

FAMILY DISTANT LEARNING

COVID Education

By Listy Gillingham

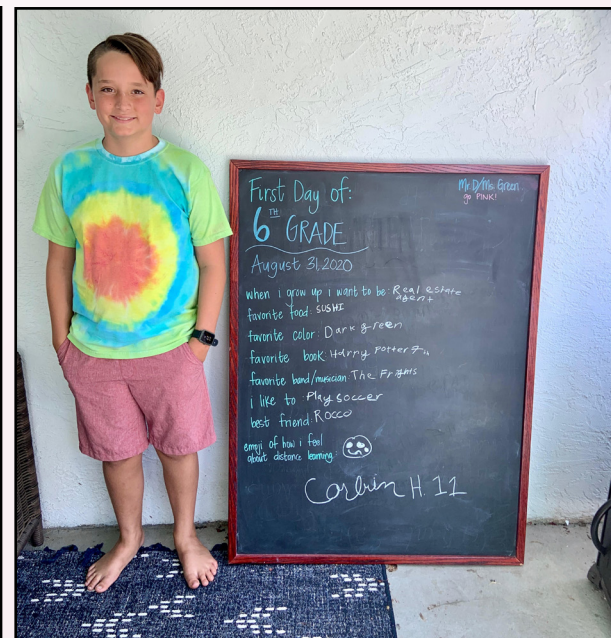
Everyone knows COVID disrupted learning last year in a big way by sending all kids home to learn using their computers or iPads in a “distance learning” program provided by all schools. As September rolls around, COVID seems to still be offering challenges. Some schools are opening in person, while others are sticking with an on-line program for all students. Here is a break down for the Grand kids created by me with limited reports from others (meaning if I made a mistake, it was because no one responded to my email request for help).

The Hartman Household:

Matthew is at SDSU and they are on-line for the first semester thanks to the many students who reported back and held parties everywhere to help spread the pandemic. Though they opened with in person classes, within a week they were forced to go back online due to a community spread that is growing by leaps and bounds as we approached the Labor Day Weekend.



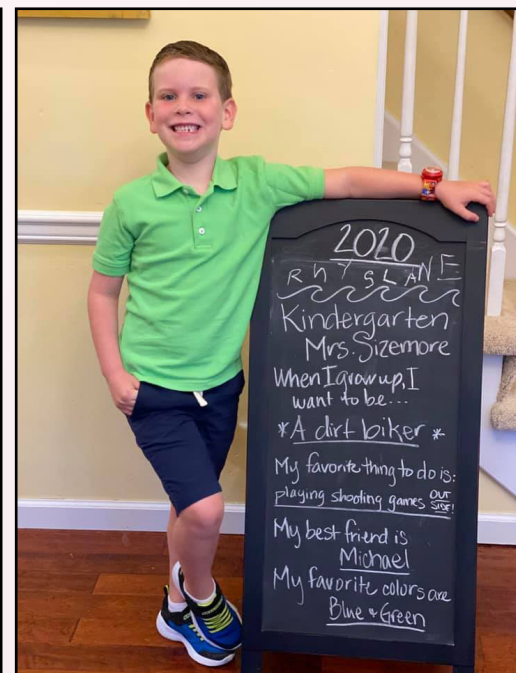
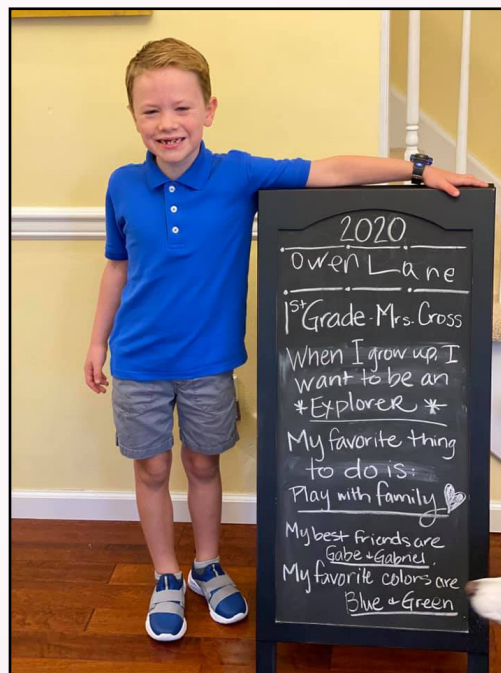
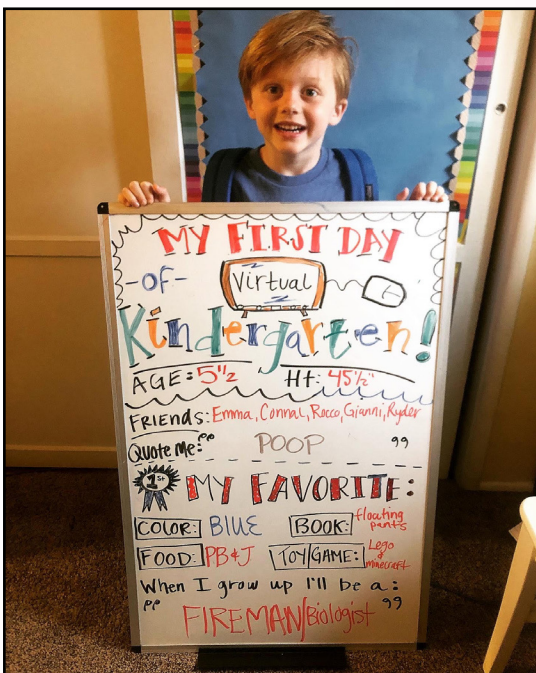
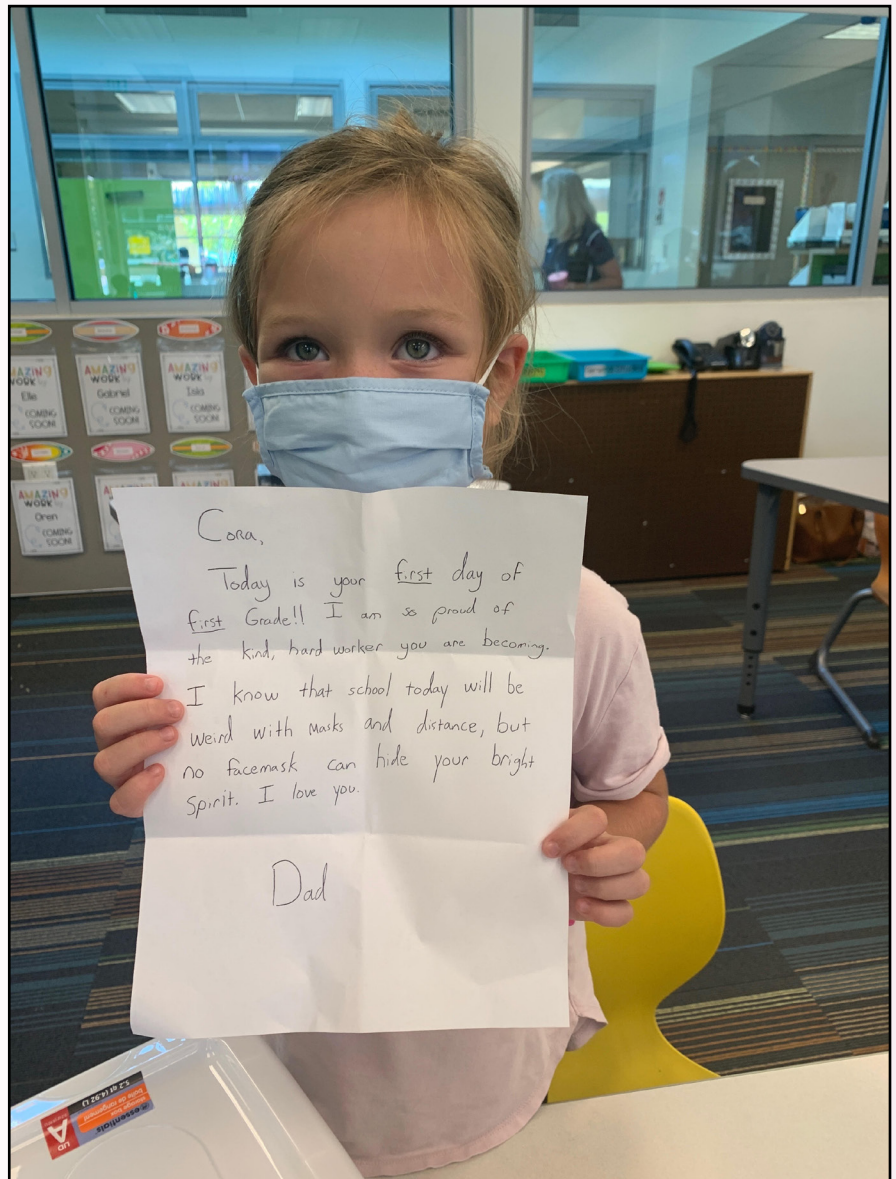
Corbin and Josie are both at High Tech. Corbin is going into 6th grade (middle school) and Josie is going into 1st grade. High Tech is all on-line which relieves Ana as she doesn't have to make a tough decision as to whether or not she's comfortable with them going back. They have classes Monday-Thursday and get Fridays off to work on projects or spend time with their Grammy!



In Long Beach, Curtis and Lauren are sending Cora to 1st grade at the private school where Curtis works (Tarbut V' Torah). They have applied for a waiver and plan to offer classes in small settings to their students. Curtis teaches in the high school (at the same school) and will be doing online classes with his students.

Scott and Krissy have found a tutor and signed up Zeke for online school with Doyle in UC (a SDUSD school). Zeke is starting kindergarten.

Michelle and David Lane are stationed in Florida and send their kids to a private school. Owen is going to 1st grade and Rhys is in kindergarten at Atlantic Shores Christian School. They will be in person and are excited to be back with friends.

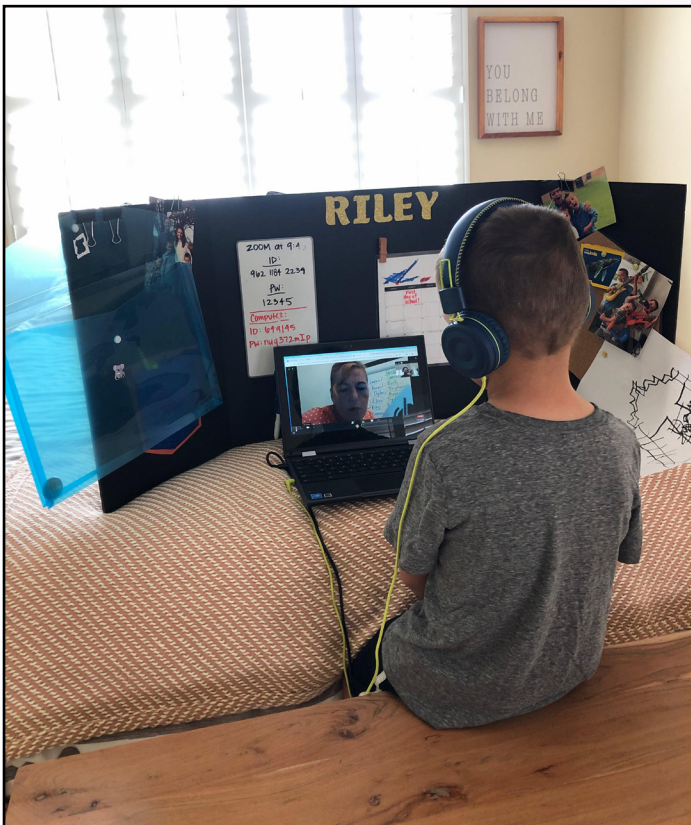
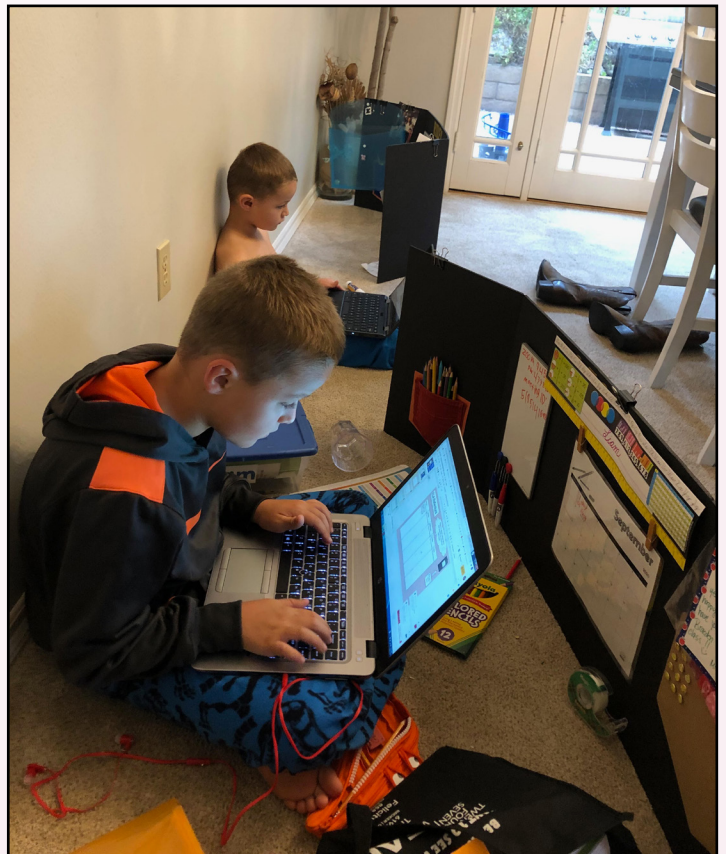
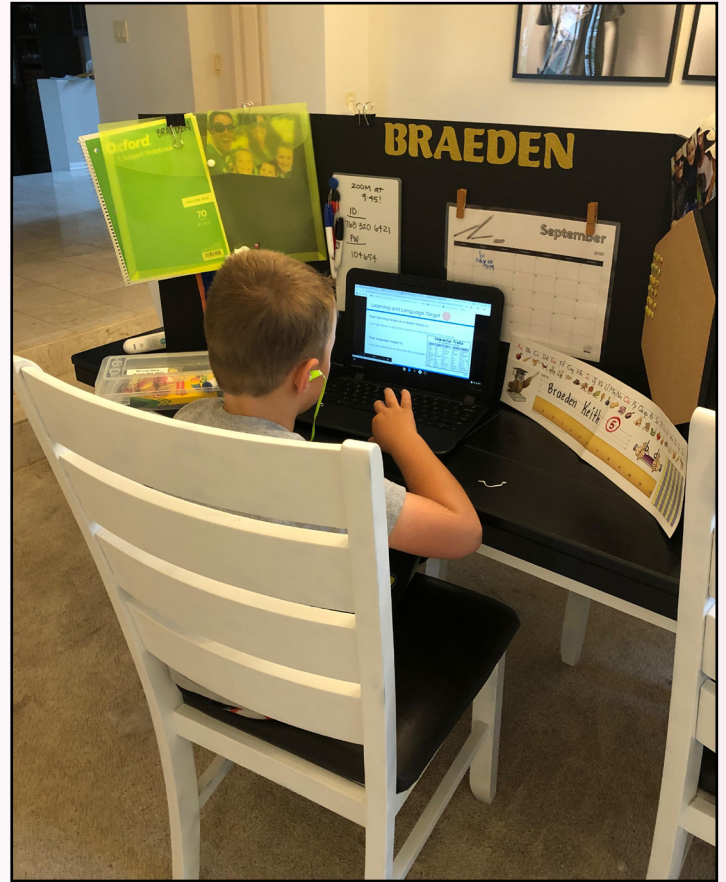


The Gillingham Household

Kristy and Seamus Keith have their kids signed up for Jerabek which is offering an online school program that was quite rigorous last year and will likely keep them occupied. Kristy teaches at Parker that got a waiver and is offering classes at the middle school in person three days a week. To manage Liam (3rd), Braeden (2nd) and Riley (kindergarten), Parker has offered to hire a teacher to help the students with their online lessons while their teachers are teaching at Parker. This will support Kristy and Seamus as working from home is a challenge with three boys also at home.

Annie and Kevin have Evie in childcare as Evie is a tiny human so far. Annie will be teaching in Lake-side a Spanish Immersion program completely on-line. She switched to 3rd grade (from 1st) which will hopefully make her work easier with older kids who might be able to navigate the curriculum.

David and Bethany don't have grands, but are both returning to High Tech, so their schools are completely online (just for the record).



The Benesch Household

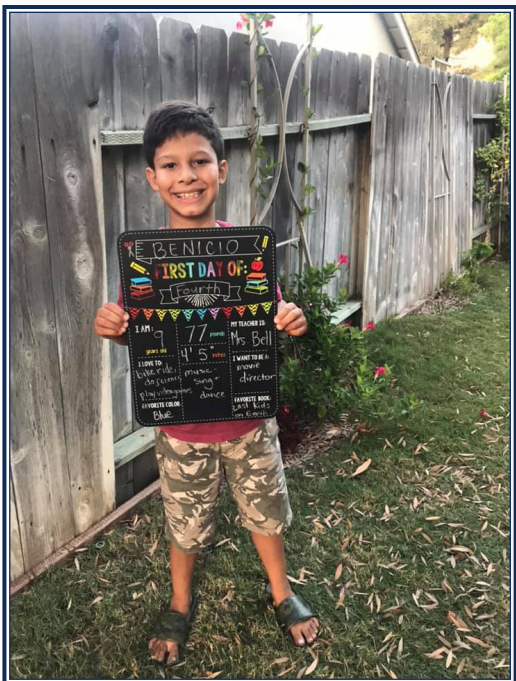
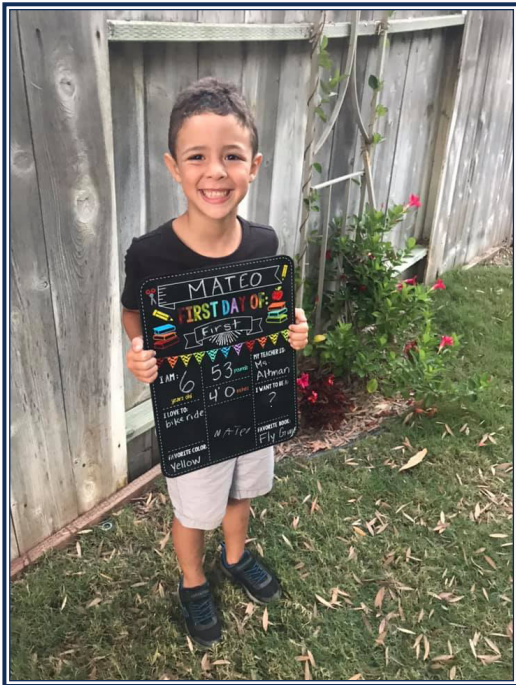
Jason and Chavva are also in the mix as their district is offering online education. Noah, 6, started first grade this year at Hillcreek Elementary. He uses an iPad and gets about an hour of face to face zoom and then assignments on Seesaw. Madeline, 4, will start preschool at Hillcreek, hopefully in January.

New Jersey school district announced that they would do distance learning until October 16 at which time they will make a decision

whether to continue at home or open up the schools again. Due

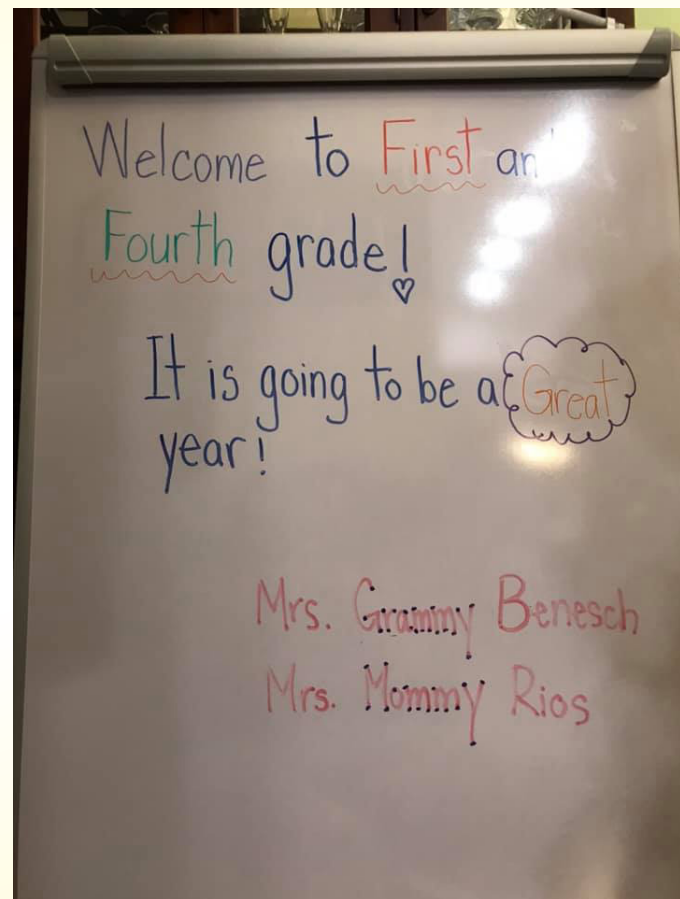
to their long-hour jobs, helping Ben and the twins with their at-home learning can be challenging so they decided to stay in San Diego where there is more help available. Ben, 9 started 4th-grade using google classroom and Matty, and Sofie, 6 started 1st-grade using Zoom and Seesaw. The challenge is school starts at 9 in New Jersey, which means they all have to be up and ready to go by 6 am!! That has been hard after spending all Summer staying up late and sleeping in, but they are all adjusting. Their teachers start at 6 am and then teaches live for 4

straight hours (way too long to sit in front of a computer, in my opinion). The good news is, they are finished by 10 am. Later in the month, they will have small groups in the afternoon. Carol and Jeff are supporting their learning by Letting them live with them for the next few months while Jessica and Miguel are flying back and forth to NJ to continue their jobs.





The New Zealand Prime Minister has done a great job of controlling the COVID spread. They are no longer quarantined so schools are back in session. Lauren and Dustin are part of a Home School program. Holden is 9 and is in year 4 which is 3rd grade, although he is doing 4th-grade work. Grayson 5, is in Year 1, which is kindergarten but doing 1st-grade work. They are in term 3 out of 4 of NZ school year. Their school year ends close to their summer which is mid-December.



The Sorem Household

Bridget and Bryce also have a little one who isn't quite old enough to go to school but with Bryce at home will surely be schooled on the best of everything a less than one year old can handle. Bridget will be at home with online learning in New York.

Lyle and Cindy also have a new baby at home and so far, Cindy is on board to manage Emery until she returns to work.



The Riel/Mehan Household

Ashley and Michael have two girls who will also be attending schools informally during the Pandemic. Emily is going into 1st grade and will be going to a house/pod with a friend of Ashley's who is a kindergarten teacher. They have hired an intern that will assist with the small group of kids as they navigate through the online lessons provided by their school. Addy will be going to a day care as she is not school aged yet.

The Riel Household

Kevin and Nicole are in the midst of a huge change as they are moving in with Jan and Ed, and sharing the raising of their three little ones. Blake is signed up for OB Elementary and will be in 1st grade. He will be online to start and Jan and Nicole will be helping him navigate his education at home.





Sometimes, Texting is NOT Okay!

Those of you that know me have probably heard me say from time to time, “there are certain things that a text message is not an appropriate means of communication. For example, Mother’s Day wishes from her kids (she held you in her body for 9 months, pick up the dang phone for crying out loud!) Or, to deliver bad news such as someone has died or has been in an accident. I could go on, but you get the point.

So, imagine my unease when I received the following text from Karla:

“I’m at urgent care. Don’t freak out but I am nauseous and I’m having pain all the way through my chest...”

Ok, so forget the fact that I rarely check my texts during work hours (even though this time I looked at it within about 20 minutes) but as I read the text, I started off into immediate panic mode... “nauseous and I’m having pain”... Oh God is it Covid??? ... “I’m having pain all the way through my chest” ... God no, it’s worse, a heart attack! Then I read on “I think it may be gallstones or my gallbladder. I don’t think it’s my heart. I’ll let you know.” Oh, good! She’ll let me know if she is having a heart attack!

No. NO. NO. This is not a textable moment! Keep in mind that I didn’t see her text right away, so she had time to send the next text as well. “The doctor is going to check for cardiac enzyme, if the test is negative, he will let me drive myself to Sharp Memorial. But he is sending me there no mater what. So, I’ll be in your neck of the woods in a while” ... Oh great! Why not just have the ambulance drop by my office for a quick visit on your way in...

As it turned out I was able to reach Karla by phone after I recovered from reading the above texts. She sounded fine and I told her I was on my way to the urgent care office. Unfortunately, she explained because of Covid I would not be allowed in to see her. So, I waited in the car for

word on her tests. The doctor still was not convinced that she wasn't having a heart attack because her enzyme levels came back as "high normal." Just what in the heck is "High Normal?" Regardless, the doctor wanted Karla to take an ambulance ride to the hospital just to be safe.

Karla on the other hand, who is probably a better diagnostician than the doctor when it comes to her own body, insisted that it was just gall stones and since I was right outside, she could get to the hospital faster rather than waiting for an ambulance. After what seemed like hours, the Doctor finally agreed to let Karla go with me.

Some might ask why not just go to Grossmont hospital since it is right there in the same complex? The problem is that Grossmont is the only hospital serving the entire east county and as such is always packed. Emergency room wait times are commonly in the 4 – 6 hour range. On the other hand, Sharp Memorial is surrounded by 3 other major hospitals and most times you can get in with under an hour wait.

So off we go, with Karla in a lot of pain but normal blood pressure and a normal heart rate. Still I'm not exactly driving slow either. We both knew that I would not be able to go into the hospital with her and most likely not be allowed to visit either. So, we made sure she had her phone and iPad along with chargers so we could still communicate.

Driving up to the emergency room was a little strange. They had a nurse outside directing traffic and checking people in. Since Karla had already been pre-screened for Covid they took her right in and told me I could go now... Thank you! I can go now! And no, you can't go in nor will you be allowed to visit! Don't get me wrong the nurse was very sympathetic and nice but these are the times we live in now. So off I drive not knowing exactly what was wrong with her. By now it's 4:30 in the afternoon and I figure I should get a call by the time I get home.

Wrong! I get home and try to call Karla, but it goes direct to voicemail like the phone has been shut off. 5:30 goes by and still no word, 6:30 and still no communication and by 7:00 I am getting really worried. I decide to call the emergency room to see if I can get an update. I finally get through to someone who asks me a couple of security questions to make sure I am really who I say I am. Then after passing all of her tests she tells me that Karla is getting a Cat Scan and won't be back for a while. I ask if there is any word on what was wrong and she tells me "I can't tell you because she need permission from Karla before she can discuss her condition!" Call me silly but don't you think they would have asked her that when I dropped her off? I mean it's not like they were supper busy, in fact, we were about the only ones there.

I somewhat protested and the nurse was nice enough to tell me that it most likely was a gallbladder issue, but they weren't sure yet. She said she would get permission from Karla and also show her how to make her phone work with their Wi-Fi so she could call me. Later, Karla sent me a text telling me she had gall stones but was feeling better. Another text!!! I called her right away asking her why she didn't call. She said, "since there was no cell phone coverage in the ER she just used the next best thing." Let me digress for a moment, Karla is what some people might call "technically challenged" so it was no surprise when she asked, "how are you calling me when I couldn't call you?" Technically, I was facetimeing her, but I let that slide. I

explained the wonders of internet calling and then got down to business. “Tell the nurse it’s OK to talk with me about your condition!” She did and then updated me on what had gone on so far.

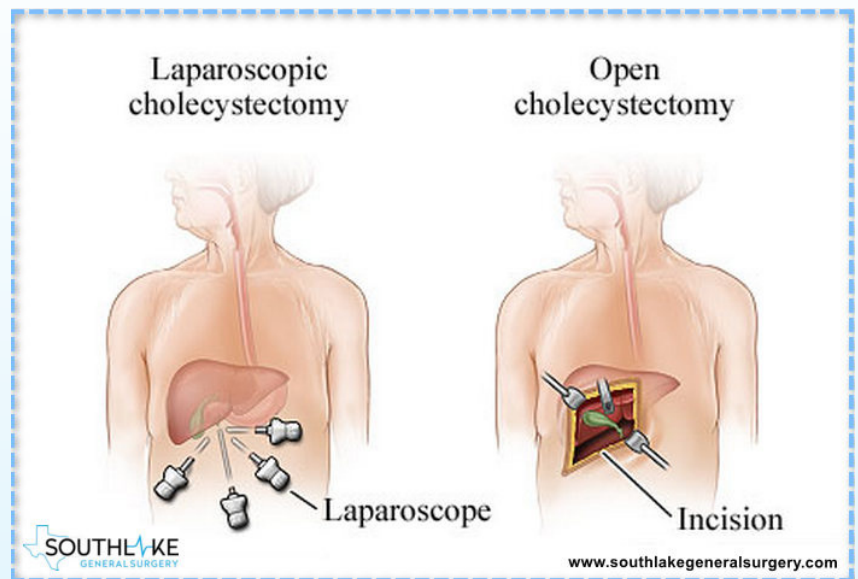
First off, they gave her good drugs, so the pain was gone, and she felt much better. Finally! Good news! After a full rundown on what they thought it might be she had to go because she had been admitted to the hospital, and it was time to go to her room. Then after she got settled in (meaning more good drugs) it would be off to LaLa land for the night.

The next day was spent getting lots of tests and finally they determined that she has 2 stones lodged in the bile duct and that her gallbladder which normally is the size of a 50-cent piece now was bigger than a tennis ball. In a nut shell, she needed 2 operations one to remove the stones and a second to remove the gall bladder. However, with her heart condition they wanted to run more tests to make sure her heart could take the stress of surgery. The first operation was to remove the stones but couldn’t take place until after her Covid test came back negative. Also, since it was not an invasive procedure (just a couple of instruments down the throat) they decided to do it first, and then, assuming all went well, they would remove her Gallbladder the next day. The first surgery went fine and once again Karla went to LALA Land.

Sunday rolls around and her surgery keeps getting pushed back due to her heart doctor running more tests. Meanwhile Karla is a facetime guru now and we have solved the communications gap! Finally, they operate around 5:30 pm. The doctor was hoping to go in laparoscopically but after trying for a bit determined that he would just have to cut her open. So after about a two-hour surgery the doctor called me to say everything went fine and that Karla was going to sleep well that night.

Karla was discharged from the hospital on Tuesday, so I picked her up around 11:00 am and took her home. Unfortunately, there was a mix-up on the pain medication prescription because when I went to pick it up, they had high blood pressure medicine instead! We didn’t get her pain medication until 5:30 that night and as you might imagine she was in a lot of pain.

However, since then, things have been going well. She now has two new scars to add to her other ones and is healing up nicely. Hopefully, she can go back to work by the end of the month. But for now, just a lot of rest and recuperation is in order. I am really glad she is back home and thankful that it was something that could be handled relatively fast (also that it didn’t happen a few weeks earlier when we were out of town on vacation). As the saying goes and especially in these times “it could have been a lot worse!”



A Lot Can Happen in 20 years!... Remember when...



School news 2000-2001 term

Each September we publish the status of all the kids in the education process, and here it is for this year.

Kevin Riel	Senior	SDSU
Michael Riel	Sophomore	UCLA
Jason Benesch	Sophomore	Grossmont JC
Chris Riel	Freshman	Mesa JC
Nathan Riel	Freshman	Mesa JC
Michelle Hartman	Freshman	Monte Vista HS
Tim Riel	Freshman	Mesa JC
Brett Sorem	Senior	Scripps Ranch HS
Jessica Benesch	Senior	Patrick Henry HS
Craig Hartman	Senior	Monte Vista HS
Kristy Gillingham	Junior	Francis Parker HS
Megan Mehan	Junior	La Costa Canyon
Curtis Hartman	Junior	Francis Parker HS
Dustin Benesch	Sophomore	Patrick Henry HS
David Gillingham	Freshman	Francis Parker HS
Scott Hartman	Freshman	Francis Parker HS
Bryce Sorem	Freshman	Scripps Ranch HS
Katy Riel	Freshman	Steel Canyon HS
Annie Gillingham	8 th	Francis Parker MS
Brian Riel	6 th	Joan McQueen ES
Frank JJ Riel	5 th	St Columba ES

We hope all of the above is correct, but if there are any errors we hope to be notified, so we can make corrections.

We understand that Katy will be participating in a new program where each student will be issued a lap top computer and a carrying case. All course work will be done by computer, and books will not be used at all. (Note - My grammar check suggested that the above phrase "All course work will be done by computer" be replaced by "The computer will do all course work." Maybe that is a prediction of the next step in education - Margaret, please note!)

Travel news

Francie, Lyle, Brett and Bryce returned recently from a vacation in the Caribbean, and we have the following report provided by Francie

I just can't believe that school will be starting up again in a couple of days. It sees like just yesterday we were all at Turks



and Caicos soaking up the sun and enjoying the ease of summer vacation. The weather was great, the water was beautiful, the kids had their own area to hang in, what could be better. We spent 9 days snorkeling, eating, swimming, eating, shooting pool, eating; well, you get the picture. It was an all-inclusive resort so the kids did not need to depend on us for food and beverages; everything was free to them. And since they didn't need transpiration, we were pretty much disposable. We did have a couple of dinners together, but they made a lot of new friends all over the states that they are still communicating with over the Internet.

But all things must end and here we are back in beautiful San Diego, a vacation spot like no other. Many thanks go out to Kevin and his sweet girlfriend Amy for keeping an eye on our house while we were gone. The neighbors reported no huge parties or kegs of beer coming and going so all is safe on the home front.



Francie



We thank Francie for this report plus the loan of her 6 photo albums. We have room for only a few shots, but I am sure that she will be happy to show anyone the complete collection, any time you can get together with her.

The Riel Family Newsletter

Catch the News

September, 2000

More travel news

Another vacationing family was the Hartmans, who spent a pleasant week enjoying the wonders of Kings Canyon



National Park. As you can see from the above post card, they had a great time.

Grandpa and Grandma also hit the vacation trail, for a week at Indian Wells. We had postponed our usual June date because of Grandpa's sore neck problem. The shift to the August date was OK, but the weather in the desert was even hotter than we had experienced in June. Not only was the air temperature in the 105-110 range, but due to thunderstorms in the mountains it was also humid, just like in Indiana. We tried one walking round of golf, but had to quit. We gave in to electric carts for three additional rounds, which were enjoyable in spite of the heat. We had dinner with our old friends from Purdue days, Ruth and Lloyd Money. Our other Purdue friends, Jack and Marge Dulin were out of town, so we missed them. We also got in some time at the Indian Casino, but did not have much luck. It was a nice vacation, however, and was a good tune up for our next jaunt, the annual fall Las Vegas visit.

Birthday calendar for September

JJ Riel	September 1	10
Karla Riel	September 20	40
Richard Riel	September 29	53

Birthday celebrations

There was one birthday kid in August. David Gillingham Celebrated his 15th birthday with lunch at Black Angus on Friars Road, followed by a round of golf at Admiral Baker. We also invited dad Bob to join us, and we had a great

time, even if some of the scores were not too good. As you can plainly see in the following photos, Bob, David and Grandma all know how to start out a shot, but we did not get any pictures of how the shots turned out. However, we have one shot showing Grandma blasting out another big drive. It was another fun day, and we wish David a great



big HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!

Sick call

Recently Michael Mehan underwent extraction of his wisdom teeth. He reports that it was not a pleasant experience, and for a few days afterwards he had to be careful not to exercise or lower his head, which increases blood flow and pressure in the area, thus, much pain. He reports that it is better, now, and soon forgotten.

Robert Riel has been slowed down for the past few weeks with a sprained ankle. It seems that he and Listy were running down Cowles Mountain (again) and he slipped and fell. He claims that Listy pushed him, but we suspect that she would deny any such activity. In any case he is making a good recovery, and will be running again in the near future.