

2-427
July 27, 2022

Greetings from the beautiful Catskills in the summertime! First and foremost, I'd like to thank you for all your kind words about Mom. I miss her and my dad every day and pray for their souls while likewise asking for their intercession for all of us! No doubt it, we have a whole cheering squad rooting for us from heaven!

John started his current job in Monticello as Director of Facilities for Catholic Charities back in November. It can be challenging at times, but overall, at least he feels that the cause is worthwhile. He was even on the local news last month as he was standing right behind Cardinal Dolan when he came up for a ribbon cutting ceremony at their Newburg office!

Arianna is still working for a local Law office while I watch Isaac (now 3) full time. She's not thrilled with being confined in a small office and is looking for a career change, especially now that the job market seems to be opening up a bit.

Kaylin and Dustyn have less than a month until their wedding which hopefully will come off without a hitch on August 20th. They're both working two jobs trying to save up for future expenses which, as they're well aware, will be many! Kaylin is really enjoying working with the Cornell Cooperative helping to run a farm stand and food pantry.

Matthew has two jobs as well. He's working full time with a stone mason, making \$20/hr at 17 years old! He's also moonlighting as a lifeguard on weekends. Mark is full time as a lifeguard and Luke is in demand doing all kinds of odd jobs for people here on Lackawack Hill. Their most notable hobby is buying, fixing up and selling ATV's and dirt bikes! Matthew is becoming quite the mechanic and Luke does the body work. Of course, they still serve the Latin Mass at our church! Matthew and Mark will be going to Camp Veritas (Catholic camp) again in mid-August. The boys are entering their senior year in September!

As for me, Isaac makes sure that I sleep well at night! Now that it's summer, we have swim lessons every day, followed by time at the playground. On Fridays we also have our weekly trip to the library where he also goes for "Story Hour" while school is in session.

The Farm is no doubt the glue that holds our family together. It's a delight to watch Isaac play with the chickens, ducks and turkeys, especially when the new little babies hatch! We have a duck who was raised by a turkey and they're still inseparable! Nature is amazing! God's creation is AMAZING!

You are all in my prayers! I'm thankful for the good news and will double down on my petitions for the not-so-good news! God is good and He will take care of us.

Love, John, Lorraine, Arianna, Kaylin, Matthew, Mark and Luke...and Isaac too!

P.S. Our door is always open
if anyone is up our way! ❤️

8/11/22

Greetings all! The RR is a whirlwind of info. Glad to see most of it is good, and medical problems under proper care. Hoping especially for Brant's return to full health. Big news here is that I too have retired after 33 years. I do hope to return to WHPL as a part-time librarian. It's an "easy" retiree gig, and it will help with the understaffing my retirement has created. The only problem is getting Nassau County Civil Service to open a p/t position for the library to use to hire me. [This is the system here; makes no sense of course.] NCCS is incredibly inept and paralyzed (by its own staff shortages) so who knows when I'll be at the Reference Desk again. So my time has been 100% free to fret over tomatoes that don't want to ripen (plenty of green ones –but the HIGH temps *slow down* ripening!) and dodging this bloody excessive heat! We did get away for a week of visiting friends throughout MA. George will now get more of my help with the domestic chores he took over 12 years ago when he retired. We now have time to address numerous house problems from appliances to siding to heating. FUN! Our small house is now a fine retirement cottage.

Ian still does customs brokerage for Tiffany's. A ditzzy young driver managed to plow into his car on the Southern State last month and that has started the diabolical process of insurance/repairs. State Farm totaled his car, but he is getting it repaired – as car buying is awful these days. He may get it back in a month if they can find the parts for a 2012 Corolla. We are lending him our hybrid fairly often.

Kate still works for CIMMYT. She is working on a database project for farmers. She is finishing her second long trip to Africa this year! First trip was to Nigeria and Kenya. Latest one covered Kenya and Zimbabwe. She's spent 7 weeks over there all told. Luckily she's managed one decent trip in NY in between. Hopefully she'll be back in Mexico City in a few days.

Matt and Carolyn are well. Matt goes into NYC 3 days/week, but Carolyn rarely goes into the Harper Collins office. Claire (8.5) and Nate (6) at least got a whole year of in-house schooling this year. Now it's daily camps. We still try to train over most weekends to visit all and enjoy Carolyn's gourmet meals. We often see Danny Zirkel (Bunny's son) there as he lives close by.

Sunday, July 31 we had a Clines family gathering for our father's 100th birthday. All sibs and partners could attend as well as several cousins. It was bittersweet to remember our Dad – who died at age 52 - but a fine celebration of his family legacy.

Sorry this mailing has been a bit delayed by our trip away last week. As I write we've had a respite today from the awful heat and humidity. Now we need rain – WH has not been visited by many of the meandering storms this summer. Oh – the tomatoes are now ripening too. All 60 plants!

Be well. Be cool. Be safe.

Love
from the Dukes

BTW – be careful with the torn pages! It arrived here in that condition. Guess we've been lucky with USPS up to now.

Greetings to all the family

Sept 3, 2022

It was so great to hear all the family news. All is going well here in NC. I am still not 100% but getting there. There are a few spots in the short term memory that go haywire but I am at least 90% back and getting there. We had a nice visit with Madeline and Ralph this summer and look forward to their fall visit to see the autumn colors up at the cabin. It's rough when your best friend lives so far away!

I got to enjoy a good breakfast out with my 2 girls Patti & Karen this morning to catch up on things. I am so blessed to have most of my children living so close by. Anything we need they take care of right away. I am truly blessed to have to have such wonderful caring kids. The grandchildren are starting to help out too when they can. Our oldest, Ashley just started her second year of teaching special needs high school students. Samantha has started her job as a physical therapist at the gym she attends. Amber is in her third year of college. Aiden & Justin are looking at colleges for next year. The others are in various years in school including August who just started kindergarten and Bruce who is in preschool.

Congrats to Bernadette and Bill on the arrival of their first grandchild. Let the fun begin. Grandchildren are GREAT at all ages. But keep in mind that grandchildren grow up much quicker than your own children did!!

All our love and prayers to this amazing May family.

With our love,

Ronnie & Augie

9/10/22

Hi from MKE!

It's been a good-weather summer on the shore of Lake Michigan - very little of the mega-heat and super-soaking that have blasted other spots. And so it's been a SUPER-swimming time for me! Just got over the 100,000-yard mark at the complex's outdoor pool (yes, I'm a maniac who keeps track). Add a nice week back East in July and the usual batch of baseball (the YANKEES will be here this week) and it's all a summer should be. And it should be a few weeks anyway before things freeze over...
Happy Autumn, all!
Frank

September 18, 2022

Dear Family,

Wow! The sudden rash of retirements, weddings and new grandchildren says a lot about where our family is. I am reminded that since the 'window of opportunity' for our own son & daughter-in-law to produce offspring has all but closed (both are 45), that means the continuation of this branch of the 'May' brand is left in the hands of Will & Alysha. Uhhhh... no pressure!

The return to normalcy in the transition to COVID-as-endemic world continues to gain speed, and our travels continue to increase. We took another road trip to Asheville, NC (Biltmore Estate) with Ed & Janet Ebert in March. That trip was supposed to include a visit with Ronnie & Augie, whom the Eberts have not seen in too many decades to count. However, on the day we were to visit them, Ronnie wound up in the hospital and the visit was sadly scrubbed.

We went on the 9-night Eastern Caribbean & Bermuda cruise out of Cape Liberty, NJ in July, after visiting Amish Country in PA and family on LI, and a 12-night British Isles cruise out of Amsterdam in August (finishing off our "Future Cruise Credits" from previously cancelled cruises), that we extended with visits with two of Danie's cousins in southern France. Just ahead is a road trip back to LI in October for Danie's *fmummuumm*th High School reunion. Looking ahead to 2023, we booked a 7-night Caribbean cruise out of Ft. Lauderdale in March, and will be joining Ed & Janet Ebert and their family on a 7-night Alaskan Glacier cruise out of Seattle (to celebrate their 50th Anniversary) at the end of June. We will combine that trip with a much delayed visit to Colorado to see one of Danie's quilting buddies. We put down a deposit on yet another, 'undesignated' cruise that we will have to designate in the next 2 months. Vacationing is hard work!

Around town, we have been catching up with delayed performances of Fiddler On The Roof, My Fair Lady, Jesus Christ Superstar, The Band's Visit, Wicked, and Mean Girls as part of the 'Broadway In Richmond' performance series, and Beehive, Mamma Mia, Dear Jack, Dear Louise and Bonnie & Claire as part of the Virginia Repertory Theatre's offerings. All of this to catch up on shows that were planned and postponed in the last 1½ years. The theaters are hopping! Once again, we purchased yearly state residency passes to Colonial Williamsburg, but have so far only visited once. Hopefully, we will find the time in the next two weeks to go to the Virginia State Fair.

Danie: Her usual quilting-related activities have returned to normal, as she attended the Mid-Atlantic Quilt Festival in Hampton, VA in February and the Virginia Consortium of Quilters biannual "Celebration" at Smith Mt. Lake in April (We hosted a quilt buddy from CO, who flew in to attend). Danie and four of her buddies went on a week-long "quilting girls' road trip" to Quilt Town USA (Hamilton, Missouri, home of Missouri

Star Quilt Company) in June. A sixth person missed the trip because she was stricken with COVID. Not that coming down with COVID was a good thing, but there was no way another person and their luggage would have squeezed into that van! Remarkably, it appears that their friendships remain relatively intact, in spite of over 36 hours of close contact during the drives there and back, although there was talk of a near mutiny.

Claudine & Laughton: Laughton had a very unfortunate incident occur in March. The was walking alone to a favorite watering hole for St. Patrick's Eve celebration, when, after a sprint to cross a busy road, he instantaneously passed out mid-step and fell in a parking lot, face planting on the tarmac. Since he could do nothing to brace himself, the fall resulted in three fractures in the facial area, and, of course much bruising. While surgery was required to repair two of the fractures, the reconstructive surgeon was rightfully concerned that the reason for falling unconscious was fully understood and would not cause problems during the surgery. Tests revealed that a heart valve was malfunctioning and needed to be replaced. A couple of rounds of *which surgeon should go first* were played, and it was determined the reconstructive surgery was more urgent. Two plates were affixed to his skull (below the eye socket) and palate. It was thought that realignment of the palate would not be perfect and that braces or oral surgery would be needed to restore a correct bite, but so far, neither he nor his dentist have identified any such need.

Because of his age, and the relatively short life expectancy (12-14 years) of bovine or pig valves, which could be inserted using a catheter, Laughton needed to have a mechanical valve installed. Unfortunately, that meant open-heart surgery. The surgery was successfully performed on May 5. He is essentially fully recovered.

Claudine changed jobs again. This last one lasted 15 months, during which she actually went to the office 10-15 times. It turned out that it was a case of one company purchasing another and implementing antiquated methods of doing business that had Claudine doing tasks / reports that the rest of the business world had automated years ago. In spite of her urgings for the company to move into the 21st century, and even pointing out that the company already had the computer systems needed, they persisted, so she left. On the two days a week that she actually goes into the office for her new job, her commute is greater than it has been for many years . . . about 11 miles one-way. The new office is located in an area where there is a lot of new development, including a plethora of microbreweries, cideries, and distilleries. Unlike many offices, most workers actually like to go in on Fridays, so they can partake in after-work activities at the nearby establishments – usually beginning around 3PM.

They will finally get to use the travel vouchers they received from their cancelled trip to France on a week at an all-inclusive resort in Jamaica next June.

Chris & Kristy: They completed a 9-night Alaskan cruise on a small ship through the inner passages, where the water is relatively calm and there is little likelihood of sea sickness (something Kristy was very concerned about). Unfortunately, near the end of the trip, the memory card that he had been using in his camera died, leaving them with only the pictures that Kristy took to tickle their memories of the adventure.

Chris was, until recently working part-time at Markel while he spent part-time on developing a consultant / training business related to programming in the PYTHON computer language. In June, he quit the day job and went full-time on his new venture. Kristy also changed jobs right after they returned from a trip at the end of May. Her new employer offered her a significant increase in salary, which allows them to squeak by for a couple of months on her salary (and savings) to allow time for his new venture to get up and running.

Me: Not much new for me. The usual activities relating to St. Michael's Funeral Meals and Blood Drive Ministries, Saint Vincent de Paul's Food Pantry, the Knights of Columbus, my own platelet donations, and *planning* travel keep me busy between travels. The retirees' breakfasts that I coordinate have slowly grown in attendance (30-34) as more have felt comfortable enough to venture out in groups. This is countered, however, by more people who, like me, have no fear of hitting the road more frequently, and are thus not in town on the day of the breakfast. Interesting note: the Red Cross tested blood samples after each donation between late February and early June for COVID antibodies. The results of each test following my donations was reported as "Reactive+", meaning that my blood carried sufficient antibodies that my plasma could be used as therapy for others who were having difficulty with COVID. This was after having received my Moderna booster on December 1. That means either my immune system is still in great shape, and continues to churn out lots of antibodies, or I was infected with COVID sometime during the period and didn't know it. Either way, the results are the same. Since they stopped testing for antibodies, and I have no intention of slowing our travels, I went ahead and got my second booster in July. Now, I'll wait a bit before getting the new & improved Bivalent Booster. I'll add at this point that after every cruise, we've heard reports of "more than a handful" of folks who have tested positive for COVID, but all who we have personal knowledge of had minor cases. So far, we've been spared (other than Danie's infection way back in November 2019).

Eric & Danie

10/12/2022

So glad to hear Maria did not have major damage from Ian down in Fort Myers!
All is well with the Christensens. June and I are both retired and she is now looking for a second career. I've spent more time at the farm working on various projects.

Bill and Emily got engaged late spring and will marry next July. Nicole and Matthew got engaged last week and are looking at an early fall wedding. We will be busy! Tim is still in Saratoga and doing well. Megan found an apartment in Ridgewood, Queens and will be moving at the end of this month. Love to all!
Steve + Family

Dear Family,

We're so happy to hear all the good news from so many of you, and please know that those of you who have medical challenges are always in our prayers. We Zirkels were blessed with the arrival of our wonderful grandson Caden on Mother's Day. Kristen & Josh are terrific parents, and these 5 1/2 months of sharing in Caden's growth have been such a great new experience for us. Bill & I are a little old to join the "grandparent club", but we are thrilled to have earned our "bragging rights." Just ask us if we happen to have a photo of Caden, and we'll be happy to share about a hundred-plus videos!

Unfortunately the Kirsch family had an unexpected heartache about six weeks after Caden's birth, when his other grandfather died suddenly, just two days before Father's Day. Josh was extremely close to his father, and it was a very sad time, but the family was able to organize a very well-attended memorial service in a nearby park. Josh's father had been a well-respected teacher in the district, and the support of all who attended was a comfort.

Nothing else is too new here. Bill & I managed to get away for a week's tour of Ireland in June. Since we've been back, we've been very occupied with the recovery of our dog Tia, who needed surgery that necessitated 16 weeks of care & restrictions - quite an ordeal, despite our keeping in perspective that she is our pet. Michelle's program is still largely virtual, but she has some private staff helping her get out more, and she was thrilled to join a Special Needs Bowling League! Danny got a promotion at work, and is still "keeping company" as they say, with Brianne, who is a speech/language pathologist in the NJ public schools. With Kristen, Caden & Josh up in Westchester, and Danny pretty settled in NJ, for the first time, Bill & I are wondering if we should move off of L.I. to somewhere between the two locations. But the first consideration would be to check out what resources any area might offer for Michelle!

Since the RR probably won't get back to us before the end of the year, we send you all our wishes for Happy Holidays & a blessed Christmas!

Love, Bernadette, Bill & family

Dear All,

Don't want to hold up this RR so... Not much to say. Joannie & I are well. Glad all is well with you -

Be assured of our prayers - Love Theresa & Joannie

12/10/22

DEAR FAMILY -

HAPPY THANKSGIVING, MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR!
THIS is the FIRST HOLIDAY SEASON in which MARY Jo & I are BOTH RETIRED. I SHOULD PUT it "RETIRED" for ME - AS I WORK a few days HERE & THERE at BOTH ABC & CBS News. BOTH ALLOW ME TO PICK & CHOOSE which DAYS I WORK, SO THAT HAS GIVEN US time to TRAVEL

WE VISITED IRELAND in SEPTEMBER, OUR FIRST TIME there!

WE ESPECIALLY LOVED DINGLE, IN KERRY, where 2 of MARY Jo's GRANDPARENTS WERE FROM. THE SCENERY is GORGEOUS, THE PEOPLE SO WARM, BUT SEEING how REMOTE IT IS, I CAN UNDERSTAND WHY 100 YEARS Ago, SOME PEOPLE WOULD LEAVE and NEVER RETURN.

IT WAS a MARVELOUS TRIP, NOTWITHSTANDING that WE BOTH GOT COVID while there, WE DON'T HOLD IT AGAINST the IRISH and HOPE TO RETURN SOME Day.

WE HOPE EVERYONE HAS a WONDERFUL HOLIDAY SEASON
Joe - Joe Clinch & Mary Jo
12/22/22

Dear Family,

Christmas greetings! When I last wrote, 2 trees were being removed from my front yard. Just 2 weeks later, 2 large Pines were removed from my side yard by a different tree service. Totally new landscape in this house I've been in for 30 years!

Websites I've created lately include a Jewish bakery, pizza shops, food truck, landscapers, contractors, furniture store, business consultants and even a quilters guild!

I've been enjoying lots of rock bands at local bars. See the video I made

at AttractWeb.com/videos - where you can also see others such as the one I put together for Lorraine's daughter Kaylin's August wedding! Oh, yeah, my "personal ad" video is also there.

Still hitting the Farm every 3 weeks to visit, work and drink beer. Steve & Ken put a new deck on the porch that I got to paint with preservative. Deck was from trees we felled, milled and planed. They are now installing new hardwood flooring in the upstairs bedrooms.

I'm always busy coordinating running club socials & group runs, helping with KofC functions, and networking lunches. Even ran a couple 5K's.

Pray for peace and make 2023 spectacular! Ho Ho Ho,
Ray

1/11/23

2-433

Dear Family
Happy New Year. We had a great Christmas & are looking forward to 2023. I am happy to hear all the news of the family & thank you for your prayers for our family.
We didn't get to see Ronnie & Augie in October due to Brant's surgeries, but hope to get there someday soon & when we do Ronnie will get a big juicy hug from me.
Bless you all, Love you all, Madeline & Ralph

5 February 2023

Dear Family,

I've kept the letter for a while before responding, my excuse being that I have been busy since the new year with home improvement projects. We made a good start last year but had to pause after Joe L's mother had health problems, including two stints in the hospital. We are now attempting to finish the second floor before our schedules get busy in the spring.

We have not had any travels since Christmastime, when we made one trip to Baltimore and two to NY. (At least I made all those trips, with various family members.) We were not able to get the entire Clines family together during this holiday season, but most of us got to see each other at some point. Covid deserves some of the blame, also the challenge of getting a large family together. The extended family has grown, but that is certainly something to be thankful for!

Last November, some of the family was able to be in Milwaukee to celebrate the 11/11/22 weekend with Frank. Barbara and a lot of her family were there, and I met Colin in Chicago so that we could travel north and join the fun. Frank hosted a gathering at his beloved Paddy's Pub, and we enjoyed some of Milwaukee's arts and culture, including their symphony orchestra. The following weekend, Colin flew back home to Philly to run in the 2022 Philadelphia Marathon. Emily and her husband came down to help us cheer Colin on in his first marathon. It was quite an experience because the weather was bad—temps in the 20's and windy at the start, not much warmer at the finish. Colin didn't do as well as he had hoped (time about 4:30, he walked the last few miles) because of the horrid weather and because he had found it hard to train the previous few weeks in Chicago as it got colder, and the days got shorter. The cheering committee also had a rough morning, because we spent hours marching around in the elements so we could cheer Colin on at various spots. I wasn't cold because I was wearing five layers, but I looked like the Michelin Man.

Speaking of the cold, Emily and Andrew are currently vacationing in Alaska. She has a friend in Anchorage. I thought they were crazy to be going at the end of January, but it has been warmer in Anchorage than in Boston this past week, thanks to the polar vortex! Things will be unseasonably warm again when they return.

Love to all,

Eileen

12 February 2023 #2-434

We're in the lull between the end of the Christmas Season and the beginning of Lent. We had single digit temps last week, and 60 degrees this week. I'm so confused. Luckily, we're all healthy, so our bodies are adjusting to the swift changes.

We've been able to take a few trips since our last entry. We stayed at Cape Cod for a week in June/July (on the way up, stopping in Connecticut for the ordination of a Capuchin friend, and hosting Eric & Danie when we returned). Then Deanne and I went back for a few days in September. That was the first time I swam in the Atlantic since my childhood days at Rockaway Beach! (I've been in the Pacific, lakes, and pools.) Deanne and I took a cruise to Bermuda (our second – and last - there). When we boarded, we had a note in our room informing us that the stay in Bermuda was downgraded from 2 to 1 day due to storms. As we returned, we took a southerly route to the coast and met the storms head on. This was our third severe storm at sea. If you get the opportunity to sail with us, my recommendation is DON'T! (See the story of Jonah for parallels.) In the future, we hope to cruise Alaska, and maybe the Carribean and/or Bahamas. And not on Norwegian: there was very little to do on the ship during the storms.

Hopefully, we will take more trips of some sort, as I am teetering on the verge of full retirement, like so many of you. I mentioned that I left Good Shepherd, and made the decision to leave St Mary as well. The turnover was delayed – trying to find a bookkeeper who knows Arch systems and procedure – but we have someone. We met last week to begin the handover. She's used to working at the Arch rather than in parishes, so this might take a while.

Being at retirement age, there are the increased medical tests. I am very convinced of their need since my heart issues were found in routine tests (rather than a heart attack). SO, I recently had a Fibroscan (my liver enzymes vacillate from time to time), and a "flip" (endoscopy/colonoscopy). All is well, which in the case of my liver, is a relief.

With my free time, what then shall I do? Good question. I had hoped to fix/paint various areas of the house, but the bathroom makeover turned into a plumbing problem when I discovered a rotted pipe. We're waiting for that fix. And we wanted some other items done by a contractor before I can paint. So, a lot is on hold. So, each morning I visit the beautiful office manager at Sacred Heart, have a cup of coffee, do random jobs, and go on my way. I have volunteered with Westchester County Parks Foundation with cleanups and maintenance. And I have a few other things up my sleeve. I still do the RCIA and help out at Religious Ed (as do the kids).

Deanne is coming to her busier times – Reconciliation, Communion, Confirmation. She's still alone in the SH office. They really need someone else to assist and learn the job for the day when Deanne decides to join me at leisure. For now, whenever we go on trips, or if she is sick, the office simply closes, which makes no sense.

Will and Alysha are making all their arrangements for their Nuptials at Sacred Heart on September 3. Alysha's PhD is delayed again due to changes in her board. So, now she is cutting it close, graduating in August and marrying in September. But if anyone can handle it, she can. Eg, her bridal gown has been hanging in her closet for a while now.

Gillian keeps her class going, even though she has both 3- & 4-year-olds. There is a big difference in that one year. She will once again lead the Destination Science camp in Eastchester this summer.

Shannon keeps the data entry team at Magnificat on track. It's a challenge. However, she will once again get a trip on the company as she will go to the LA Religious Education Conference in about a week. She really needs breaks from the work. Unfortunately, when we went to Cape Cod, she began symptoms of Covid on day 1 and stayed isolated for the week. As we were leaving, she said she felt better.

We have much to be grateful for, and look forward to the blessings of 2023!

Love -
Alan + Deanne
Will + Alysha
Gillian +
Shannon

2-22-23 2-435 A
(Ash Wednesday)

Dear Family,

Hello from SW Florida where the weather is superb and wish it would stay that way. Just need to escape during the summer though. I do have a few opportunities with 3 of my kids living in SC, NC and NY. I did have a heartbreaking decision to place Alex in a long term facility as his onset of dementia caused frequent falls and needed surgeries, rehab you name it. I do visit him and take care of his medical needs, which keeps me busy and out of trouble. This enable me to take trips to see the grands who give me much joy. This week my grandson Cedar (21) is coming for a week as his crew team is training in SARASOTA. Fingers crossed for the future Olympic Team! Not much more here - thinking of you all and sending you much Love

Maria