to this stop. We planned it in advance, spent 2 nights and had a blast. The site was right on the Colorado river. It could not have been nicer. Miguel and I spent our wedding anniversary white water rafting with the kids, playing in the river, and ending with a BBQ and a campfire. Another successful stop! Phew!







Night 7 & 8 - **Utah**: Another location we were anticipating—two nights in Moab. Arches National Park was breathtaking. Everyone enjoyed hiking and the kids became junior rangers.

Moab is also home to the only dinosaur museum in the world dedicated to dino tracks. It's as underwhelming as it sounds.



Night 9 - **Utah:** We enjoyed Arches so much that we decided to take a quick trip to Zion before continuing to our final CA destination.

We were fortunate! It was the first day the public shuttle was operating since the Covid-19 shut down. Miguel and Ben braved the cold water and hiked a mile into the Narrows



Night 10 - **California**: After Zion, we decided to drive the rest way to California without stopping. We arrived in San Diego on July 1st. What a crazy - awesome adventure that won't soon be forgotten. Miguel and I are incredibly grateful to be able to travel this way. During these crazy times of turmoil and uncertainty, it's been especially great for the kids as well, to experience the beautiful lands and people our country has to offer.



## David and Bethany Buy Their FIRST home!

By Listy Gillingham

As most of you know, the last Saturday in June was meant to be a special day for David and Bethany as they were going to be married at Mission Trails Nature Center with over 300 of their closest friends and family. Instead of it being a sad or sappy weekend, it was filled with frenzy and hope for the future as they signed their lives away with a house mortgage and the start of their new lives together in a different way.

Weddings are great occasions, but there is nothing like landing your first home too. The description from the realtor's ad read, "Bay Ho Home Run! Freshly enhanced with an ideal floor plan. All ready for you to relax in style in your oversized yard perfect for entertaining, bring your imagination for barbecues, playground, spa, pool-you name it. Large covered patio offers an abundance of shade. Two separate grassy areas. Quiet neighborhood- Extra deep garage allows for plenty of storage. Super close to Clairemont Town Square, shops, dining, movies and freeways. This is a true gem."





A true gem it will become with David's handiness and Bethany's style. Special thanks to family members who came together with furniture donations. Carol and Jeff gave them a desk and hall tree; Birdy and Lyle had a fancy couch, coffee table, baskets, and frames; Bruce and Sara Tipton had much-needed dining room table and outdoor furniture, and Bob and Listy also added to the pot of stuff.



It is so fun to see your kids take hold of projects and make their houses a home with everything they add to it as they move in. Their new address is 4279 Gila Ave. in Clairemont (not Kevin's and Nicole's Clairemont) but right in San Diego. This new address happens to be near both High Tech schools so their commutes will be easy and it's in north Clairemont which is where they had hoped to land. And, Bethany will tell you, if you stand on the roof you can see the ocean! This knowledge lends itself to new dreams of adding on one day, which is just the beginning of the land of projects for everyone to enjoy in the future.



# Golfing Sisters

By Listy Gillingham



A family tradition lives on as mom and dad stood in a socially distant spot (heaven) watching Their 4 daughters (though we could feel Francie watching and mostly laughing at us) play their first round of golf at Mission Trails Golf Course, on Monday, July 6th.

After paying to be part of the Player's Club, this new fore-some set out to play their first outing of golf together. The round was filled with many triple-plus bogies, no birdies, several missed putts, and dropped balls wherever we preferred to play our balls. We all had at least one successful shot that carried us through the day. There were a few moments, where we relied on an expert opinion (thank you David for taking a call) on starter rules.

Even though we meant to play 9 holes, we only got credit for 8.5 because we accidentally drove pass the fairway of the second hole and decided to just chip-in to make up for it. We also got scolded on the 7th hole by an unsuspecting foursome who wanted to know why we didn't yell "fore!" when the ball hopped by them. The truth of the matter was we didn't actually see that the ball was flying wayward until it bounced on the cart path and took an unexpected hop "dog-legged" right. I did hear in the distance a "fore" from our team, but it wasn't done to quite the level of warning that the foursome expected, and they yelled it out for us later so we would know better next time.

We all agreed that the day went well and that the spirit of mom was in the air. You could almost hear a "Zut Alore!" yelled in the background when a shot was missed, but you could also feel a sigh of satisfaction too when a shot soared up in the air as if to say "just like I taught you!" With the first round played, and everyone coming out of it in good spirits, we all signed up for another Monday game. I'm not sure Mission Trails is ready for us, but "the sister" act will be returning to take advantage of our memberships to the fullest extent.





## Adapting to Covid 19

By Birdy Hartman

Ugh! What can I say about this experience? We are all suffering through the shelter-in-place pandemonium as best we can. Already we have had six family members that I know of (Brett, Carinda, Chris, Frank, Sam and Katy) catch this nasty germ and we've lost a dear parent to this devil of a disease (Ana's beloved dad, Ben Arboleta). So, my question to each of you is, how are you surviving this time in your life?

Are you taking up video crafting as our own Krissy Hartman (She and Zeke are the stars of some amazing YouTube videos which are definitely worth watching). Are you learning how to paint? I know that Megan Riel is currently teaching her boyfriend Allen, all the skills that her years of art teachers have taught her. Are you thriving on the fact that you are out of work and getting to bake/cook every single day for your lovely wife and baby (Check out the food photos that come through Bryce Sorem's Instagram page and I guarantee that your mouth will soon be watering).



Maybe you have decided to be a little freer with your actions and have hit some waves surfing the San Diego coastline. Unfortunately, there also happens to be an invasion of stingrays waiting to sting an unprotected ankle (as Nathan Riel can attest on a recent surfing trip).

Perhaps you are like the Rio's Family and decided to run away from the virus by buying a giant motorhome to drive across the US to come to the safe and newly remodeled home of Jeff and Carol Benesch. Or, maybe a motorhome is NOT big enough for YOU? Maybe you are more like Brett, Carinda, David and Bethany and you used your Covid time to go house hunting! Yes, we have two new homeowners' folks! And if Covid didn't prevent it, I am sure we would be having some epic housewarming parties! Rats again!

Speaking of parties, we also have had two Covid marriages this year. Scott, Krissy, David and Bethany all walked their own way down matrimony lane without all the fuss and fun of our usual party time celebrations. Dang that Covid! But don't you worry...the marriages may have happened without us, but the parties are promised for a safer time zone. I also can't forget those new family units that are hunkering down as the pandemic hovers out there to protect their newest family members (Annie, Kevin, Nicole, Kevin, Bryce, Bridget, Lyle Allen and Cindy. Thanks for doing an awesome job keeping our grandkids safe). And some of us have decided to start some new hobbies. The Hartmans are killing it on the Peloton bikes! Michelle, Curtis, Lauren and I are trying to outrun the Covid virus by biking our butts off.

So that is what I know about the family. I challenge you ALL to give a Covid update report. Maybe Bryce will share his favorite Covid recipe and Allen will share a drawing that Megan has guided him through. Or maybe Curtis will tell you about Zwift (a new biking game where you compete against other bikers on different races). My fingers are crossed that this Covid column will grow until the disease dies out. Until then, I have a bike just waiting for me to sweat upon. Whatever your Covid hobby has become, I hope it keeps you all safe and happy. Love Aunt Birdy

# May 2nd, 2020. Start of the Benesch, Covid Kitchen



Professional home wrecker Listy



Bob spending first of 3 weekends!



New walls in place!



Ceiling exposed and wall opening enlarged per Ed Riel instructions!



New ceiling and walls all dry walled.



New ceiling and walls Painted.



New island and cabinets installed.



Counters and cooktop added!

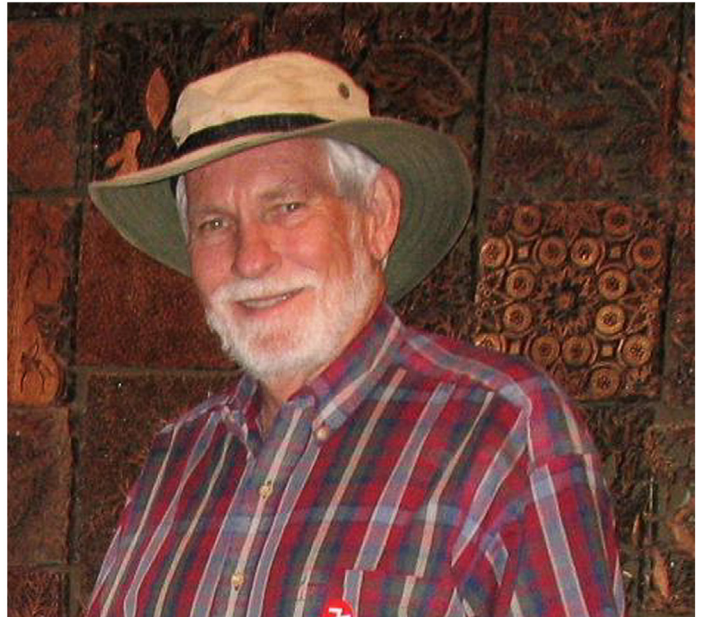


Fajitas are the first test for Chef Jeff

July 2nd, 2020 Kitchen is finished!!

# ***Bud did NOT have a Heart Attack, Read all about it!***

By Margaret Riel



This past month has been a scary one for Bud and me, but mostly for what didn't happen than what did. Bud was having minor issues with what felt like breathing. He feared the corona-virus. When he shared his set of symptoms with his doctor, the doctor suggested that they start by eliminating the really serious issues-- serious, he said, were things that could kill you. So, he sent him to a cardiac specialist to examine his heart. After some testing and a blood test, they skipped the stress test as they were increasingly worried about his heart.

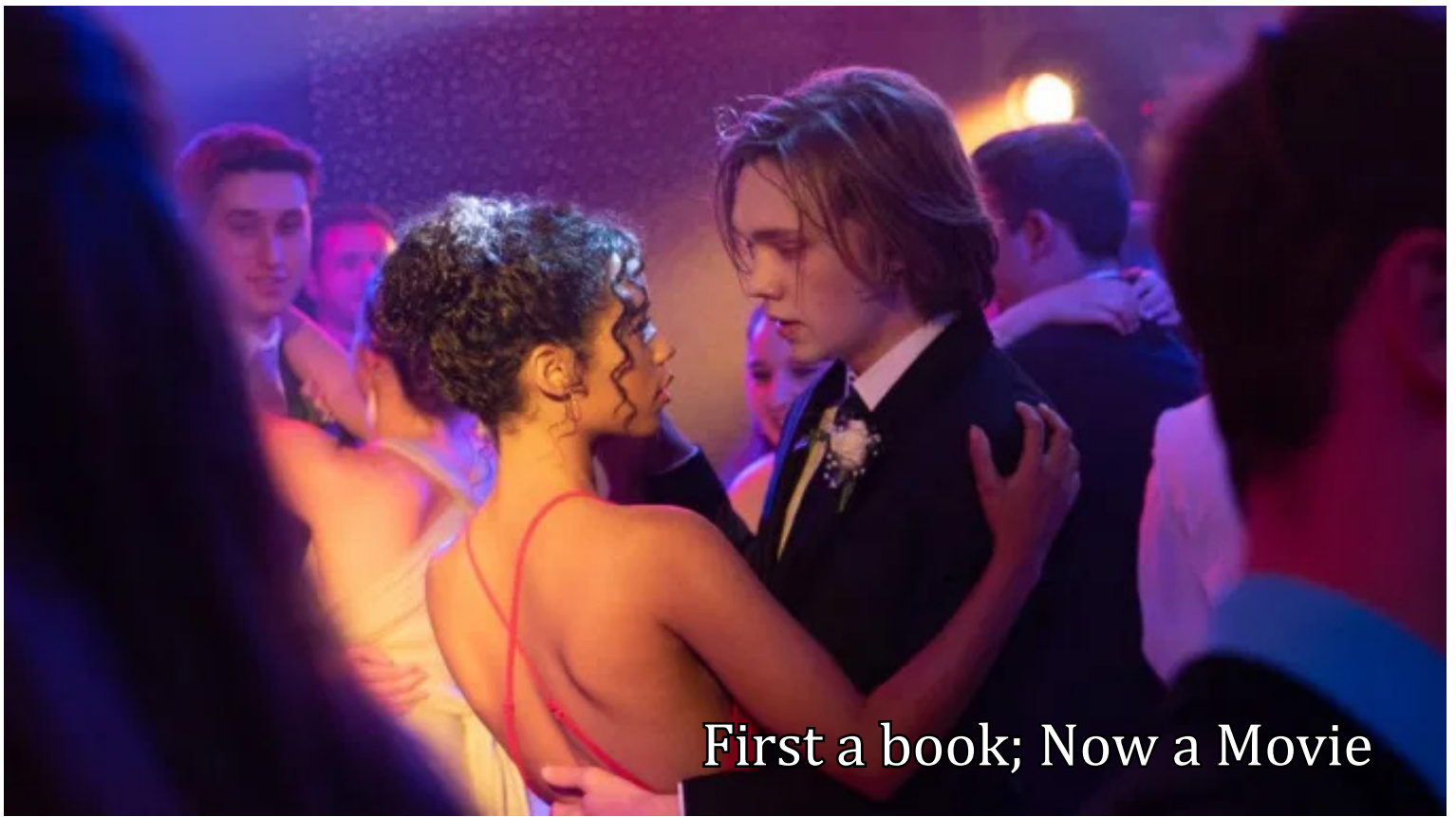
Within a few days, he was scheduled for angioplasty with the hope that it would eliminate the concerns and maybe clean up a little plaque that might have built up over the well, many, years. Since no one is allowed to wait at the hospital I was stuck at home to wait for news on the procedure. While waiting, I worked out that his Dad died of a heart attack at Bud's current age which did not give me much comfort. Then, when I didn't hear anything for over 5 hours, I knew this was not a routine checkup.

When the doctor sent the scope in, he was a bit concerned, (an understatement). The major front and side arteries were 95-98% blocked and Bud was only a bit of plaque away from a major heart attack. The doctor went to work on the major artery. He cleaned the plaque and put in three stents to hold open the arteries.

A stent is a very, very, small wire mesh tube that is pushed through an opening of the artery on the arm and then by using air to guide and stretch the artery moved to the right place. Once in place, they use air to open the metal mesh tube which then locks open and then becomes a reinforcement of the artery. It is amazing what they can do without cutting open the body. However, it also means more metal for the airport detectors if we ever get back to flying.

Once he finished cleaning out this critical artery, basically saving his life, the doctor decided he had done enough good for one day. (Really, he was not sure how much more Bud's body could handle.) Bud is doing fine although he had been told no exertion what-so-ever. This next visit to the doctor he is going to get numbers, how high can his heart rate increase, and for how long, before they call it exertion. Other things he can't do is drink alcohol for as long as he is taking one of the drugs. You can bet that Bud will be questioning the doctor on how long he will need to take it.

The repair of the second artery took place a few days ago. They added another stent, so he is now good to go. The doctor left me a message to say that he was really proud of the repair and is pretty sure Bud will not need to see him again. That was reassuring. The first time, I was home alone and worried all day and night. This time I was with my Sister's enjoying a Golf Day and except for wearing a mask, it felt great to be with them. It really helped in taking my mind off of worrying about Bud. It worked because I must have been concentrating on my shot and did not hear the phone ring. Bud was home, (he did not have to stay overnight this time) and in 24 hours (if he manages not to bleed out) he will be more or less back to normal. That new was better than hitting a hole-in-one!



## First a book; Now a Movie

LD Entertainment and Roadside Attractions have reteamed to release the feature adaptation of Julia Walton's (Michael Merica's Daughter) YA (young Adult) novel, *Words on Bathroom Walls*. The teen drama is set to debut nationwide August 7 and marks the first theatrical release for both companies since the coronavirus pandemic.

Directed by Thor Freudenthal and adapted by Nick Naveda, *Words on Bathroom Walls* follows Adam (Charlie Plummer), a young adult with raging hormones that has dreams of becoming a chef. Expelled halfway through his senior year, Adam is diagnosed with mental illness that he keeps secret at his new school. Living in constant fear of being exposed, Adam finds a connection with Maya (Taylor Russell), an outspoken and fiercely intelligent girl who inspires him to open his heart and not be defined by his condition. With the love and support of his newfound romance and family, Adam is hopeful for the very first time that he can see the light and triumph over the challenges that lie ahead.

Roadside Attractions' Howard Cohen and Eric d'Arbeloff added, "It's an emotional film that appeals to the YA audience. And that audience is the demo that will return first to theatres. So, when LD Entertainment came to us to discuss releasing the film theatrically in less than two months' time, we were up for the challenge. Under the right conditions, moviegoers have indicated their desire to return to the theatres in July. Exhibition has listened and committed the resources to ensure a safe experience. At this specific point in time, we have hit the Trifecta — a great film, a great partnership and great industry indicators. No one can predict the future, but we are all-in to make it a success in this current environment."

# FAMILY SHORTS



Happy Anniversary  
Margaret and Bud

4 candles 4 flames and 44 years of marriage. They celebrated with a romantic candlelit dinner in their backyard. It's a good life, but we all look forward to the time when these life markers can be family parties again!



Bryce has a new soccer fan to enjoy the games with.

Even though Kieran is just over 3 months old we're sure he will be running circles around dad in soccer soon.



The Rios family isn't the only ones on the road RVing. Karla and I are in Yellowstone for the next week then on to Glacier National Park and then the Redwoods. The picture to the side is our home for the next week. We will be back in August and that's when this issue of the RFNL will be available on Riel.org. But for now, I am publishing the newsletter from Yellowstone, hope you all enjoy!

Also, a special thanks to Listy for all the help with getting me articles this month. I am so happy that we have so many retirees in the family because they all now have the time to write an article each month!!!