

Dear All,

It is taking longer & longer to read the RR as the families continue to grow - older, as well as newcomers. Welcome to all the newly married, and the new babies.

I just returned 9/26 from a 2 week ^{100R} of England / Scotland + Wales. Very enjoyable, tho the rate of exchange is formidable! (1 pound = \$2.00+)

Back at the farm, I'm busy cleaning up after a successful gardening season. Ben is here helping me company till 11/20 when he returns to his ship. So there is much to do on all the projects under way (barn, trees etc.) Steve is here most weekends.

My dilemma is - while I love being here, either with a house full of company - or - alone, in between, I'd also like to spend more time with Lorraine and family, and in Floral Park, visiting with Aunt Helen & some old friends. Since I may be anyplace over the holidays, I take this opportunity to wish you all a most happy and blessed Holiday Season.

Aunt Claire

Hello from the Dreher's. We're always glad to see the May Family RR start another round. So much news - parents, grandparents, cousins all in the act. It's great to hear the good news, and a call to prayer for the challenges many of us face.

As reported by Eileen, we have sold the Clines family homestead in WH. It was a crazy two months before the sale date of Aug. 23. Many nostalgic items were discovered as we went through the house, and I have given Aunt Claire many photos (probably Nana's?) to be redistributed to all of you at the next family reunion. Now we can concentrate on visiting my mother frequently at the nursing home. She is quite helpless now, and wheelchair-bound. She spent a week in the hospital in August with a respiratory infection. She recognizes us as familiar, but often cannot name us - or sometimes even herself. She does remember some basic prayers, snippets of hymns, old songs and nursery rhymes. She seems unaware of her circumstances most of the time - a blessing. We are grateful for the cheerful, patient caregivers who tend her.

The new WH Public Library building has opened for business. It's been a six-week process getting moved into the new facility, and it'll be some time before we are operating on all cylinders. It's quite a project moving a library! I've been involved in everything from dismantling computer workstations to deciding where to shelve all the adult books in the new building. Check out the website www.whplibrary.org to see how it looks. I'm glad the house sale was over before this project started!

Other news: Kate has returned from her short-term work in Mexico to take a job in Palo Alto, CA. She'll be organizing an online database for genetic plant research. The job is located at Stanford, but she works for a Carnegie Research Foundation. She started Nov. 1st.

Ian and Matt continue in their jobs. Matt will be moving downstairs to the first floor apartment in the Madison, NJ house where he lives. Both are pondering job/career changes, but will move cautiously.

George is playing his usual trifecta - teaching HS, teaching college and coaching track. We've had more visits from retired Frank, and he now uses our house as his home base.

Happy holidays! May we all thank the Lord for His countless blessings to all our families.

Hello to everyone.....

November 20, 2007

I just had a wonderful visit with all of you in reading the letter. There has been so much growth and so many additions to our family it would probably be a real kick for each of us to read our original "news" in the first round of the letter.

Speaking of news.....Patti & Seth finally moved down to NC the beginning of May. It is such a "miracle" that in this day and age we have ALL our family so close by. Andy and Karen and their families are 1 hr away, Patti is 20 min away and Paul, the farthest, is only 4 hrs away. We went to SC for Ciera's 2nd birthday last month and they will be here Thursday for Thanksgiving. We will all be giving our thanks for being together, especially since our 9th grandchild arrived last week. Patti gave birth on Tues Nov 13 (my Dad's 99th birthday) to a beautiful little girl, Chloe Teagan.

On the bad side of things, Augie, Michael, Andy, Karen & I all work in retail so the dreaded Black Friday is upon us. Augie has to work on Thanksgiving 7-3 and on Friday I go in at 3:45 am, Augie at 4:45 am, Karen at 5:00 am and Andy & Mike at a more reasonable 7-8 am. We should all be pretty tired by the time Christmas actually arrives.

Since no one will get this until after the big turkey day, I hope it was a wonderful day for everyone. In spite of the craziness that will be upon all of us the next few weeks, let us all keep the true meaning of the season in our hearts and souls.

LOVE - PEACE - JOY - HAPPINESS TO ALL

Love, Ronnie & Augie

Dear Family,

November 28, 2007

Congratulations on all the new babies! How blessed our family is that all are healthy bundles of joy born into loving families! My thoughts and prayers extend to all generations of the May family, both old and new!

We enjoyed a wonderful Thanksgiving here in Wake Forest. Mom, Ray, Steve, Nicole and Megan came down for the weekend. John's parents and brother also shared in the turkey feast, so we had quite a full house! We look forward to Mom visiting through December 15 (if she can take it--ha ha) at which time we will take her home and visit Lackawack Hill until December 24 when we will return home in time for Santa's big arrival.

Arianna and Kaylin have adjusted wonderfully to their new school which continues to adhere to the year-round school calendar. Love it!!! They are now in 4th and 2nd grades and have fantastic teachers. Kaylin also has a big year coming up at St. Catherine's as she will celebrate Reconciliation in February and Holy Communion in May. They both enjoy gymnastics. Kaylin is in the recreational class and Arianna has been promoted to the progressive class (come January) which means that she will have practice 2x/week for 2 hours. It's a good thing I picked up a *very* part-time job at the gym teaching 2 classes (2 hrs.) per week. This allows me to get half price tuition for the girls!

The boys, who will be 3 in February, are bundles of energy. Fortunately, they have been very healthy and have even graduated from speech therapy. Matthew continues under the care of the craniofacial team at UNC with his next appointment coming up in December, but his cleft lip seems to be healing pretty well. As far as potty training is going...what work!!! I feel like all I'm ever doing is cleaning up pee pee spills, drips, misfires or just plain complete accidents in the pants (or on the sofa or rug...etc). My whole house is going to need to be fumigated after this and my living room sofa is going to be just plain thrown away!

As 2007 draws to a close, allow me to wish everyone well in 2008. May the good Lord keep smiling down on our family, even through the tough times.

Serrano, John, Arianna, Kaylin, Matthew, Mark & Luke
xxx 000

Dec. 3, 2007

Greetings from Milwaukee!

Eight months into retirement and so, far, so good. Lots more healthful swimming, lots more enjoyable reading, and some satisfying volunteer work involving adult literacy. And after 35 years of having every conceivable kind of working hours, a regular schedule that involves something wonderful--- more sleep! AND now I can get back to see Mom and the siblings and the younger generation more often. I'm averaging a trip back east about every six weeks. As Barbara has said, the sale of the longtime Clines homestead has turned me into her boarder. And at Christmastime, the return of her kids will send me wandering off to Bunny and Joe's homes for temporary sleeping quarters. Ah, the adventures of life.

Happy and healthy holidays, everyone!



December 9, 2007

Dear Family,

The hectic time we experience during the first half of the year has been replaced by a relatively tranquil second half. As reported by Mom and Alan, Mom's house in Williamsburg has been sold, Mom is settled at the retirement community and Monica has settled down in the nursing home. Not having to make weekly trips to Williamsburg has allowed me to catch up on some things here (like intense loafing).

In late spring, I brought Monica her electric wheelchair, so she can now zip around the nursing home. Since Monica is among only a few residents that have relatively sharp minds, she needs a lot of stimulation to keep her going. She has cable TV, I bought her a portable DVD player & I make and bring or send copies of movies I record from broadcasts, also bought her a Zune (Microsoft equivalent of an Apple iPod) so she can listen to music, watch videos, view pictures and listen to podcasts in her room, or while she's cruisin' the halls. She's also on our cell phone family plan, so she talks to mom (who is also on our family plan) without additional cost. (Thank GOD! . . . They each had 1400 'IN' (non-chargeable) minutes usage last month.) If you want to say 'hi', Monica's cell number is 757-272-2648 (free on nights/weekends or all the time for Verizon cell users).

At the end of July, Danie & I took a two week vacation in Colorado to see Danie's friend, who has been 'pestering' us to visit her for years. Selwyn and her husband, Mike, live just outside Denver (Lafayette, CO) and also have a 'getaway' in the mountains midway between and west of the Denver to Colorado Springs corridor. Using these two locations as home bases, we took a number of two and three day trips around the state. It was as close to an ideal vacation / getaway as is possible!

Both Chris & Claudine are involved in relationships that seem to grow more serious as the weeks pass. Claudine has been seeing Laughton since May, and Chris has been seeing Kristy since July. Both Laughton and Kristy who have local roots, so there appear to be few reasons for them to move out of the area (better jobs might be one!) We still have Family Night most Sunday evenings, so we often have all four over for dinner (had to replace our 31 year old dining room chairs after 20 years of abuse and 11 years of non-use!).

Danie continues her pursuit of collecting fabrics of every imaginable pattern and color and creating quilts in all forms, from large bed quilts to baby quilts to small wall hangings. Nary has a week gone by when she isn't attending a class or attending a quilt guild meeting. Otherwise, she keeps Sophie (our Shih Tzu) amused and endures daily phone calls during which excruciating details of her parents' daily activities are conveyed.

We ended the last bowling season near the bottom of the league standings. This year, our only non-May teammate hurt his knee while playing golf and had surgery several weeks before the season began. Expecting to be back in a few weeks, we kept the team together, but used Chris as a substitute. So we've been an all-May team thus far. Complications from the knee surgery have kept our teammate from rejoining us as quickly as we hoped, and we just learned that he will require similar surgery on his other knee. So it looks like Chris will be with us for the rest of the season.

This year's softball season went significantly better than last year (recall that we were zero for bazillion during the 2006 season). I don't think we broke .500, but we won a fair number of games (and not JUST by forfeit!). Once again, I consider any season completed without debilitating injury is a victory (although one of my teammates injured a thumb and required surgery).

Since we all seem to be at the age where we discuss our health issues, I'll report that I have thus far been keeping my Type 2 diabetes under control, with only a little help from one pill a day, by keeping much closer to an appropriate diet. By doing so, (and losing 20 pounds) during the last checkup, the doctor agreed to dropping one of my cholesterol pills (\$75 per month saved!). So I'm back to three pills a day; one for each of my three issues (blood pressure, cholesterol and diabetes). Another health issue I faced this year was related to, let's say, liquid waste disposal. While the system had been running at reduced

capacity for some time, it acutely became fully blocked one day in the spring. Without getting into too much detail, I'll say that I was prepared for, but at the last minute avoided surgery (a procedure in the controlled environment of the operating room was successful), and after a short period of recovery, I'm considering joining the fire department. 'nuf said!

Things are about to get really hectic in the electric utility business, particularly in our region. After watching the failed experiments with deregulation of electric utilities in other states, the Virginia legislature, in conjunction with Dominion, chose to go back to a regulated environment. During the trial period of deregulation in Virginia, little interest was expressed by third party power producers to build anything but small co-generation and peaking units. With the growth in the area, and aging base load generating units, there is a serious need for new, base load capacity. Recognizing that a crisis would be looming (indeed, considering how long it takes to build new plants, its upon us!) if nothing was done, Dominion worked with the state legislature to come up with a re-regulation plan, so that Dominion could see to the state's power needs for the foreseeable future. The new arrangement will provide incentives to Dominion to build new base load generation, with particularly goals and incentives for 'green' power. Among the 'green' power sources will be the *increased* outputs from our four existing in-state nuclear units (turbine & generator replacements), and the new nuclear unit at our North Anna site. While we haven't committed to building the new nuclear unit, the company submitted an application to the NRC to build & operate it just last week.

Wishes for a happy and healthy holiday season (and I do mean CHRISTMAS!) to all!

Eric & Danie

Dear Family,

December 26, 2007

As one of the youngest of the cousins, I'm writing this on my 44th birthday. A belated MERRY CHRISTMAS to all!!!!

2007 was a heck of a year for me here at the Times. We finally moved to our new office location in early July, so the first 6 months of the year were beyond brutal. It was a nice quiet summer and early fall, then things ~~got~~ ^{got} up with fun ~~like~~ like a new system rollout (SAP) and ~~compliance~~ compliance. (All started to Auditing requirements) ??

Weekends and assorted time off continue to be spent at the farm. Mom is doing well and Ken is on his usual 70 day rotation (at Sea/at the farm). Ray comes up on occasion and we continue with projects such as timber stand ~~management~~ milling lumber, barn ~~renovation~~ renovation, etc. This spring we will even try our hand at boiling sap to produce pure maple syrup!!!! Lorraine and family were up ~~before~~ before Christmas and ~~everyone~~ everyone had a nice time playing in the nine inches of snow.

Nicole turned 14 in September and is now in High School.!! She continues with advanced Art classes and will join track in the spring. Megan turned 12 in October and now in 7th grade. Both girls have full social calendars and make me proud every day with their positive outlook on life. (calendars)

HAPPY NEW YEAR to everyone!!!!!!

Love to all,

("Editor's Note" - Steve's entry here arrived terribly smudged, & disappearing with every movement of the paper. Bill says it looks as if it was printed with a laser & something was wrong with the toner. (?) I tried to print over it to preserve it, but I'm sorry I couldn't make out some of the words.)
Bernadette

1/8/08

a all

Dear Family,

Happy New Year to all! First I wanted to apologize to those of you who sent us Christmas cards, but didn't receive one from us this year; while I started out sending a few, I simply ran out of time! This Christmas was different for all of us Chinese, without our family home & with my mother in her new living situation. However I can report that we were able to bring her out of the nursing home for the Chinese Christmas party, graciously hosted by Joe & Mary Jo. Not only were all 5 of her children & their spouses there, but all 12 of her grandchildren & Aunt Claire & Raymond as well! While she really doesn't understand exactly who we all are, my mother was the center of attention in her wheelchair, watching everything, opening a few presents, & even being able to sing a few Christmas carols! God bless Barbara & George for handling Mom's transportation to and from the party!

Now we're already back to the routine - how fast the holidays come & go! I'm still doing home tutoring, so I'm always in the car, either driving to tutor, visiting my mom at the nursing home, or trying to squeeze in both! After a few "iffy" weeks, Kristen LOVES Mariet College & is doing well there. This fall, she took Alan's Billy, Gillian & Deanne on a tour of the campus, as both of the kids are considering it. But there already is another descendant of the May family at Mariet - Kristen is good friends with Cynthia Hagenais, a cousin once removed from the Frances Hennessey branch. The two girls had been at Christensen Family Reunions at the farm without knowing each other till now! Michelle is still in pretty much the same situation as earlier this year - medical tests don't show any problems physically, but there's no easy solutions to her attention problems, obsessive compulsive behavior & vocal tics. We keep praying & trying. She does have a new girlfriend with whom she gets along very well, so that, at least, is a blessing. As for Danny, his interests continue to be very eclectic - saxophone (esp. jazz), travel soccer, crosscountry team at school, robotic & biotechnology programs & rollerblading. He will make his confirmation this spring, & I can't believe that my "baby" will be heading for the high school in September. Best wishes to all for a super 2008! Love, Bernadette & Jim

X

1/28/08

Dear All,

I heard about the passing of Aunt Helen. Please know that I had Fr. Pio celebrate a Mass for her on the day of her funeral. I can just imagine the parties that the Mays are having up there.

Nothing new to report and I want to get this out. Be assured of my prayers for you all!

Love,
Theresa

Greetings from Williamsburg, VA

2/6/08

Happy New Year to all – one month has passed by already in year 2008! I like the way Ronnie started her message writing that she just had a wonderful visit with all of you in reading the RR letter. That is the way I feel and that is how I will know about all of you by whatever you write. Most of you I will never see you and it is nice to find out what is happening to you and your family.

Monica is doing quite well at Walter Reed. She knows a lot of the people there – all the nurses and aids and gets along quite well with everyone. Most of the time she has a cheerful attitude about her and kids around with a lot of the aids and nurses. In fact, one of the aids told Monica that she wishes more of the residents would be like Monica – then it would be a better and nicer place in which to work. She goes to therapy in that she goes there and does the exercises as best she can. She wants to keep up doing something with her legs and arms. She scoots around the place in her power chair and for the most part is happy there.

Me – well I ended last year and started off this year with a bang! I was in the ER on Christmas morning and was told I have shingles – on my face! from the chin, inside and outside my mouth and up the cheek up to my ear and up a little on the hairline – all on the left side of my face. Ouch, ouch, ouch! It is painful. Now, 1 1/2 months later, I don't have the blisters and swelling, but I still have the pain. The worst thing outside of the pain – is that I can't sleep. Yesterday, after a very painful and non-sleep night I called the doctor and finally I got a pain medicine that worked for me. I'm sleeping but I sleep at all different times of the day. I woke up this morning after not being able to sleep – I did some things around my desk and then got drowsy. I went on my lounge chair and woke up at 10 a.m. because someone was knocking at my door. I wonder when I would have awakened if the pharmacy delivery guy hadn't knocked. I did have a nap later on in the day.

I know Monica misses my visits – and I miss driving over to see her and spend time with her - but I don't want to drive there now – I might fall asleep at the wheel - and a woman offered to drive me to see Monica, but I don't know if I'd keep awake for several hours. It is an hour drive there and an hour drive back and 1-2 hours spent with her. I think I'd fall asleep!

Well, that's what's happening here – nothing good. Monica and I can really use your prayers.- that I will get better real soon and I can do the things I used to do. And I won't have any more pain. For Monica, that she will keep on the real even keel she is on now. I'm so glad she is as good as she is. Months ago I was wondering what will happen to her. But she got her mind back – she has her memory back – oh! what a memory – she's outstanding in that department! She remembers everything!

Well, that's it for now – I'm sorry it's not real good news from here...but keep the prayers going and it will be soon. My love and prayers to all of you! Monica is always praying for everyone, too.

Love, Penny and Monica

Dear Family,

3/13/08

This letter is like a newspaper, including the sections for sports, weather, travel, real estate, baby announcements, and unfortunately, obituaries. Eric, maybe we can sell some advertising! ... I guess that's the way you think when you run your own business, especially when it revolves around internet marketing. To see my ever-growing portfolio of websites, go to www.AttractWeb.com/portfolio.html.

When I got this 'edition' of the RR in the mail, it seemed as if I'd just recently received it, but that's because I was blessed to see the entire Clines family at their holiday party and at Aunt Helen's beautiful funeral mass. This year's **May Party at the farm (6/28)** will be in her honor. With our busy lives, this letter keeps our family together. I hope that our family website can spark interest in even a few of the newer generations to do the same. Photos from previous Family parties are posted there and I welcome emailed photos to add to the site: www.StillConnected.com/may

No huge changes in my life. Still have two "Bobs" living here. One is only here 4 nights during the week since he has a family in northern Jersey and works down here in Wilmington. I sing with choir when I can fit it in between monthly weekends at the farm and various running events. In October, I ran **Marine Corps Marathon** in DC and I think I already bragged to everyone about finishing 3rd out of 165 Delawareans and top 3.5% of the 20,000 runners overall. Bored?.... then visit www.attractweb.com/run/mcm07.html for photos. Better yet, see my re-designed www.RebelRunners.com for motivation to run (or walk) with friends.

By the way, I'm using this whole sheet since my cousin Joe started a new one and I didn't want this space to go to waste ;-) Instead of hitting Boston Marathon with some of my friends, I'm doing NJ on 5/4 (in Long Branch), just to check out something new.

I write this as my mom is on a 2 week trip to Malta and Sicily and Ken is at the Farm "sugaring". He's collecting sap from Sugar Maples and boiling it down to syrup. Too bad he was all alone up there for several days while the sap was pouring out faster than he could collect it and had to make an emergency trip to pick up a few large tanks to hold it in. All of this as he's tending a fire in a wood stove to keep the process going - outside, in cold, rainy weather. I think I'm happy sitting comfortably in front of my computer, pecking away at the keys!

My latest internet business venture is one that I hope you'll check out (since there is no price markup at all). "Travel" is the most searched for term on Google, so I'm happy to offer the same services as Expedia and Travelocity to book travel through my own new site. Please Visit www.TravelUSAandWorld.com and **bookmark it** for your travel needs. Tell friends.

A few days ago I ran a half marathon here in Wilmington with a bunch of friends. The evening before, I hosted my 5th annual pasta dinner for 18 guests. The highlight was display of a new set of shelves for my growing beer bottle collection (750+). I built the shelves from birch trees at the farm that Steve & Ken cut, dragged out of the woods, milled, planed and sanded into 1" x 6" planks. Same process as for the huge 12" x 12" beams in the barn (minus the finishing). They even milled siding for the barn, which you'll see in June.

Stay healthy!

Randy

Dear Family,

Thank you for keeping us in your prayers.

As I'm sure you've all heard, our mother (Aunt Helen) died in January, after a long battle with Alzheimer's disease. Though it's never easy to say goodbye, it comforts us to know that she is no longer suffering. Thanks to Barbara's tireless efforts, and the companionship of her aide, Leta, Mom was able to stay at home up until the last year of her life.

As Bernadette mentioned, we were able to "spring" her from the nursing home for the Clines family party at Christmastime—one last visit with all of her children and grandchildren.

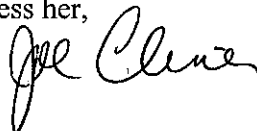
Mom was a proud woman, who instilled in us a sense of duty, and who accepted life's challenges with dignity and grace. Whenever one of us encountered some sort of difficulty, her advice was simple: "Offer it up."

As I watch my own children use the computer as they write immaculate essays for school, I can't help but remember the hours that Mom spent, never complaining, typing school papers, turning our handwritten chicken scrawl into coherent reports.

The story I like to tell about Mom dates back to 1986, when a bunch of us headed to Lindberg Street for Sunday dinner. Only after we'd had our fill of roast beef did she confess that she had some tightness in her chest, and agreed to be taken to the hospital. Deep down, she probably knew she was having a heart attack, but didn't want to spoil dinner for the rest of us.

As Sister Theresa suggested, Mom is undoubtedly having a ball in heaven, reunited with Dad and the rest of her family. We miss her terribly, but she continues to inspire us.

God Bless her,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Joe Clines".

Dear Family, I didn't want to 'spoil' the beautiful tribute to Aunt Helen by Joe (+ everyone else) so I'm writing on the back. Gammie gave birth to CAMDEN Rus on Feb 28th at 7# 14oz & just as sweet as can be. He's gained over 1/2# in 3 weeks & is filling out so cute. The only dread having to go back to work in a few weeks. Everyone will be here for Easter Weekend & Gammie + Cousin came in early & will stay 5 days, so I get to hold him some more. Yea!!! It will be Easter in a few days & I wish everyone a blessed Easter. Love Madeline + Raehl



215

24 April 2008

Dear Family,

We are all grateful for everyone's good wishes and the memories they have shared with us after Mom's passing. Even though the progression of Alzheimer's is such that it seems like you are saying a very long, very slow goodbye to the person you love, in certain ways Mom kept her personality to the end and I am surprised to find that I miss visiting her.

There is not much that is new on my end. We're in the last marking period of the school year, and already my kids and their friends are starting to get spring fever. Brian will be done with his first year of college in a few weeks. He seems to have made a good adjustment and gotten decent grades. His plan at this point is to major in Electrical Engineering. EE requires a lot of Math, which is his strong point. Unfortunately for him, it also requires a lot of Computer Science, which he hasn't taken yet and doesn't know if he will like. I'm sure he will get it all sorted out.

Emily is finishing up her sophomore year in HS. She's had the usual teenage ups and downs this year, and has attended so many Sweet Sixteen parties that I have lost track. Many of the ups and downs have come from the same source, a terribly difficult history course (AP World History). She chose this course, and enjoys the challenge, but it's been a tremendous amount of work, and now she has to take the dreaded AP test, which covers every civilization on the planet since the beginning of agriculture. She has continued her extracurricular interests, most notably field hockey in the fall, but is taking things easy this spring, doing community softball instead of a school sport. She's continuing with the school orchestra and still loves studying German, although she does not love her German teacher.

Colin is enjoying the wrap-up to his elementary school career as he finishes 6th grade. He will move on to middle school next year, so for right now he is King of the Hill. His class is excited about their farewell party and other milestones. Colin achieved a personal dream of his own this year when he finally got to present a project at "Museum Night". This is an enrichment activity for some 6th graders and he has been planning for Museum Night ever since he was four years old and saw Brian's project. For that one night he was one of those over-achievers who drives everyone else nuts, because he had to have three trifolds to do justice to his topic of "Tornadoes and Hurricanes".

I have some news to report for Frank of a medical nature. His eye doctor discovered something abnormal at a vision test that led to the discovery of a growth on his pituitary gland, which the optic nerves apparently pass by on their way to the brain. He has already had surgery which was successful in removing the bulk of this growth (OK, a benign tumor) and has recovered well. He will need checkups and monitoring, but should have no long-term health issues.

On that happy note, I will say

Love to All,

Eileen

Dear One and All,

Within 2 months, I hope we all get to see everyone at "the Farm". We're looking forward to that.

2008 began with Deanne taking a weekend trip to Paradise Island for her nephew's wedding. Nice way to start the year! I couldn't go, and the kids are still reluctant to fly, so D had to carry her own bags!

Deanne, Bill & Gill were on hand to greet the Pope at St Joseph Seminary last month. The event did not go as well as the Archdiocese would have everyone believe. There was little communication. Kids from the grade & high school were trapped away from their chaperones for most of the day by security. There was also little water and food to be had. In spite of that, I hope they will remember it a good experience that will help them at some point. Locally, the visit was very well received. He greatly improved his stand-offish perception with a warm smile and by listening to the WTC families and the disabled. It is a much-needed boost for a sagging Local Church stuck in closings and the like. Cardinal Egan is loathed by most. Rumor is that he will soon leave- maybe to go to Rome???

In January, our parish was saddened by the sudden death of one of our secretaries. She and her pal have been in the office for umpteen years – longer than most parishioners were here. Upon Loy's death, Deanne stepped in to get the parish through the first days. She was off from Mercy at the time. She has not left. Now she is working part time at Mercy and part @ SH. The Pastor, Fr. John is thrilled, as D is as much plugged into history and names as the other secretary, and knows how things get done. She will leave Mercy this month. She maintains her role as Religious Ed coordinator at SH. She now has sessions on both Sunday (grades 1-6) and Monday (grades 7-8). Her new job will interfere with family vacations, as she only has a week off this year. I will be off 2 weeks Aug 18- Sep 2. Of course, part of my time off will be spent settling Bill into college. But the rest of the time I hope to be contemplating the meaning of life on the beach or off in the woods near our house in the Poconos.

Just a few weeks ago, the parish received another blow. Last year, we lost our newly-ordained priest who was appointed to formation work for the Province. Now, our pastor was elected Provincial, so he will be leaving after two very dynamic years with us. He has been a real blessing for us. Of course, he will appoint his successor here, so we have every reason to believe we will get a quality pastor, but it still hurts. He leaves us with a priest who was ordained last year, a priest who is semi-retired, and a priest who is recovering from cancer and cannot walk much. We're just not sure what we will be left with once the dust settles, and many in the parish are wondering how long any priest will stay with us. Not good for rebuilding the community.

Bill has had a long, convoluted decision making process that has led him to Iona College. Marist was the runner-up: he would have been with Kristen Zirkel and Cynthia Dabenais (of the Hennesseys). Both Colleges seem comparable to me. I preferred Marist earlier, but have warmed up to Iona. Then again, no one is asking me my opinion. Someone invited Bill to attend their Sunday evening Mass, as he was interested to know if he could continue to play music at the College. On the second visit, he brought his wind controller equipment and is now an accepted member of the ensemble. (He plays weekly at SH's 5PM Saturday Mass, ordinations & other events.) He was invited to play at Iona's baccaulaureate Mass next month, but it doesn't fit into his schedule. He should be the valedictorian for his class, and also spoke at the annual HS fundraising dinner-dance last month. Graduation is May 30. He is amazing in so many ways.

Gillian is finishing out her junior year. So, we will go through the college choice routing again next year. She will definitely stay home, and would skip it if she could. She does very well academically (steady first honors), but the thought of another 4 years of study, papers, classes and whatnot has her troubled. She did visit the College of New Rochelle last week, and was pleased by it. That would bring her within a mile or so from Bill. There are other possibilities nearby – we'll see how that goes. She's looking forward to being a full counselor with Bill at the Yonkers Summer Day Camp, where Shannon will once again attend. The campers will be lucky to have her.

Shannon learned this year that Yonkers will be closing her school at the sixth grade level this year. Therefore, she had to pick another school. She chose Mark Twain Middle School. It continues her Montessori tradition, but it is as far away from the house as you can be in Yonkers. She'll probably be on the bus before I'm on the train in the morning. She's almost as tall as G & D, and with her grandfather's blue-grey eyes, she's a beauty. That, of course, is my unbiased opinion.

My heart is doing fine, though my diabetes is not. My doc increased my meds, though I have not gotten myself to be smart about diet and exercise. I'm not sure when I'll grow up, if ever.

Work has been challenging due to a change in DB's model for Finance. All manual processes are being off shored to Mumbai. I had 2 men from there in training here for 3 months up to the year end, and now they perform many of the functions my team used to perform, and I am setting up another batch of processes to give them. One of my onshore team retired last year, one resigned, and another is on LTD. Of the four remaining, 1 is an analyst scheduled to leave my group in October. In the short term, I should not have to fire anyone, but over time, we may all be given the heave. There is talk of moving us to Jersey City (many other groups are already there) and then there is also talk of revamping our Jacksonville, Fla. office to house Finance. Since I have to work at least 12 more years to cover Shannon's tuition, I will have to manage these changes carefully. There is no probability of changing jobs with the current state of affairs. I am still involved with the parish Scripture Studies, and D & I still run the Children's Liturgy. I'm done with scouts and all other activities for now.

Monica is undergoing hernia surgery today – this is why I held the RR letter. All seems to be well – she's back in the nursing home resting comfortably. You'll hear more when the RR hits Williamsburg.

Deanne, Alan, Bill, Gillian & Shannon

Dear Family,

So great to hear from all of you. Some good news — some sad. Well Aunt Claire — you are the matriarch of the May clan now! Our family is growing also. Adrienne, married last Aug. is preparing for the arrival of her first in June (#5 grandchild) (Ronnie you way ahead!) Our last Robert was accepted to Stevens Institute of Tech and will start his college career this summer at his brother's Alma Mater. I seem to be having a hard time with the impending Empty nest. I am still at the doctor's office giving the little babies their shots, and there isn't much news here to report. We are looking forward to summer and am seriously contemplating selling our house (if only the market would get better, Our 4 Bedroom is much too big and expensive to keep — Alex had hernia surgery in Jan. and developed 2 large blood clots. He is presently on Coumadin therapy for the past 4 months. I guess we are getting old. Wishing you all a great summer!

Love from Middletown!

Alex, Maria + family