

5/24/06

2-185

Dear family,

As you all know, all lives have been on a roller coaster since 3/1, when Uncle Ed's cancerous brain tumor became activated. Today he completed 33 sessions of radiation, and chemotherapy, and will see his oncologist on Friday. Probably he will have to <sup>be</sup> sent for an MRI next week. Then we will assess the next steps. I'll keep you all informed on his progress.

With love to you all,  
Aunt Elaine

Greetings from slightly humid LI. Summer arrives tomorrow, and I hope it treats all of you gently. Summer gets George some free time from his teaching and coaching, so he's got plenty of chores and pleasantries like gardening lined up. My library duties are morphing a bit as we prepare to move to our own building next summer - lots of paring down and planning to do in anticipation of life in our new digs. We are currently immersed in the World Cup soccer broadcasts - our favorite sport (even though the Mets are looking good too!).

George and I will try to get away - maybe for some shorter driving trips this summer. We may not visit CA, because Kate is in the final crunch to get her doctorate. After the PhD ... who knows? But she won't be doing lab research; that's the one thing she's not considering.

Ian continues to work in Baltimore. He may be changing digs and job titles, but he'll be there for the near future. Matt will try a few grad courses at Seton Hall this fall. He's looking for a new job - his current one has lost its charms and challenges. He'll stay in NJ - none of that crowded, expensive LI living for him!

My mother continues her slow deterioration. She has little long-term memory. She has no short-term memory. We managed to get one of her cataracts removed, but it was pretty crazy for us to keep her from rubbing her eye and get the many drops in her eye. Her eyesight did improve. She cannot complete her thoughts or sentences and everything is done REALLY slowly. But, thank God, she still often exhibits her gentle, undemanding ways. Her caregiver intends to return to the Phillipines within the year. When that happens, I think we will pursue placement in a home. By then, Mom may not be able to be cared for (physically) by an aide, and we doubt anyone could replace Leta. So, the future holds uncertainty and change - reluctant decisions we will have to make.

And we all labor under the sad news of Uncle Ed's terminal illness. We admire the faith and courage of all the Christensens and pray for their Divine support.

Have a safe & blessed summer!  
Barbara, George & all

7/8/06

Dear Family,

What a trying time for our family. I was visiting our son Paul in SC when I got the news about Uncle Ed and on my arrival home I heard the news about Aunt Betty. Our prayers have been constant for them as they are now for their families. As Madeline previously said, we were lucky enough to have a wonderful visit with Aunt Claire & Uncle Ed at Lorraine's house just days before the diagnosis. It has been quite a while since my last visit with Aunt Betty at Maria's house but thoughts of it bring a smile to my heart.

It's hard to believe we have been here in NC over a year already. We are being kept very busy now with activities for our grandchildren. It's great to be so close to them. We just got word that Patti & Seth will be moving down in the near future for sure. Their original plans had to be postponed. They are looking at an area just 20 min. away from where we are now. Holidays should be hectic and crazy and we will love every minute of it.

Madeline & Ralph's NC cabin is just 2 ½ hrs away so we got to see them over the Memorial Day weekend and will hopefully see them again before the end of the summer. Augie & Michael both got jobs in retail so schedules are pretty crazy as can be expected. It is taking some getting used to. None of us are thrilled but a paycheck is a paycheck.

Love to A L L.....

Ronnie + Augie

Dear Family,

July 17, 2006

What a mystery life is...on the one hand our ever-expanding family is being so blessed with healthy new additions right and left while at the same time we weep over the loss of my dad and Aunt Betty. I truly don't know how people with little or no faith can deal with the passing of a loved one. It is faith that comforts us and allows us to realize that those we love are in a better place.

It is ironic that I distinctly remember the conversation I had with John as we celebrated the New Year rolling into 2006. After the whirlwind year we had in 2005 with the final stages of my pregnancy and the complete upheaval of life with triplets, we thought 2006 just *had* to be more peaceful. We couldn't have been more wrong!

Things around here are as chaotic as ever. Life has been a whirlwind since Ash Wednesday when dad was brought to the ER. On the same day that mom and I took dad to the hospital, I had to leave them there and rush Mark (with a 105 fever) to the doctor. Although we ALL had the flu vaccine, we still managed to ALL get it anyway including mom and myself—as though we weren't going through enough with dad in the hospital. I've learned that with five kids there is an endless stream of colds/flu/viruses coming into the house and I think we experienced pretty much all of them this past winter. We went almost straight from the flu to stomach viruses (you don't get the true triplet experience until you have all three of them with a stomach virus puking and pooping constantly for 5 days) to colds that lead to ear infections to the "hand, foot, mouth" virus...you get the idea! Even when we went up to NY for three weeks in May to *help out* (if that's what you call it when you bring 5 kids along with you-ha ha) with Dad, they were all sick!

Now that the summer is here we've all been pretty healthy – praise God! We're even trying to wean Matthew and Mark off of the Flo-vent inhaler medicine for their breathing. We were back up in NY over Fourth of July week and we're planning on being up there again in August for the Memorial Service/Family party.

For a quick update on the kids...Arianna started 3<sup>rd</sup> grade on July 10 and seems to like her new teacher. She is still enjoying gymnastics and is being "promoted" to a more advanced class. Kaylin is now in 1<sup>st</sup> grade and says that it's "really hard" but for one of the youngest in her class (she has a late Sept. birthday and the cut off here is Oct.) she's holding her own. Unlike Arianna, Kaylin is not enjoying gymnastics so when this session is over she won't be returning. Matthew, Mark and Luke, now almost 17 months, are really keeping us busy! As you can imagine, they are into, climbing on, and chewing on EVERYTHING in their path! Thankfully, they are cute, healthy, sweet *and* keeping me skinny! And, now you have the scoop from Wake Forest.

Thank you for all the prayers for dad and the support you've shown to mom. This has meant a great deal to all of us Christensen's. We in turn have been praying for Aunt Betty, and continue to pray for all the members of our family. I know that life seems to be increasingly complicated these days, but I do hope to see as many of you as possible in August.

Love, Ronnie, John, Arianna, Kaylin, Matthew, Mark + Luke XXX 000

7/25/06

Greetings from Milwaukee!

Memories of Uncle Ed and Aunt Betty have been making me smile — just as the two of them did so often when I was in their company.

I picture Uncle Ed romping around with good ol' Czarina; putting together projects in the early days of the farm; telling jokes and talking politics — oh so passionately — at family parties. I'm grateful I got to see him over Christmas when he and Aunt Claire stopped by at my brother's house for the Clines holiday gathering.

I see Aunt Betty making sure everyone was well fed; asking my dad if he wants to lindy with her; helping keep track of the passel of kids during the joint vacation our families took in, I believe, 1958; beaming at Theresa's fabulous impersonation of John Lennon in the early days of Beatlemania; asking me, once I was a college guy, about what my girlfriend was like. Always, I remember the sense of fun they brought to their activities — and the devotion they had to their spouses and children. Like all of our parents, they sacrificed so much to make things better for the next generation. Thinking of them reminds me how lucky we all are that we grew up in a family with such wonderful values. Their goodness and enjoyment of life continue in everyone they touched.

Pretty usual summer in the Midwest--- covering a few Brewers games and watching lots more; swimming daily in the pool at my apartment complex; waiting eagerly for Milwaukee's Irish Fest, the best four-day bash anywhere. Had some time in the East in late May and late June; next trip back will be in October.

Best wishes to everyone!



August 1, 2006

Dear Family,

Here's what's going on in beautiful Glen Allen, Virginia!

Within barely a year at Community Neurological Services, Claudine was promoted away from the front desk to be the assistant for the office manager, and then promoted to billing manager and is now finally salaried. She is currently planning to move out of our house in September and into a nearby apartment which she will share with a former college roommate. (*Empty nest . . . again . . . for a while!*)

Chris continues to do well in his job at Estes Express. He moved out of his friend's house as the friend got married and will sell the house. Chris bought a one bedroom condominium (converted from apartments) that is located adjacent to a golf course and resort that is about 10 minutes from our house (closer than he was before). The place is right at the intersection of I-95 and I-295 and accessible from Route 1. Because of the limited access to the area, there will be little more development in the area, and the value of his condo should only go up with time.

We've been helping him paint the place to make it his own. And let me say, Chris is not afraid of color!

Danie continues to work on quilts and is teaching classes at a nearby sewing machine shop. (The pictures to the left show the quilts she teaches)

Our Shih Tsu, Sophie Belle, is now three years old, but still continues to be attention starved and keeps Danie, or whoever is home, occupied, as she is always ready to play.

Bowling season ended at the end of April, with our team, "Wastin' Away" finishing up in the middle of the pack. Chris' team did a little worse than we did, but everyone had fun. Chris will likely not play as a regular next year (the mortgage sucks up every dollar he



makes), but will probably sign up as a substitute. Claudine will continue to play with us.

Softball season has wound up for the year. I once again played on the St. Mike's coed Church League team. Unfortunately, this year's 'team' was less than enthusiastic / inspired. From a roster of 26, we barely fielded a team of 5 men & 5 women each week. Too many games were played with one player short. In the end, we lost every game. (Not the kind of "perfect record" one tells about).

Danie and I are in the midst of several getaways this year: including long weekend getaways in Gatlinburg, TN and a tour of WV. We're also going on our first cruise to celebrate our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The 12-day Alaskan Cruise / Tour will be in August 21 - September 2. (Unfortunately, this trip coincides with Uncle Ed's memorial Mass and the Family Reunion, so we won't be present at those events)

My work with the Knights of Columbus continues, as I still publish the newsletters for the Council and Fourth Degree Assembly, maintain web sites for both and continue to organize the two fundraisers we participate in every year during NASCAR weekend at Richmond International Raceway (manage buffet tables in the Corporate Hospitality area).

In the year since Dominion has taken possession of the Kewaunee Power Station, efforts to keep it running and keep out of regulatory hell have consumed tremendous resources. While the physical plant has remained in good condition over the years, the design bases (the information on why it was built that way) has fallen into disarray, and no one understands why a lot of things are the way they are.

Recently Dominion lost out on a bid to take over the Palisades Power Station (near Kalamazoo, MI). While management sounds very disappointed, we, the workers can't help but to do a happy dance. We are simply not ready to take on another headache! The next plant up for sale will be Point Beach Power Station, a two-unit plant located just five miles from Kewaunee in WI. Bids for the plant are due in November. We do want this plant so that we can operate Kewaunee & Point Beach as one site.

Eric

Dear Family,

August 8, 2006


**Tumultuous 2006. Celebrating Lorraine's triplets birthday, then Dad in a coma, only to recover within days of surgery, then falter immediately after concluding radiation and chemotherapy. His passing became so expected, but only months earlier wasn't even a thought.....only plans for the next great farm project.**

**Dad will certainly be missed, as will Aunt Betty. I'll always remember her warmth and great hospitality with the big gatherings in Brooklyn. Prayers for both, and for Aunt Helen too.**

Aside from spending extra time with Mom at the farm, and Dad during his decline, life has managed to go on. Job cuts finally came to my department at the Times although it seems to have strengthened my immediate group. I was in the very difficult position of being responsible for training and transitioning the NY Helpdesk down to Norfolk, Va. That transition was completed in late June so it begins a new chapter here at 43<sup>rd</sup> St. as we prepare to move to a new building early next year. OK, enough about work....

Nicole and Megan will be together in Junior High School this September beginning 8<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades. They both did very well last year with many academic awards, and Nicole had a spectacular semester in Track. With her thin body and long legs she's a star at hurdles! She's also been accepted to a special Art program this year. Megan continued with Hockey and has already begun Cheerleading just last week

Hope to see as many as possible on August 26.

Love, 

Dear Family,

8/2/00

It's so sad to think that we have lost two wonderful members of our family since the last time I had this letter. This coming Saturday I'll be driving up with Barbara & George for Uncle Ed's memorial Mass and to visit with his family. I hope some members of Aunt Betty's family will be there, too, & we can all reminisce.

The Zirkel household is in much better shape now that Bill is almost completely recovered from the bad break to his leg. He's fully back to work, and even taking his business trips again. Although he does carry a special medical card, he has not set off the airport metal detectors as the rod in his leg is made of titanium. (Makes you wonder - couldn't weapons be made of titanium??) This summer has been the "summer of colleges" as we've taken two long family trips targeted toward visiting certain campuses, as well as many shorter trips, for a total of 10 visits. Fortunately Kristen is now helping with the driving, as she has her junior licence (which will become a full licence next week when she turns it). She's leaning toward studying education at some point in the future. Michelle graduated from the Middle School, but it was not a very festive occasion since in many ways she has actually lost ground (compared with the other students) from where she was when she entered the school 3 years ago! After much searching & heartache, we asked for her to go to a high school program in another district. The work seems at a level that's possible for her, and for once there are as many girls as boys in the class. We're so praying that she'll have a more successful experience - especially socially - but with all her many problems, we're also very nervous that it won't work out. Any & all prayers are welcome!! Danny is going into the 7th grade, with his two main outside interests being the two "S's" - saxophone & soccer. However he has also added a "wonderful" new dimension to our home life, in that we let him use his money to buy a full set of drums! Since our dog Cassie starts barking whenever he starts banging away, it really is quite a "musical" experience. Anyone care to visit?? Love, Bernadette & gang

Dear Everyone ~

Thank you all for the prayers for - Mom + Uncle Ed. The Mass of Resurrection was so beautiful up in Ellenville. It was great to see you all. The years are passing quickly ~ let us live our lives well in the Lord!

We are getting ready for new members in our Community. God has indeed "opened the doors." This also means we have to open a house. Oh how I will miss all those times spent in the deepest of solitude ~ (Shame on me!!)

Let us turn now our thoughts & heart-felt prayers for our dear Aunt Helen. She is surrounded much in prayer!

Know also, that each & everyone of you and your families are prayed for and in this - protected from all evil! Although it is not in our life to go to gatherings & parties, knowing you are always in our prayers, we know, is enough for you!

Long embraces for all ~ Bernadette

Greetings from Williamsburg and Yorktown, VA,

09/17/06

Ernesto did harm to the Round Robin letter in my mailbox but it did no harm to my house this time. It did leave quite a big branch across my driveway, but it did not touch any part of the house. I could not get out of my garage until the branch was taken away by some nice neighbors.

Monica is in Regency Healthcare Center, 112 No. Constitution Drive, Yorktown, VA 23692, which is about 30 minutes from here. She had home health care nurses coming in at least 3x a week, sometimes more often, because the wound on her toe which never really healed. On 8/23, a home health nurse saw her leg was red, swollen and warm (cellulitis). The nurse called our doctor, who ordered her into the ER (8/23), was admitted into the hospital and after 4 days, she was admitted into the nursing home in Yorktown – they had a bed for her. We did not want to use either of the 2 nursing homes here in Wmbg. – they do not have good reputations. The one Monica is in, has had a good reputation for a long time. She is there for short term rehab care, 3 months – after that, we'll see how Monica is – maybe stay there permanently. She needs nursing care and I can't help her. She is doing pretty well – knows just about everyone on the staff and gets along fine with them. When and if Monica is placed wherever permanently, we (me, Eric and Alan) are thinking of selling my house and I would go into an independent living or assisted living place. Then I wouldn't have to worry about things around the house and the expense of paying for things that have to be fixed - and I wouldn't be living alone!

Alan and Deanne and family were here August 14<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup>. Eric and Danie came on Friday, the 18<sup>th</sup>, so there was a mini May Family Reunion that day. The day Alan left here is when Eric and Danie started their vacation to visit Alaska (Aug. 21 to Sept. 2). When all the family was here, we were talking about nursing homes for Monica and assisted living places for me. Alan and I visited Regency to see what it is like and we thought it was a nice place. Little did we know then that Monica would be in the hospital and then nursing home so soon. Me, I'm still using Duragesic (pain patches) and taking Vicodin for pain and the doctor is thinking of another epidural on my spine. I'm glad I can still drive and I still walk with the aid of my walker.

It was sad hearing the news of Ed and Betty – the good part is that they passed away peacefully in their sleep. Helen will probably be placed in a nursing home. Most of the family have good news to pass on to all. Some have troubles that are trying to be resolved – they will - and that is good. That's life!

Yesterday Eric and I went to see Monica. We got new cell phones and Eric was 'teaching' us (with some difficulty) how to use the new one. Every phone is different – why can't they make them all the same and only with options you want – not all the other 'stuff' that's possible to have with the phones – and a little bigger! We'll try! – and hopefully do what we are supposed to do – we'll learn! But Eric thinks the nursing home is nice and Monica seems to be happy there – gets along with everybody and doesn't mind that we have to leave her there. She's been like that even when I go alone to visit her – she knows she stays and I go.

We send our love. You are in our thoughts and prayers.

*Rosemary and Monica*



2-191

10/15/06

Greetings from Malverne...

I'm glad to see that the letter survived a thorough soaking. It's nice that letter carriers follow their credo, (Neither rain, nor snow, etc.) but maybe the post office could invest in a little plastic. Couldn't hurt.

Terry, Kira and I were able to get to Lackawack Hill for the reunion, and we all had a wonderful time. Uncle Ed is certainly missed, but his spirit was very much in attendance. (The Genny cream certainly hit the spot as well.) I'm glad I was able to see cousins Kathy, Alan and Maria, though I did miss Joanie and Theresa. And of course, it was great to see all of the Christensens, including the triplets. The farm looks better than ever, and I'm very impressed with all the construction projects going on there.

I recently started a new job, writing for the CBS Evening News with Katie Couric. The number one benefit is that I get to sleep in my own bed, and at night! For the first time in my career, I actually sleep during normal human hours. It's also quite a change from local news. I will no longer have to get excited over those half-inch snowstorms, or worry about covering non-stop crime.

Joseph just started 9<sup>th</sup> grade at Kellenberg High School. You may have read about it. It's the one that cancelled its prom. As a parent, that's fantastic. One less thing to pay for.

Mom has some good days and bad days. And her routine is going to be shaken up quite a bit in mid-December when her caretaker, Leta, returns to the Philippines. She has been a godsend, and we will all miss her very much.

Please keep Mom in your prayers.

*Joe Clines, May Jo, Joseph, Terence & Kira Clines*

10/23/06

Dear Family

The Lord is kind and merciful! That's what I say to myself after a good race and I felt the same on the day of the Memorial Mass / Family Reunion at the farm. It was beautiful, all around, mainly because we got to share it with friends and family. (Sorry I only said about 3 words to each person present.) Mom is doing well (just returned from a 2 week bus trip to the Maritime Provinces with her old high school buddy) after the extremely hectic summer.

Attraction Web Design has been in business for over a year and I continue to make progress finding clients and learning more about web development with every project. You can see some of my work at [www.AttractWeb.com/portfolio.html](http://www.AttractWeb.com/portfolio.html). Recent sites include a preschool, a local artist, a fire company, an author, and eCommerce sites for gift baskets and vacuum cleaners. I also get some revenue for advertising on my own sites. Plus, I'm writing an eBook (see [www.StartYourClub.com](http://www.StartYourClub.com)) And finally, just to keep from being bored, I'm a distributor for USANA Health Sciences nutritional supplements. I have customers in several states, Canada and Australia! [www.HealthandEndurance.com](http://www.HealthandEndurance.com)

On October 8, I set a personal record of 3 hrs 14 mins for my 9<sup>th</sup> marathon. The 2,000 runners (small marathon) had spectacular weather for our race ending in Scranton, PA, not far from Srs. Theresa and Joan. I didn't visit them since I was with my group from DE, but ever since my father was first hospitalized in the spring, I've been doing more praying while I run, which leads me into thinking about the May family.

Steve and Ken get me up to the farm as much as possible, but they only need me for my brute strength! It's funny to see emails going back and forth between them while Ken is aboard ship in the Pacific: Which trees to cut...how wide to mill beams...how much concrete to pour...where to plant trees. - - - I just leave these decisions to my bosses!  
God Bless your individual families.

*Ray Christen*

Dear Family -

11-28-06 2-192

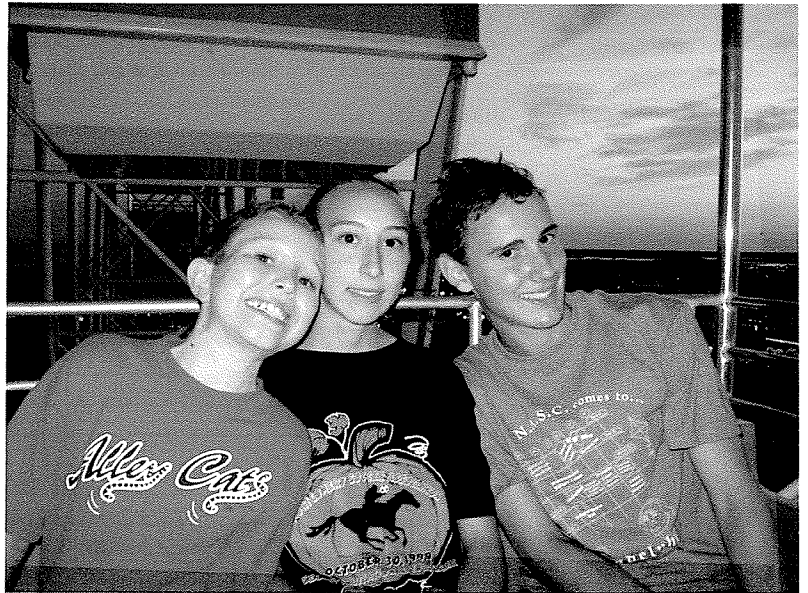
Not much to report from here, except Jennae's husband is studying to be a firefighter & will graduate in Feb. He's #1 in the class - & Ralph & I got to babysit Kai (15 mos) in Orlando last weekend for 4 days of spoiling, jumping on the bed, eating refined sugar & chocolate & blue jello! Heather surprised Brad w/ tickets to Las Vegas for his 34<sup>th</sup> & Tallen & Chris surprised him again by meeting there. They hiked in Mt Zion Natl Park, saw a show, gambled a little & had a great time - Well, that's what's happening here, now I'm happy the holidays are going to be here soon & that's always a year time.  
Love Madeline & Ralph.



From the day of Uncle Ed's memorial

Pictures from Eileen

← I'm on the far left next to Barbara



Colin, Emily and Brian Lynch  
This one is for you, Maria!



Dear Family,

January 5, 2007

I do apologize for keeping this letter for so long. I have a knack for receiving it during my busiest time of year (Nov-Dec). This year, in addition to the two December birthdays and all of the Christmas events, we were working on Brian's college applications. Now we have to move on to scholarships and financial aid. What fun!

January is sort of a quiet time here. Brian is doing Indoor track and Emily is going to do Indoor Soccer this year, but this will be less intense than the fall sports scene. Emily is also preparing for her first ever experience in a "pit band" for her middle school spring musical. Both of them had much more eventful summers. Brian volunteered to work at a conference that was held at his HS last June for over 1,000 student council members from across the country. He spent all of last school year training to guide a busload of visitors around our area. Our family volunteered to host some of the students, and because the conference organizers were desperate for housing, we ended up with six girls staying in our family room (Brian loved that!).

Emily had quite an experience last summer taking a trip to Switzerland, Germany and Austria. She takes German as a foreign language (I think they offer it because many people in this area have a PA Dutch background) and has become very interested in the German language and culture. I guess it's nice that at least one of the 50 great-grandkids is! I was very nervous about letting her go to Europe without a parent on the trip, but her teacher had arranged for them to stay a few days with a German host family and I knew that would be a great experience. She still "chatten"s with her host family's daughter by instant message.

Colin didn't do any of those exciting things last summer, but then he is only 10. He started 5<sup>th</sup> grade this year, and things are going well. He's improved in some of his areas of academic weakness since last year, and he's got more self-confidence and is starting to develop his own interests. This year he spent a lot of time working on the model train platform we set up every Christmas, taking over from Brian and Emily. The big addition this year was a real rotating tornado that he and Joe made from styrofoam, polyester batting, and a small motor. We don't know how we're going to top this next year!

Love to All,

*Eileen*

Jan 18, 2007

There is much going on in the William May branch of the Family.

The most important is that **Monica** was transferred from Regency Health Care to Mary Immaculate Hospital in Yorktown. She was unresponsive and the staff could not give her scheduled medications. She was diagnosed with sepsis, which is very dangerous. While we do not know the cause, as I write this, she seems to be responding; though certainly not back to the way she was prior to the episode.

For **Alan**, the heart surgery we postponed in Aug 04 is now set to occur Jan 24 at Westchester Medical Center. The five blockages have progressed, even though my bad cholesterol has been in the 31-50 range. The surgeon said that everyone focuses on cholesterol because it is the only cause of heart disease doctors can do anything about. But heredity plays a much larger role. So, in a few weeks I should be recovering from the surgery and rebuilding my strength. I should no longer have to worry about the heart, other than to monitoring it periodically. You will hear how that goes.

We spent the days between Christmas and New Years at Mom's in Williamsburg. We helped move her to **Chambrel** at Williamsburg (note her new address on the front of the RR), in their independent living program. She has a spacious apartment *although she is having trouble finding a home for all the stuff we moved there from the house!* It has two entrances. She can park right in front and walk across the lawn to her back door. She knows many people there from St. Bede Church, and there is even a bus from Chambrel to the Church each Sunday. There are many other activities as well, from fitness to a library to games to music, etc. Most important, she is not alone in a big house that requires constant maintenance. Although she has not had peace since moving in (*the "stuff" to sort through, and now Monica's condition*), every indication is that she will love it there. She has had dinner with several residents and is meeting new people. As we left Williamsburg, we took a 10 foot truck filled with some of the other stuff from Mom's house. We are sorting through that at our already overflowing house.

Other news:

Other than preparing for surgery, **Alan** continues to lead children's liturgy and may be involved in a Lenten program if it ever gets organized. Work remains a stressful environment which is not good for my conditions, but it pays the bills. There aren't too many alternatives for a 50 year old in this industry.

**Deanne** is on break from Mercy College for most of Jan. Unfortunately, she goes back to work just as Alan has his surgery. She is sorting through Mom's stuff and trying to clear a place for me to stay during days following surgery. She is also more and more involved with programs at Sacred Heart. She began an RCITeen group with our new priest and has 10 participants. She runs the sacramental and the Religious Ed programs as well as the Spiritual Life committee. No free time here.

**Billy** has begun playing his new wind controller at the Saturday 5PM Mass @ Sacred Heart. He has been taking lessons from the musician for the Church and now is getting a chance to show his stuff to the parish. He is getting great reviews. Unfortunately, the rest of us generally go to the 10AM Mass Sunday, which is the Children's Liturgy, and afterwards is Religious Ed we are all involved in. While we talk about colleges, we have done nothing concrete to decide where that next phase of his life will unfold. We presume he will remain at home, but other options are open to him. He will probably be able to go wherever he wants, and we have good reason to hear about scholarships. He is still involved in the scout troop as Junior Assistant Scoutmaster. He keeps the new scoutmaster on track!

**Gillian** has developed into a pretty good bowler for the Sacred Heart team. Last year, she was happy to break 100. This year, she is consistently in the 120+ range. And she's having fun, which is great! She's meeting kids from other schools and developing friendships. Who knows, she may be the team star next year! She is out of scouts, a mutual decision among the girls in the troop. She continues to do well academically, especially in her beloved Math. Her drawing continues to amaze me - she's good!

**Shannon** has developed nicely in the world of academia. She's gotten great reviews from her teacher about her progress. That relieves my worries. Deanne says that she herself did poorly up to fourth grade, and then it all clicked. That seems to be the pattern that Shannon is following. She has developed a writing talent from her wonderful imagination. Maybe the girls will collaborate on children's books. Shannon can be the author and Gillian the illustrator. Sounds like a good plan to us.

Hope everyone stays well through 2007 and we will keep everyone updated on Alan.

Alan, Deanne, Gillian & Shannon  
2-1-07

Dear Family -  
That much to say from the Middletown Fields! Our daughter Adrienne got engaged this past summer to a fine young man from Ireland, and I guess my brother's European influence finally reached our home. Hopefully a 2007 wedding is in the making. So glad Alan is recuperating fine from surgery, and as we get older those May genes are surfacing. Recently enjoyed a short vacation in Fla. to see the grandkids (sorry Madeline) and everyone here is doing fine and coping with the cold of winter - will write more next time -  
Love  
Mama, Alan & all.