

Dear Family,

4/16/11

Snow, ice and consistently freezing temps describes our long winter (as I write this, temps were below freezing, even today). The weather was kind to the maple sap, however, and we had a very busy but rewarding sugaring season. Maple syrup, anyone? Now it's onto gardening season, and again our plans are ambitious. My interesting trips to Morocco and Tunisia last fall prove to be well timed. I luckily missed the chaos that has befallen the middle east, starting in Tunisia. Guess I won't be returning there anymore.

Much love to you all,
Aunt Claire

Dear Family,

April 27, 2011

Happy spring! Well, we finally have some warmer temperatures in the last few days, but the rain has been relentless. Easter Break was *just peachy* with three stir crazy 6 yr. old boys stuck in the house!

By far, the two craziest times of year for a family are the Christmas season and spring/end-of-the-school year. All five kids are in Little League—Arianna (13) and Kaylin (10) on the “Mudcats” and Matthew, Mark and Luke (6) on the “Indians.” Practice has been scheduled and rescheduled more times than I care to remember due to weather. As far as I know, opening day is still set for Saturday. On top of all this, Arianna’s gymnastics schedule is heating up as she’s preparing for another meet May 7th. Kaylin is also taking an art class on Tuesday afternoons. Through this same program, Kaylin starred, over the winter, in a production of “~~Charlie~~ and the Chocolate Factory” where she played both Mrs. Beuregarde and an “umpa-loompa.” Here in ~~small-~~ town America this might as well have been Broadway as the place was packed to the rafters for the performance. Excellent!

The boys have transitioned well to kindergarten. Now, as Matthew’s teacher calls them, they’re FIT’s...~~first~~ graders in training! It’s hard to believe their first year of “real” school is almost over already. The good news is that they’ve come home on “the green light” most of the time and have actually learned a few things...~~not as~~ much as I would have liked however, with a winter full of “snow” days resulting in school closings or 2 or 3 hour delays. This 3 hour delay was newly instituted this year! What a joke! Don’t get me started...

Thankfully, CCD will be coming to an end on May 15th. Although I actually enjoyed my first 8th grade Confirmation class, this will be one less chore for the week. I will be free of both preparing my lesson and getting the girls to class at 8:30AM Sun. mornings, with John then bringing the boys for 10:15 Mass in a separate car.

Please keep mom (Aunt Claire) in your prayers. Ken left her (literally, he just went out to sea) with very ambitious garden plans. I help as best I can (in *all* my spare time) but her legs, all originating from her spine, are in such bad shape and causing her such intense pain that we’re all very concerned about her. The will is strong, but at 80 the body is weak...and failing.

To end on a happy note, welcome all new family members. We must pray for them also as they are our future!

Love, *Arianna, John, Arianna, Kaylin, Matthew, Mark & Luke* *YXY000*

5/11/11

Hi to all. May is finally bringing a touch of Spring to LI. Very slowly. At least the lilacs are blooming! Hope you are all experiencing the joy of Easter and Spring renewal.

Not much new with the Dreheres. George is in the midst of his first retired spring and is enthusiastically attacking garden projects. We have much larger growing areas - all for veggies. George cooks at least 4 nights a week and plans to harvest many of his needed ingredients. I remain the tomato plant expert. George and retirement get along pretty well. He is always doing projects and taking care of 99% of household chores! Coaching track rounds out his schedule. I continue to work full-time (no reason to quit now!). George gives his 90-year-old Mom a good chunk of his attention too. She remains alone in her home in Hicksville... for now.

We had a wonderful vacation out west in early autumn, enjoying warm (80's) weather as we drove from Big Sur to Oregon/Idaho/Wyoming/North Dakota. Saw Lassen, Crater Lake, Yellowstone and Theodore Roosevelt (ND) national parks. We finished with a visit with Frank. Our first autumn travel ever!

Ian, Kate and Matt (and his Carolyn) remain employed (a blessing!) and healthy. We will gather together in late May and join the Zirkels to celebrate the wondrous 60th birthday of "Bobby and Bunny". In fact, all the Clines family will be together for the commemoration - and Joe and Mary Jo will graciously host. A fine way to commence our next decade! (George already started last December.) Mmmm ... these "big" birthday years are coming quicker and quicker! Gotta laugh about it, right?

It's always good to catch up and connect with all of you. Some of you already have discovered that I am now on **Facebook**. Some HS friends have leaned on everyone in our Class of 69 to reunite in September and Facebook makes it easy to communicate - and see how we have all *gently* aged. I don't do much on there, but I am friends with many of you and enjoy your photos and activities. Maybe when I retire I will jump in a bit more. But we'll always have the RR! Eric, a special thanks for those photos. I have looked at your web album and it is pure nostalgia and wonderment. What memories! May we all be grateful for FAMILY and all our blessings. Wishing you all a safe and healthy summer (minus humidity and heat waves!).

Our love - Barbara & George

Greetings to all,

June 2, 2011

I am guilty again of holding the letter longer than I should. Madeline and Ralph were just here for the weekend and we enjoyed our time with them in spite of the fact that they brought the 90° temps with them!! We are all doing well here in the Carolinas. Some of the kids are looking forward to the end of school (the bookworms are sorry to have it end). Our oldest grandchild, Ashley will be entering HS next semester! It doesn't seem possible.

Augie is doing well. His PSA #s were zero last visit. Good news!!

I am looking forward to a road trip the end of June to FL with a friend of mine. She has a new granddaughter who just happens to live in Tampa, which is so close to Madeline. Then in August Augie & I are being treated to a cruise to Alaska with Patti and Seth and his family. We are so excited as this will be our first ever cruise and I have always wanted to see Alaska.

Hope everyone enjoys a peaceful, relaxing summer without nightmare storms or heat.

LOVE you all.

Love Ronnie & Augie

6/7/11 2-263

Hi from Milwaukee!

... Where right now it's about 95 degrees - or 80 more than it usually is when I make my 'winter report' to y'all. Good thing the pool at my apartment complex is as great as ever!

As for the summer plans, it'll be the usual - lots of baseball and daily swims. Hope you all have a blast, too!

Jude

June 14, 2011

Dear Family,

2011 has certainly been full of challenges thus far.

First and foremost; Danie's mother, Pauline Le Bris, passed away last Thursday (6/9). 'Nanny' had been complaining (to family... not a doctor) about weakness in her hands, and legs since last summer and had fallen several times recently. Two months ago, she began having difficulty breathing and was taken to the hospital. A blood clot was found in one lung, so clot-busting drugs were administered and she was sent home after an overnight stay. Several days later, after losing her appetite and continuing to have breathing problems, she was again taken to the hospital in Williamsburg and was subsequently transferred to the Medical College of Virginia (MCV) in Richmond. There, she stayed in the ICU for several days until she was finally diagnosed with ALS (a.k.a., Lou Gehrig's Disease). After spending two weeks in MCV, she was transferred to a nursing home in Williamsburg. That is where she passed away. In keeping with her wishes, she was immediately cremated (no services or viewings). Danie's brother, Richard, made two short trips here while she was in the hospital / nursing home and will make a longer trip during the July 4th week to help 'Poppi' with his affairs. We'll have a family memorial during that week.

Danie underwent a long put-off mammography when she started to feel discomfort in an area where she had bruised herself months earlier by walking into the sharp top corner of an open car door. The mammography revealed a mass. A needle biopsy revealed old pooled blood, (consistent with a bruise) but no cancer. It was recommended that the mass be removed, and the outpatient surgery was performed in February. Several days later, we learned that the removed tissue was tested, and that carcinoma was detected. An MRI was then performed to get a better look, and to plot the area of concern for another surgical procedure. The tissue removed in this procedure was tested and found to have clear tissue in all directions, but one. So, it was back in again for another go. The sliver removed in the third surgery achieved the desired clear tissue all around. As a precaution, radiology was prescribed. Normally, this would be a six week regimen: one dose a day every week day. Fortunately, however, the physical attributes of her condition made her eligible for a new treatment option, in which a balloon, with multiple tubes and sensors is inserted into the skin, and during treatment sessions, the radioactive source is driven into the balloon to irradiate the area at precisely the right location within the body. This technique required two doses a day, but for only five days. The worst part was putting up with the protruding tubes for a week. Bottom line: she's done and all is well. This was caught so early, that one wonders if the cancer would even have been detectable during the mammogram, if it weren't for the bruised tissue. Also, thank goodness she qualified for the fast radiation treatment, or she would have been dealing with her mother's issues while still dealing with her own.

While Danie was undergoing all of the medical procedures, the owner of the quilt shop that she has been working at signed an agreement to sell it. The change in ownership happened today (6/14). Communications between the old and new owners and the staff have been very poor, with some changes in store hours being communicated to customers before the staff was told. Ugh!

The only changes in status of our offspring is that Claudine received a promotion. She is now the 'team lead' in the Medicare Provider Enrollment processing area of ACS. Unfortunately, Kristy has still not landed a full-time job (although she

has been a finalist in several). But, she has begun working part-time again with the same company that has worked for and been laid off by multiple times.

The bowling season ended with our 'Wastin' Away' team taking second place, by virtue of winning the first-half mixed team honors, then winning the season ending mixed-team playoff. We're in the middle of Softball season, but because of issues with Nanny, and work 'crises', I have missed an unusually large number of games.

In December, we finally donated our '94 Eagle Vision, with 241,000 miles on it and still running well, to the Church, and it was immediately passed on to a needy individual. We picked up a 2010 Mazda 5. The Mazda is only our sixth car in our 34 years of marriage.



Central and eastern Virginia is not particularly know for tornados, but during the active period last month, and on separate occasions, one passed within five miles of Monica's nursing home in Gloucester: causing severe damage to a school and several homes, another within ten miles of our home, (a reported sighting less than four miles away was never confirmed) and one went through the Surry Power Station site (across the James River from Williamsburg), causing a dual-unit trip and extensive damage in the switchyard (That's a dumpster sitting on a transformer in the picture).



The Japanese earthquake and tsunami, and the subsequent damage to the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear complex have, of course, prompted immediate response from the US nuclear industry and the NRC to verify readiness for any such 'beyond design basis' event. Needless to say, since my group is responsible for the seismic design of our plants, we have been asked many questions. It is interesting to note that while the Japanese earthquake itself was significantly stronger than the 'design' earthquake, we are as-yet unaware of any damage that resulted to the safety systems of the plants as a result of the quake itself. Unfortunately, it was the tsunami that was fourteen feet taller than the flood wall that did them in. The Japanese event is causing us to move further in the direction of providing diverse backup equipment & procedures for coping with 'beyond design basis' events (In spite of the rash of tornados, floods and fires, US plants simply don't have the magnitudes of natural phenomena that Japanese plants are subject to).

Eric & Danie

June 28, 2011

Dear Family,

So the last time I wrote I was doing College Tours. Now that Nicole has graduated with honors I get to start PAYING for College as she will be attending FIT here in the city this fall. She will be majoring in Art Therapy. I guess I can keep an eye on her since it's just 13 blocks from my office here in midtown, with just Madison Square Garden between us. Nicole very much enjoyed her Prom just last week, and Megan went also since her boyfriend was graduating the same school.

Meg happened to have an outstanding year academically so now the push will be on for her to start thinking about college. She will start her junior year this fall and although she has many interes4 she's still undecided on a potential career path.

I've continued on at The Times, although lots of changes make things more precarious all the time. Sounds like it's time for a contingency plan! Since we have some fun toys in the country like a sawmill, tractors and trucks, we've started some small scale contract jobs. Tapping Ray's Webmaster talents, he's created the Lackawack Lumber website where we're offering an array of lumber products as well as marketing our increasingly productive Maple Syrup business. If you need some lumber, let us know we deliver!!!

Mom is well and she's been managing with Lorraine's help in the garden. Ken returns from sea this Friday so he'll be able to take over most of the weeding and harvesting duties.

Enjoy the summer!!!!

Love to all,

Steve

Happy Summer to all!

2-265

We were happy to hear that, despite some "scates" & some chronic illnesses, all of the family is doing pretty well. Joe & Mary Jo hosted a really nice party for Barbara & me, to help us "ease into" the next decade. All 22 members of our particular Clings Family branch were there, as well as some old friends, some of whom we've known for over 50 years!! This year has turned into the "year of reunions" - as Barbara mentioned, there will be a reunion of high school friends for a weekend in Wash. DC in Sept., ~~the~~ a reunion of my old Northwest Airlines co-workers on the 10th anniversary of our office's closing, & a reunion of all Bill's girl cousins at the Foxwoods Casino in October. Plus whatever party/reunion I can come up with for Bill's 60th birthday in Dec.

Kristen graduated from Marist College "cum laude", with a lovely diploma and certification to teach math in Grades 7-12. But no teaching job came with the honors!! Like most new graduates around here, she hasn't found any teaching opening yet. Fortunately she is so far working full-time in the "price posting" dept. of an alcohol distributor, while she continues to send resumes & consider alternate careers. For the second summer, we are doing a lot of short trips showing Danny various colleges, as he's entering his senior year. We were very lucky that Bed, Bath & Beyond remembered the wonderful job that Kristen had done for them & gave Dan a job, even though he's only 16. Michelle has a special ed summer program with which she's not too thrilled, but it keeps her busy. And my "summer job" is to research better what's out there for her to do as she ages out of high school!

Hope you're all enjoying good weather & lots of fun activities! Love, Bernadette,
Bill & gang

Dear All,

7/19

Things have been very quiet here in the convent. We are all well and living the peaceful contemplative life. In the fall we will be joined by 2 more young women - we continue to grow!

Please know that you are in my daily prayers -
have a wonderful Summer!

Theresa

Greetings from Gloucester and Williamsburg,

July 29th 2011 (Danie's Birthday)

Seven months passed since I last wrote to you in the RR and Monica is now in her own private room. I didn't think this could ever happen, but it did, but not without some frustration. Yes, she was offered a private room but negotiations got mixed up and the room was given to a man. Then about a week later, she was offered the same room again - it seems he wanted the room Monica was put into and she wanted the room they put the man into. Then problems were worked out and Monica is in the room she wants and he has the room he wants. Now she's in Room W32 and has more space and likes it. She can now control things like the TV and temperature, etc. Alan refers to Monica as "queen of Walter Reed". Yes, she does dart around the halls saying "hi!" to other residents and to staff members and reminds them of what has to be done that day or hopefully in the not too distant future especially in things pertaining to her. Please say a prayer that all this continues to be as it is now. Back July 8th and 9th Monica was in the hospital re. her overly extended colon - but in the ER more xrays and tests were taken and her doctor and the surgeon saw the colon was okay and she was sent back to WR. Last December I wrote that Monica was still waiting for work to be done on her teeth - well, she's still waiting! Her power chair is working okay. I hope it continues that way.

As for me...I have lost between 50-57 lbs. I still do therapy - I am on the NuStep or CardioGlide for exercise - I do not play billiards anymore, but I still do some weight lifting. It's not easy to walk like I should and walk like my body wants to walk. The trainer and I go over the menu every week to discuss what I will eat. I do not want to lose any more weight, but to maintain the weight I am. Everything is a challenge.

Well, that's it for Monica and me - I still like reading all the things happening to all of you. Let's keep up the good work! We still keep you in our prayers - please keep us in yours.

Love to all of you, Aunt Rosemary and Monica

GREETINGS FROM MALVERNE -

WE HAVE MUCH TO BE THANKFUL FOR HERE -- HAVING DODGED A BULLET WITH HURRICANE IRENE. WE HAD NO DAMAGE, THOUGH I DID WORRY THAT WE MIGHT RUN OUT OF BEER AS WE AWAITED THE STORM.

AS I WRITE, EVERYONE IS GOING BACK TO SCHOOL - JOSEPH TO FORDHAM, TERENCE TO CHAMINADE HS AND KIRA TO KELENBERG HS. MARY JO REPORTED BACK TO WORK FOR A NEW SCHOOL YEAR YESTERDAY.

WE'VE HAD A LOT OF COMINGS AND GOINGS AT CBS. KATIE COURIC EXITED IN MAY. EVERYONE HERE LOVES HER REPLACEMENT, SCOTT PELLEBY. AND THE RATINGS ARE GOOD. SOMETIMES CHANGE IS A GOOD THING.

BARBARA & BERNADETTE'S 60TH BIRTHDAY PARTY WAS A FABULOUS SUCCESS.

THE WEATHER COOPERATED AND ENJOYING HAD A WONDERFUL TIME.

LOOKING AHEAD - SOME OF US WILL BE TRAVELING TO MILWAUKEE FOR A BIG PARTY THAT FRANK IS THROWING ON 11/4.

HOPE EVERYONE IS WELL
Love Joe Clines

9/12/11

Dear Family,

Yesterday was Patriot Day and I found time as usual to contemplate & pray on my 14 mile training run. Last time I wrote was days after the Jets season ended. Last night they kicked off their season with big comeback win. A great reminder that you've got to play all 4 quarters in life as well.

Ken just left for sea. Steve got engaged to a great lady in the neighborhood. Lorraine's triplets are starting 1st grade. Mom is always in her garden (& brings her cordless phone there to answer calls for "Lackawack Lumber."). I barely find time for web design since I'm coordinating 2 races this year (300 + 400 participants) and became DE state rep for Road Runners Club of America. But life is good -- even though I periodically get frustrated with online technical problems. :-)

Take care!

Ray

Dear Family Sept 21, 2011

Thanks Ray for your nice note re: Hurricane Season & congrats to Steve on being engaged. Also, I cannot believe my "little" cousins are all turning 60ish. I, as a 6 year old, remember all the excitement when the "twins" were born now Monika too is 60! Congrats on your own private room. My family had a little excitement when we were on our way to support "24 Hours of Sooty" in July in NC. (where my son-in-law Stephen & Ronnie's sons Paul & Michael & Seth) biked over 160 miles each for Pediatric Cancer Research. We got a phone call that our little cabin in NC burned down. We were able to stay at a neighbors (as he was heading back to Fla) so Susan & family, James & family were all coming to the cabin for the week & we were able to stay there & enjoy the rest of the week by the river. The cabin will be able to be rebuilt & will make it a little bigger, which will be good as Heather & Beau expect baby #2 in March. After Kai, who is 6 years old now, we will have a grandchild born every year for the last 5 years in Jan, Feb, & March which makes us very happy as we love those grand babies! And we love our whole big family too. Ralph & Mabeline

Dear Family,

14 October 2011

I don't have much news to report from PA right now. There is a major upheaval going on at Merck but that almost doesn't seem like news because restructuring + layoffs have been coming every year or so for quite awhile. Joe does have a job in the new world order, but will have to do a lot of travelling.

The new school year is underway and our two college students have returned to campus. As far as I know, things are going well for them. Emily enjoys being in an on-campus apartment this year, despite the fact that she is in a "healthy-living" dorm. I hope she focuses on her work instead of playing house, though. Brian intends to spend most of his time on campus this year. Last year, he kept up with his summer job and came home almost every weekend (his campus is an hour away). This year, he needs to focus on finishing up and wants to spend a lot of time with a racquetball club that he helped to start on campus. So we won't be seeing much of him. For the first time, Colin will be an "only child" at home.

Colin has more change to adjust to this year than his siblings. He's in 10th grade, but this means a move to our HUGE 10-12 high school (2700 students). He seems pretty happy there and is handling the academics well enough. It will take some time for him to find his niche, though. He isn't doing a fall sport at school like his older sibs, which helped them feel a part of the school right away. Colin does play rec soccer, but almost all of his games for September were cancelled due to the bizarre weather we've had. PA had the wettest September in recorded history, on top of the tons of rain from hurricane Irene and tropical storm Lee. It got to the point where the outdoors smelled like a musty basement! (On the bright side, my lawn is a lush, emerald green.) I spent this past week working on a project that I wanted to start after Labor Day, but I needed dry weather and had to wait until October to get it!

Love to all,



October 25, 2011

Dear Family,

About 6 months since the last round: not a bad pace.

Summer was quite different for us this year. Normally, we escape to our Pocono house on weekends and for a two week stint while I am off. This year, the Club that is part of the development rented the house from May-Oct to house the staff that they hire from all over the world. So, without access to the house, we decided to try a cruise for the family. Deanne, Gillian, Shannon & I all boarded the *Carnival Glory* for a 4 day trip, with a stop in St. John, New Brunswick. (Will was busy with work and a vacation of his own.) All had a great time, although in retrospect, some aspects could be better (*small swimming pools with icy water, no shows other than karaoke & comedy*). But for a first try at this kind of family vacation, we definitely are interested in pursuing more. This will depend upon the house once again being rented, and the market is generally slow. We'll see.

The cruise was followed immediately by the earthquake (the girls at home felt it) and Hurricane Irene (no damage to our properties). We also got to visit Capuchin friends at St. Pius X in Middletown, CT. Then everyone went back to work and the kids to their respective schools.

2-2/69

Will is finishing up his thesis for his bachelor's, while several of his courses will count toward his master's. He is at least as involved as ever in plentiful campus ministry and other activities. He worked for IBM again in the summer, with time off for his first flight - part of a weeklong trip to Chicago to see a friend / former roomie from Iona. He returned via Amtrak - seeing the shores of Lakes Michigan & Erie, northern New York, and the Hudson. Details are appropriately sketchy, but he got to see a lot of Chicago. (*The Hawaii trip mentioned in the last RR installment did not happen.*) I can't even begin to describe what his thesis is about - a combo of Math and Theology/Philosophy (*spec. the problem of evil/Theodicy*) from the perspective of Gottfried Leibniz (d. 1716). Ask him, not me. He also passed his road test and has our 10-year old Subaru at his disposal at Iona.

Gillian has a somewhat easier schedule this year at the Mount. No practicum in Education this year, just a course. Both she and Will are taking Abstract Algebra in their respective schools, so they compare notes and, of course, vie for the higher grade! (*Again, ask them what "Abstract Algebra" is, not me!*) She's rooming with her crazy friend, Courtney. This is a change from her quiet friend from last year. She is enjoying life at the Mount, coming home weekends and helping with our activities.

Shannon continues as the "only child" during the week. She claims she is tortured by having to live with us old folk, but has managed to survive thus far. She continues to thrive at Sacred Heart. Her design was chosen for a banner to represent the sophomores in the gym: the banners for each class hang from Homecoming (Thanksgiving) through the following year. She's excited at being recognized. Her art club is also painting murals on the stair walls (with permission), so her artwork is noticeable. She is literally making her mark on the school!

Deanne continues in her numerous roles at Sacred Heart (as well as at home!). She has reworked her middle school Religious Ed program to include some family events, which should lighten her load on Monday evenings, and shift some of the heavy lifting to other volunteers. It will also make the program more interesting for the 7-8 grade Confirmation students. Sacred Heart was dealt a blow when the school that was renting our old grade school left. That hole in the budget will usher in a lot of changes that will affect her as parish secretary and (maybe) religious education coordinator. In some ways, it is like other businesses, struggling with real estate and budget problems.

I am still plugging away at DB. There are constant threats of layoffs (*mostly front office and above my pay grade*), which makes the atmosphere gloomy. For my business, revenue expansion is really not going to happen. So they are constantly looking to reduce costs. They look to me for advice, but there is really nothing left to cut. This makes conversations difficult.

Overall, we are well and happy. We thank God and do our best to keep moving on!
Love to all!

Alan, Deanne, Will, Gill + Shannon

Nov 14 2011

Dear Family -

Next week is Thanksgiving and where did the year go.

Our family seems to be growing more + more. Just found out Adrienne and Philip are expecting baby #3 in May and that will be grandchild #9 for us. I had a scare this past May with a triple bypass (thank you May gods) but I am feeling well and back walking with my buddies. Adjusting to a condo now @ Shadow Lake Village. True love no leaf-raking and snow shoveling. All the kids are doing well. God has blessed us tremendously! - Hoping you all have wonderful holidays - Not much more to write about - Be well -

Love
The Fields!