

# R F N I



Novemebr - 2023

Issue No: 394

Happy  
Halloween







# David and Bethany Announce a New Arrival!

By Listy Gillingham



The Gillingham family is super proud to announce that David and Bethany Gillingham will be having their first baby in May! They surprised Bob and Listy with a wine bottle labeled with a tag that read, "Pairs well with becoming grandparents, sweet baby arriving soon!" And a beer bottle with a label that said, "The best parents are promoted to Grandparents, we're having a baby!"





We were instantly delighted with the news and Listy went into her office to retrieve a special gift for the new baby. Francie gave us a mini-Padres jacket that all three of our kids proudly wore for the baseball season. Listy saved it for David as he is our biggest Padre fan (note he even wore a Padre shirt for our dinner). It was noted to be the baby's first gift and seemed so fitting for the special occasion.

A family Halloween dinner was already planned for Halloween, so everyone decided that the Keiths and Mulholland's would be surprised then. David and Bethany prepared more wine and beer bottle labels, but Listy decided she would have Halloween gifts for the grandkids. As soon as David and Bethany arrived, Listy announced they could open their gifts, pulling out presents for Liam, Braeden, Riley, Evie, and Kenzie. After a slight pause, Listy announced there was one more gift in the bag and pulled out one labeled for "Baby G!" It took a few seconds for it to register, but then everyone cheered, and hugs were given to all! It was an exciting night, and we had our traditional sonogram picture of Grandbaby 6, ETA May ready to display our newest baby!

The following week we got the news from David and Bethany that they will be welcoming a baby girl and the name will be Avery Bruce Gillingham (Bruce is Bethany's Dad's name and David has two Uncle Bruce's that he admires as well).



# Riel.Org Gets New Logo and New Look



As some of you may have noticed Riel.org has a new logo and an updated format. Additionally, there has been a lot more content added to the site. Back issues of the newsletter are now complete adding in from the first issue (April 1991) all the way up to the end of 2008. The site already had all issues from 2009 up to the present. Also added are Grandpa Frank Riel's military and genealogy records.

## A New Logo

I felt it was time to update the logo from the one we have had for the last 10 or so years so I started to play with it. Eventually, I came up with the one shown above. I think it's a good blend of the past logos with our lost loved one's pictures. I hope you all like it.



Old Riel.org Logo

## A New Look

I updated all of the pages to a new look with softer colors and more consistency. I also changed a few of the pictures used and added additional security features. The password to get in has not changed and you no longer need a user name. If you have forgotten the password, just shoot me an e-mail [alpinebob57@gmail.com](mailto:alpinebob57@gmail.com) and I will send it to you. Also, you will need an additional user name and password to access Granddad's military records. Use the same procedure (e-mail) to get access.

Contribute to the RFNL or Riel.org by sending your videos, pictures, articles, thoughts and/or comments to [Robert Riel](mailto:Robert.Riel).

RFNL is a copyrighted publication all rights reserved

## Frank Riel's Military Records

Grandpa was very good at keeping records and I have his whole file starting from his enlistment documents to his final discharge papers. He kept every order, note, receipt, list, letter, test, etc. he ever received or sent. There are a lot of interesting things to see, especially his test scores. I would have liked to have seen them when I was a kid, because he was giving me a hard time with my grades!

In all, there are almost 200 PDF files that each contain from 1 to 9 pages of documents. I did not scan everything because there were many documents with 10 or more pages but only one or two pages dealt with Grandpa. In these cases, I scanned the pertinent pages and left a note stating there were more un-scanned pages.

I cataloged each file with a short description and the date of the document along with other information that might be useful in a search. Once you enter the website page dealing with his records, you will see a table with this information displayed as column headers. Simply click on the file name of the record you wish to view, and the PDF will be downloaded to your device for viewing.

There is a lot of information in these documents that does not always apply to Grandpa, however, there may be information that would be useful to other families seeking information about their relatives. So feel free to download any document and send it to whomever is looking for the information.

### *Military Records of Frank James Riel Jr., 0415973*

Date	Type	Description	Rank	File Name	# of Pages	Comments
6/4/1941	Notice	Warning Order - Place on active Duty	2nd Lt.	<a href="#">FJR Military Record20230816_0001</a>	1	
6/24/1941	Notice	Rescinding Warning Order - Place on active Duty	2nd Lt.	<a href="#">FJR Military Record20230816_0002</a>	1	
7/7/1941	Orders	Placed on Active Duty effective 7/23/1941	2nd Lt.	<a href="#">FJR Military Record20230816_0003</a>	4	Missing pages not related to dad
7/7/1941	Id	Dad's Military ID	3rd Lt.	<a href="#">FJR Military Record20230816_0190</a>	2	Filed with birth certificates
7/9/1941	Record	Acceptance of appointment to active duty	2nd Lt.	<a href="#">FJR Military Record20230816_0004</a>	1	
7/23/1941	Record	Report of Physical Examination	2nd Lt.	<a href="#">FJR Military Record20230816_0005</a>	2	
7/23/1941	Request	Request for waiver of Physical Defect.	2nd Lt.	<a href="#">FJR Military Record20230816_0006</a>	1	

Click on the Blue Links under File Name to access that document

## RFNL

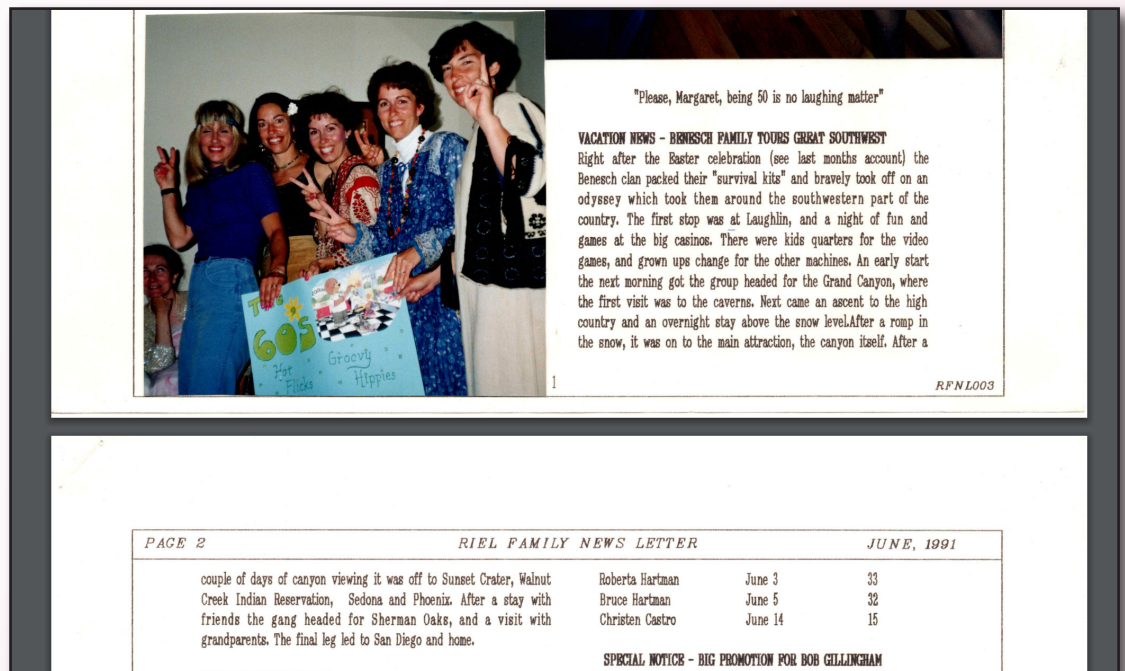
As mentioned above, Riel.org only had back issues of the family newsletter dating back to 2009. The main reason was that these issues were produced electronically and could easily be loaded to the website. The creation of each month's edition specific web page was also not so hard as article headlines could be copied and pasted into the specific web page with very little effort.

Unfortunately, from 2008 and back, Grandpa used a CAD drafting program to type each article up in a "text box" that had no editing features whatsoever. He would then print each article and then cut and past them onto a master page layout. Once he had each page laid out, he would photocopy it once. Then he would run all pages through the photocopier once more to have a back and front master. Then one more time to make enough copies to mail out to everyone. While this worked well for him, it is not very conducive to providing electronic copies. Fortunately, and as I have mentioned before, he kept great files.

In fact, he kept just about everything he ever got that pertained to that month's edition. Each month's file looked something like this:

- Original master page layouts with the articles glued on.
- Photocopy of each master layout
- Two-sided photocopy of the master layouts
- Actual handwritten/typed stories by family members
- Pictures and postcards received.
- Programs for each of the grandkid's plays they were in (autographed by the grandkid)
- Tickets to movie theaters with the grandkids name that they took with them, written on it
- News articles that were sent in
- And anything else that came in that month.

As you can see from the issue shown on the right, there was only a single paragraph of text about a Benesch trip. However, in the files, there was a 3-page article that Carol wrote and it is now available along with other information for that month in the electronic version. Check it out!



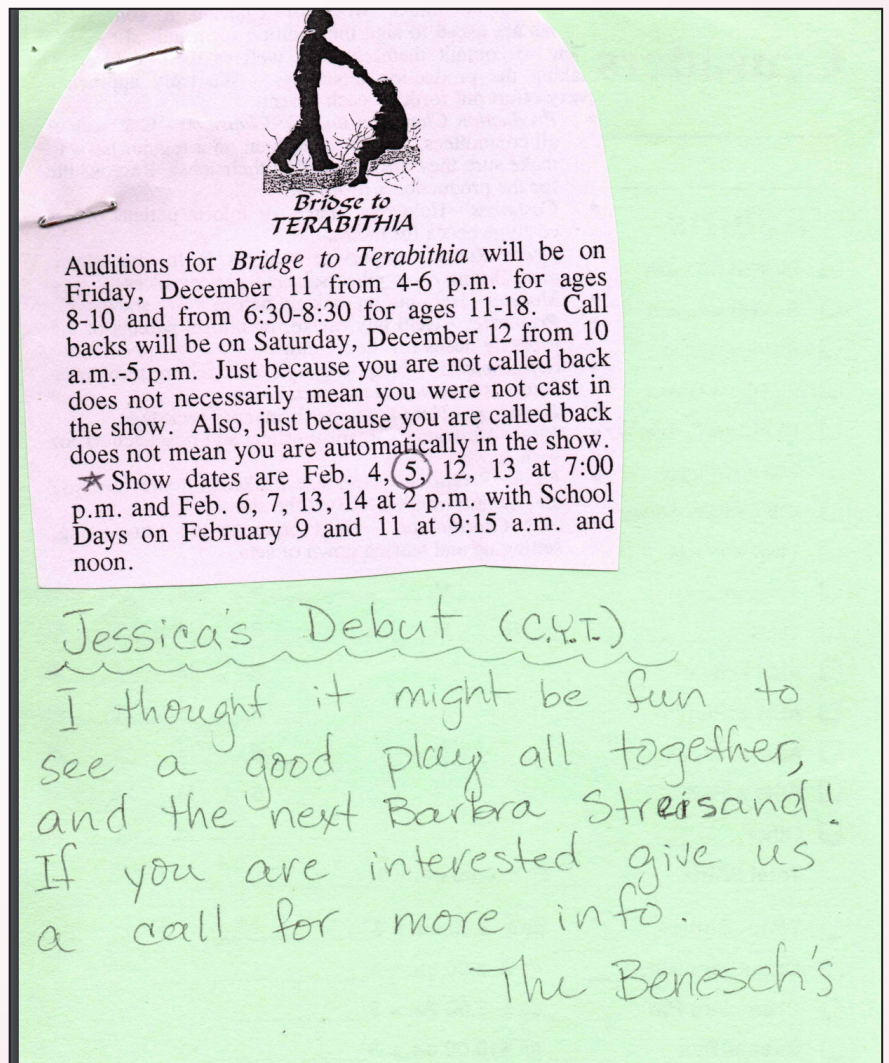


So, as you can see there are a lot of documents besides the actual newsletter in each month's file. In fact, I would estimate about 15 – 20 different attachments were in each file along with the newsletter. Now I could have just scanned the newsletter, but I just felt there was too much history to not have it all available to everyone. So, here are just a few examples of the extras that were not in the newsletter:

- Some of the grandkids report cards from grade school (wont mention names here but Brett and Bryce might want to check them out).
- An essay from Michelle when she was very young describing what she hoped to have accomplished by the time she was 80. Interestingly enough, she has most of them checked off already, except the grandkids part, which I am sure will be coming along in another decade or two.
- Hand drawn pictures from just about every grandkid.
- Poems and essays from the grandkids
- Handwritten letters and updates from all of us.

I would say that from 1991 to 2007 you will see a lot of extra material. But by 2008 it dwindles down and by 2009 there is just the newsletter. However, I did add as much to the file as I could or that was relevant. For example, I did not scan the playbill for every production one of the grandkids was in. But if you see something and you think there could be more that you would like access to, just give me a call and if it is there, I will send it to you.

Just creating all of the pages for each of the added newsletter was a monumental task. Because, not only did I need to scan each edition and its accompanying documents into one file (a total of 204 files), but I also needed to create a jpeg file for each cover (another 204 files). Then create a unique web page for each newsletter (204 pages) with links to the supporting documents and listing the headlines from the newsletter. Finally, I had to type every headline in by hand (no more copy and past as these are scanned documents). Needless to say I have hundreds of hours invested in getting all of this information online.



*Bridge to TERABITHIA*

Auditions for *Bridge to Terabithia* will be on Friday, December 11 from 4-6 p.m. for ages 8-10 and from 6:30-8:30 for ages 11-18. Call backs will be on Saturday, December 12 from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Just because you are not called back does not necessarily mean you were not cast in the show. Also, just because you are called back does not mean you are automatically in the show.  
★ Show dates are Feb. 4, 5, 12, 13 at 7:00 p.m. and Feb. 6, 7, 13, 14 at 2 p.m. with School Days on February 9 and 11 at 9:15 a.m. and noon.

Jessica's Debut (C.Y.T.)  
I thought it might be fun to see a good play all together, and the next Barbra Streisand! If you are interested give us a call for more info.  
The Benesch's

There may be a few of you that will think why bother with all that work? My answer is that I believe the great grandkids will soon be old enough to see all of these issues and will really enjoy learning about their parents and how they grew up. After all, what great grandkid wouldn't want to be armed with their dad's report cards from when he was the same age as they are today? Or maybe some of the family members that are no longer with us will come alive in the pages of the newsletters and give the reader a good feeling as to who they were and what they stood for.

Regardless I think it is something that will be valuable to future generations to experience and read. There are letters from both Francie and Bruce that I have long forgotten. Many of them were abbreviated in the newsletter and to read them in the actual handwriting of the author gave me a better understanding and a feeling of real connection to the writer. What will you get out of it? Don't know, but I encourage you to do some exploring with your kids and grandkids. Especially when they come to you and ask... "Grandma, what was your mom like?" Here's a good place to start, Riel.org has a copy of an hour long recording of Grandma being interviewed by me, taking her from childhood until she married Grandpa. What better way to introduce someone to Grandma than to hear it directly from her?

## **Genealogy**

Under the Family history section, you will find a location to view all of Grandpa's Genealogy files. Again, all cataloged and by clicking on the file name it will allow you to download the PDF file. There is not a lot of stuff but if Genealogy is your thing, it's a great place to start.



## So What's Next?

Well, in the near future I would like to scan and catalog all of Grandma's letters to Grandpa (like I said Grandpa kept everything, unfortunately the same cannot be said about Grandma).

There are Grandpa and Grandma's medical records that could be useful to future generations. Again, when I have time they will be added. There are additional files dad kept, including his school years, personal interests, important papers, and other miscellaneous items that will be added over the next few years (as I find time).

Finally, and at some point, in the near future, I hope to add all of the family pictures both Grandpa and myself have taken over the years. The goal would be to have the photos searchable by name, date, or other keywords as seems appropriate. I have close to 50,000 family pictures and except for all of the great grandkids they are all tagged with the names of the individuals that are in the photo. OK, confession time, the great grandkids are not tagged yet because I am not sure who is who and will need some help on that front.

So, there you have it. I hope you explore Riel.org (Bob Gillingham's 50th birthday video is great, oh did I mention Carol's birthday video isn't bad either). Hopefully, you will find something that makes you smile.



# News from the Benesch Family

By Carol Benesch



At Hill Creek we put our best P.A.W.S. forward!

- P - PRACTICE SAFETY
- A - ACCEPTS RESPONSIBILITY
- W - WISE CHOICES
- S - SHOW KINDNESS

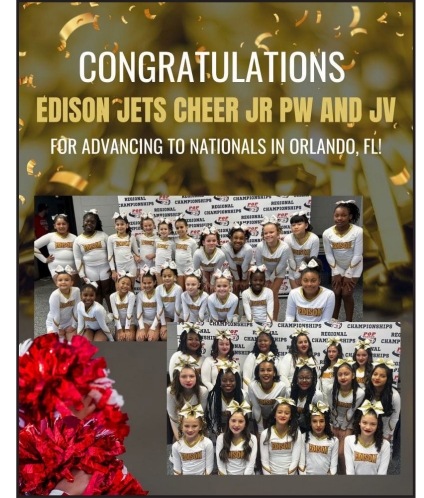
**Noah and Camden** both received the first PAWS award of the year at their school for being outstanding students. Camden's teacher said he was sweet, kind, and a good friend to all. Noah's teacher said the same along with great classroom behavior and always being on task. We are very proud of both of them.

Madeline was chosen by her teacher to get a book from the Reading Machine for listening and following directions. We are very proud of all three of them! They are all doing so well in school, which of course is a reflection of Chavva's and Jason's great parenting!! I'm very fortunate to be able to volunteer in Madeline's class each week. She enjoys having me and I love being in the classroom helping out!



## News from New Jersey!

While Ben and Mateo continue to practice their Karate skills, Sofie decided to try cheering this year instead of dancing. She wanted to work on her tumbling skills. They had their final competition of the year and placed high enough to make it to Nationals!! They will be going to Florida Sea World at the beginning of December for the competition! We are all so proud of her. Go Jets!



## Jeff's First Pickleball Tournament

Jeff plays pickleball every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at the Y, which held an open tourney last week. He was asked by another player if he wanted to be in it as his partner. I went and watched him play. They were very good together and played pretty well, but agility and quickness seemed to be an advantage for younger players. There were some really good teams. It was a lot of fun to watch, and Jeff and Bill played very well. At 4 and 4, they finished in the middle of the pack, and felt they could have won a few more with a little more tourney experience. The top 2 teams were amazing, and it was an exciting finish!!



# Camden Turns 5!!



Following mom and dad's lead, we spent the day with our youngest grandchild, Camden for his birthday. We started out at the new Chuck E Cheese in Santee. It had only been open for a week, so the place was so nice and clean!! (Unlike the other Chuck E Cheese's) Also, being a Tuesday, the place was empty!! Camden had 90 min of playing any game he wanted for as long as he wanted! He had a blast!! We took a break and had some pizza and then finished up with lots of tickets for very small prizes!!





Then we headed over to Target and let Cam pick out his gifts. He told me he should have 5 since he was turning 5. It took a while, but he was very happy in the end. And of course, no birthday is complete without ice cream!! We went to a new place in Santee called Handel's Homemade Ice Cream. It is a chain that has made ice cream fresh daily at each of its stores since 1945!! It was very good!!

After that, we headed home. It was a full day! Camden was excited to show his family his new toys. About an hour later, Jason sent me a picture of Camden asleep on the couch, holding his new Sonic toy. A good time was had by all!

A couple of weeks later, Camden got to enjoy a birthday party with friends at the same Chuck E Cheese. It was a little more crowded, but we still had a good time!



# Keeping up with the Halls

By Birdy Hartman-Hall

It is time to complete the trifecta of National Parks. Let me recap. In June, we hit Yellowstone, July was Mount Rushmore and in October we enjoyed the Grand Canyon. Wow! Look out Robert Riel, the Halls are on the move! We had visitors that came all the way from New Zealand to visit us in San Diego. Clive met Francie 10 years ago in Jamaica, and they forged a friendship that has prevailed all these years. Toshie, Clive's wife, even came to our wedding with a friend because Clive was busy working. She flew from New Zealand to San Diego ONLY for the weekend! Now that is a true friend!

Clive and Toshie had two requests. One was that they wanted to golf. And so, we had the pleasure of taking them to our club, The Heights in Rancho Bernardo, Torrey Pines South Course, Steel Canyon (thank you Bob Gillingham) and La Jolla Country Club (thank you Greg Velaquez). It was a great week of golf and sharing fun stories with our friends.





Clive and Toshie's second request was to go see the Grand Canyon. Since I have never been, it was up to Lyle to be our resident tour guide. We piled into my car and off we drove to sights unseen.

It was the late afternoon when we reached our destination, but the canyon was in its full glory. Cliffs as far as the eye can see, touches of fall springing up and birds soaring across the sky. We took many memorable photos and soaked in the goodness. We dined right next to the cliffs but with the fall hours, it was pitch black. So, our viewpoint was not as stunning as we had hoped. Nonetheless, we enjoyed our time together.





The next day we drove onward to Sedona, Arizona in search of the famous Red Rocks. Our first stop was the Red Rockslides. We stretched our legs as we hiked up and down the stream. It was my favorite part of our visit. The rocks were so awesome, and nature just never disappoints.

On Sunday we took a stroll to see Montezuma Castle that once housed the Sinagua people. They were sedentary people that constructed their dwellings from mud and stone right on the side of a mountain cliff. I was sad that we couldn't go into any, but it sure was impressive to think about the ladders that they had to assemble just to climb into their homes. They are well known for their elaborate rock art, which tells stories of their culture, religious beliefs, and daily life.

As I was reading about the caves, I came across The **Six Leave No Trace Principles for hiking**. I thought I would share them for all of those that love to hike and leave no trace.

### **The Six Leave No Trace Principles for hiking.**

#### **NO. 1 - Plan Ahead & Prepare**

There's more than desert in Arizona. Planning ahead and preparing for the state's diverse terrain and temperatures means being able to safely experience all Arizona has to offer.

#### **NO. 2 - Stick to Trails**

Wander with wonder, but please stick to the trails and camp only on existing or designated campsites.

#### **NO. 3 - Trash Your Trash**

Ecosystems are delicate and even organic trash can have a negative impact.

#### **NO. 4 - Leave What You Find**

In Arizona, there is so much to discover and history to explore. Take pictures and make memories, but please don't take mementos or leave a mark.

#### **NO. 5 - Be Careful with Fire**

Arizona's hot, dry climate is perfect to catch ablaze.

#### **NO. 6 - Respect Wildlife**

Arizona's great outdoors is home to more than 800 species of wildlife. It's best to observe them from a distance, so be prepared to stop and let the wildlife stay wild.

The other highlight for our visit with the Kiwis was watching the World Cup Rugby game that was New Zealand vs South Africa. Since we were on the move from the Grand Canyon to Sedona, we had to find a sports bar that would be showing the game. After a little hunting, we settled in with some beers and cheered their team to an almost victory. The name of the bar, incidentally, was called Dirty Birdies. We thought that would be a good omen. The score went back and forth. It was a nail biter for us all. This was my first Rugby game and learning about it with the aid of Clive made it twice as enjoyable. He was the ambassador of rugby as strangers would stop to ask him questions. Poor man just wanted to watch the game, but he was as gracious as could be. Unfortunately, South Africa won in the end, but the game was an amazing experience for us.



Clive and Toshie were with us for two weeks! The time flew by so fast. They got to experience Halloween for the first time. That was fun for us to share. We went to two local friends' homes that love to DO Halloween. It was impressive to see how crazy Americans can be when it comes to their holiday happenings.

We are looking forward to the next visit with our friends. Perhaps we will go out to visit them. They told us that they are 20 minutes from Dustin and Lauren's home. That would make it a fun trip to be able to see New Zealand, our friends and our nephew and niece. So stay tuned for our next **Keeping up with the Halls** stories.

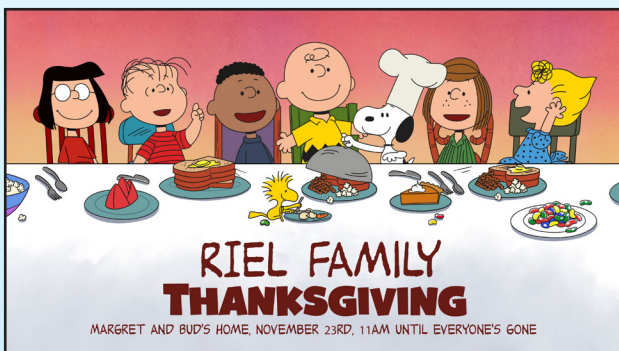


# FAMILY SHORTS

## Riley and Braeden Earn Awards!

Riley Keith got recognized at Jarabek Elementary for being Proactive at school. The school defines a proactive student as someone who does good things even if no one is watching. They are in charge of their actions, attitude, and mood and they don't blame others when they make a mistake. Jarabek is determined to create leaders in every student, and we're thrilled to see the Keith brothers excel each year! Seamus, Listy, and Bob were there to recognize Riley!

And then, the following month Braeden surprised everyone by earning the Goal Setting award for the 5th grade class. Apparently, the email to the parents was sent to a different address that Kristy and Seamus missed so no one was on hand to witness the honor, however, we are still proud to see the Keith brothers representing the family in such a positive way. Go Braeden and Riley!



Get ready for the Turkey Athlete of the Year Competition-- There will be 5 carefully planned events and prizes so get ready to compete for the honor of:

**Turkey Athlete of the Year.**