

Yo,

Greetings for the dog days of late August, and on to another round of the May family saga. (Question: should we sell film or television rights to it? Who'd play Nana??!!) We Dreherers are all well and preparing for the craziness of fall school, sports, clubs, etc. G will be teaching chem and genetics. He's coaching the HS girl's soccer team for the first time, and will probably get an evening course at NCC where he's now a full adjunct professor. He may see Ian in the hall there, because Ian transferred from SUNY Albany to NCC for the next year or so. He didn't fall in love with Albany - big classes, horrible food, too much SNOW, etc. So he'll get the AA at home (and save us some \$\$!) and then look to get off the island again to get the BA. Kate (15) is entering Junior year. She attended the US OLYMPIC invitational distance track camp for a week in Colorado Springs, and it was a real highlight of her summer. She also worked with the summer reading club at the library (nepotism, you say? Not really. She had done volunteer work there for several years prior.) Soon she'll be back into cross-country and marching band and homework. Matt has a soccer tournament this weekend, and will be on a travelling team this fall. He's a little nervous about moving on to the middle school where he'll be the youngest of three grades. He just had a thrill this past week. While visiting friends in Boston, he got two chances to fly in a Cessna (small prop plane), and the pilot let him take the controls for a short time. (Luckily, I was safely on the ground while all this was going on.) In fact, our trip to Boston has delayed getting this letter out, so I will end here without further ado. Hope everyone has a great autumn. It won't be much of a change for me because I worked thru the summer. I'll just be working a few more hours/week.

Regards to all. Let's keep the good news coming!
Barbara, George, Ian
Kate, Matt

September 4, 1993.

Hello Everyone!

Well, so far 1993 has seen Monica in the hospital 2 times. In March, as you know, she had about 1/4 of her colon removed. Everything went well after the operation and she continues to have no problems anymore except some occasional gas cramps. She's a "gassy" person! Then, on July 22nd, she had the cataract in the right eye removed and replaced with an intra-ocular lens through which she sees so clearly now. Of course, nothing ever goes smoothly or uneventful with Monica! The operation was done with her sedated and on an out-patient basis. The day after the operation, at the Dr.'s office, he found that she had a corneal abrasion which he said was caused by her lower eyelid. Monica's lower eyelid is unique, in that it turns in when the eyes closed and the eyelashes on the lower lid caused the abrasion. After drops and ointments, etc. the abrasion cleared up - but then, exactly 1 week after the surgery as I was gently raising the upper eyelid to put drops in the eye, she said, "Ouch! that hurts!" At the Dr.'s office that afternoon 2 holes were found in her eye from which fluid was escaping and caused the pressure to drop in that eye. They put her into their so-called 'operating room' and put 2 stitches in her eye...stitches to be removed at a later date. They don't know why or how she got the holes - but as soon as they stitched them up, the pressure returned in the eye. After that, the healing process continued, she was given a prescription for new glasses and after daily visits to the Dr.'s office, she was dismissed from the Dr. - to be seen in 3 months. She is now wearing bifocals. She has very bad astigmatism, but that is corrected with the eyeglass prescription. She has a bifocal in the left eye, too, but because of the cataract in that eye, she can't see clearly out of that eye. The cataract in the left eye is gradually getting worse, but still not bad enough for surgery. They will not do surgery in a second^{eye} after until 3 months has passed. But, now that she sees so clearly with the right eye, she can't wait for the left eye to get worse, so she can see clearly with both eyes. When she came from the optometrist's office with her glasses on, she's looking down and said: "Oh look! I can see the pebbles in the aggregate!" and when driving home, she looked up at the trees and said: "Now I can see the formation of the leaves!" Before, all she could see was a blurry patch of tanish color for the aggregate and a blur of green for the leaves in the trees.

We were very happy to have a visit from the Vonkers Mays. Alan, Deanne, Billy and Gillian came for a visit Memorial Day weekend to help me celebrate my 67th birthday. It was so good to see them again - and on Saturday, the Richmond Mays came - for a real family reunion. And guess what - noone took a picture of the whole family!!! Just last week, Alan was in the hospital for a hernia operation. His was on an outpatient basis, too, but he had general anesthesia. He was in at 9 and out at 4:30. He will be out of work for about 2 weeks. I think he can use the rest after all the 11-12 hr. days and the courses he's taking evenings. Both courses to be started soon, are to Saturday mornings in White Plains. That, I believe, will work out better... but, he will be away from his family Saturday a.m.'s. BUT!!! Deanne continues to work full time at home for various companies and services. And Billy and Gillian ~~to~~ play, watch TV, learn things everyday, play well with each other at times and at other times not. Billy may be going to pre-school, I'm not sure!

Re. the Richmond Mays: Chris was one of the thousands in Denver for the Pope's visit. He was about 6 rows away from the Pope's entourage at one time, and other times, nowhere near any of it. He said it was a unique trip, very interesting and one he'll not forget. He was on TV at the Richmond airport carrying the church's flag and there was a quote from Chris printed in the diocesan "Catholic Virginian" - also a report of a woman who was suffering a miscarriage in the motel in which Chris' group was staying, and Chris gave her his sweat shirt because she was shivering..... Now Chris is working at a Burger King near home. He got his drivers license right after his 16th birthday... only Mom and Dad are making it hard for him to drive - they have manual transmission and Chris has not fully mastered the shifting, and the family is so busy they don't have much time to take Chris out to master the clutch. Chris and Claudine have taken tennis lessons this summer. Maybe they'll continue this sport in school. Claudine continues to babysit - went to Girl Scout Camp as an aide but the rest of the Summer (except for a family vacation in the Smoky Mts.) was an uneventful one for her. She'll be more active when school starts, esp. with cheerleading..... Danie will be working 4-5 days as a teacher's aide with little ones. She likes the work - had done it last year, but only 1 day a week ~~last year~~. They like her, the children like her - she's good with the children, they've asked her to come 4-5 days. BUSY, BUSY FAMILIES - both the Vonkers and Richmond Mays.

We are anxiously awaiting news of the arrival of Gina's and Steve's baby due soon. Also, waiting to hear of the wedding date of Lorraine and John. About all the other families - it's so good to hear all the things happening with them - the babies are well and keep growing - the nieces and nephews are attending high schools or colleges - getting jobs, esp. glad to hear you got a job, Augie! Everything seems to be going well with all the families - please God keep it that way. I'm starting with Bowling and Choir... I'll be busy with my secretarial and librarian jobs. After Monica's eye surgery, she was told not to do anything for 6 weeks... no stress, no strain, no therapy. But, next Friday, she goes back to therapy again. So, we'll really be back into the swing of things again. Well, I've written enough - can't think of anything else. Everyone, keep well, keep happy, keep in touch ----- keep this RR going a bit faster !!!!!!!!

Love to all
 (Lorraine)
 Lorraine & Monica

Dear Family,

This round of the "Letter" catches me at a good time ^{9/15/93} looking forward to the late October visit to your side of the country. I was already planning to attend my 10 year college reunion, so Gina's ~~new~~ arrival - expected ^{anytime} as of this writing - makes for a grand double-feature. No injuries, new car, new house, new girlfriend, lottery winner, Nobel Peace prize, felony conviction or earthquake here. But I've had my current roommate for 7 months, so she's approaching a record! I've taken some hikes, attended local sporting events and generally worked some long hours at the truck terminal (we now have 25 drivers and haul quite an array of hazardous liquids). Religious activities have picked up - I'm in a prayer/discussion group, attended a weekend retreat, and got talked into teaching a CCD class this year to about a dozen 2nd graders (I guess I have to finally ask for some prayers) - in addition to my own regular choir gig. Take care and enjoy life! Love,
 Ray

9/29/93

Dear Mays and all extensions of the Family,

I thought this letter was going around pretty fast, but now I've been told it's taking too long. Granted the West Hemp. post office is supposed to be one of the worst on the Island, I still think it is doing well in getting around, especially with summer vacations holding things up, While you folks were "frying" in the Northeast, I was real cool on my trip to Glacier National Park in Montana, and Lake Louise, Jasper (where I walked on a glacier), Banff and Calgary, Canada -- came home to 90+ and promptly caught a "virus" of some kind - it's awful to have a fever of 101 in that kind of weather! Now it is back to work at St. Thomas Human Services (formerly Outreach) with a new boss, a Sister who has all kinds of degrees in counselling, etc. Guess who is trying to word process on a computer, no less -- for me it would still be easier, less nerve wracking, and probably faster to type and then make copies. It might help if the books on the system were written in English instead of Computereese! Those machines are supposed to make things easier for harried secretaries, but not this one. (Is it my age maybe?) The new boss is familiar with Word Pro but we have Leading Edge - so she gets frustrated when she can't push certain keys and make them do what she's used to them doing, and I'm just frustrated trying to read all the stupid directions and only sometimes hitting on the right key -- then promptly forgetting which one it was the next time I try it -- ugh!!

Going visiting in Vermont next weekend to see the changing leaves and visit with an old St. John's friend of the Clineses. Last Saturday I attended the 50th anniversary of my graduation from High School. It was fun trying to match faces at this age with the names you don't forget. By the way, this past June would have been Uncle Eric's 50th anniversary of ordination, too. I'm so proud of this family and how you keep this R.R. going! You are ALL in my prayers, especially Steven and Gina -- no news yet. Lorraine I'm proud of you for bringing another "Klein" into the family, even if he doesn't know how to spell his name. Last thought -- this is Ian's 19th birthday and I know I'm too young to have a grandchild that age--the laugh of the day.

Love and Prayers for you all, Aunt Helen

21 October 1993

Dear Family,

Our little family is going to make a big change soon. We'll be moving from our 120-year old "farmhouse" to a new (as in not yet built!) house nearby. Our main reason for moving is the collection of problems that we've had with Merck as our back-fence neighbor. Our neighborhood is adjacent to land owned by Merck, the drug company that Joe works for. (They do manufacturing + research here). ~~That~~ Three years ago, Merck announced long-term expansion plans (more buildings, more parking) and at the same time made a standing offer to buy any property on our side of Jones Ave. They say they want to increase the "buffer zone" between their facilities and the neighborhood. And with good reason - they recently built a CO-generation (trash-to-steam) power plant that produces the most annoying sounds.

Needless to say, we haven't felt at ease here since we've been aware of Merck's plans. We keep worrying about

which neighbor will go next (3 houses have been torn down since we've been here) + how bad the noise will get. We finally decided that we should leave before Brian starts school next fall. We figured we'd have to go sooner or later.

The worst part of this situation for me is that the only option was to sell ~~the~~ the house to Merck, which is going to tear it down. It's not a really great house, but I'm sentimental about it, plus 120 years is a lot of history to lose!

Picking a new home was also a difficult decision, as it turned out. My ideal house + neighborhood are not to be found in this area, plus house-shopping with the kids in tow was a real pain. We finally identified a neighborhood we liked, but we couldn't find the right house. In the end we picked a building lot in a field that we had noticed from the yard of a house that we were touring. A developer had bought a few acres from a nearby homeowner to subdivide. Our house is supposed to be finished in the winter, but right now it is just an empty lot with a big hole in the ground! It sure will be different to be the first owners ~~of~~ of a new house instead of the last owners of an old house.

While I've had this letter, the first anniversary of Uncle Charlie's death passed by. I'm reminded of all the occasions we were together - family parties + so on. Nice memories.

Love to all,
Eileen

Greetings to all!

Thanks so much Eileen for your ^{outspoken} lovely note. Always nice to hear from you!

In a short while, I'll be off to ^{and kindly} Steubenville, OH. for a big meeting with some new vocations. Say a prayer. The week before, the postulants and myself spent a week at hermitage in solitude + prayer with some of our girls giving conferences, and Mass. We have been doing some work now with AIDS patients. We have been inviting them along with their families to our Holy Hours with Expositions of the Blessed Sacrament. Some have had some powerful conversions. God's work is truly being done here. Keep praying for us. I hope all of you are well. God's blessings on all.

Love,
Annmarie

November 15, 1993

Hi Guys!

We were so pleased to see everyone had good news this past round and it looks like the next round will be even better.

Since our last writing, you know we took a short visit south to Virginia to see Grandma, Aunt Monica, and that other crazy group. We all had a great time and were thrilled because we got to spend a good deal of time with everyone (Eric took off an extra day and the kids were off for Memorial Day.)

On our return, Alan started having some difficulty with what was later to be his hernia surgery. His doctor had warned him two years ago that he would have trouble and that he should just schedule the surgery whenever he became uncomfortable rather than wait for emergency surgery. After juggling all work and school schedules, he had the surgery in late August and went back to work mid-Sept after a three week recoup at home. The only real problem was trying to keep the kids from horseplay and "Daddy withdrawal" when he went back.

September found Alan, Deanne and Billy in school. Gillian will have to wait another year or two. Alan has two more classes after this semester to complete his MBA. Deanne is taking the Intermediate Tax Course with H & R Block and is planning on working with them again this tax season. Billy is in a two morning program through the Parks Dept. that he is enjoying immensely. It runs for 2 hours on Mon and Tues with play time, snack, story and art. He proudly shows his creative display on the refrigerator for Daddy to see when he gets home.

Gillian turned two on the 4th and she had a birthday visit from Grandma and Aunt Monica. It was a short 5 day visit but all the kids (young and old) had a great time.

We are waiting for the roofer to arrive in two weeks for a new roof. Then next year we hope to have the windows done and then we will deem the house complete. (At least in terms of necessity.) We'll always have a wish list.

We can't believe Turkey Day is just around the corner, but we're thankful for all we do have-including a great family.

Happy Day!!!

*Alex, Deanne,
Billy + Gillian*

Nov. 28, 1993

Hi to all!

This is a great time of year to receive the R.R. letter, as we get to wish everyone a very happy holiday season. I guess I'm also the first to congratulate through this letter Steve + Gina on the birth of their daughter, Nicole - + Aunt Claire + Uncle Ed on their "grandparenting." We were able to congratulate Lorraine + John on their engagement in person over the summer,

as they stopped over one Sunday, ~~over the summer~~. John seems like a great guy, & he interacted so well with both our girls that he had Michelle hysterical laughing at him & Kristen with a king-size "crush"! 85A

These last months have been pretty good for us, as both girls have been generally healthy & making some progress in their various activities. Kristen is in pre-school 3x/week at Our Lady of Mercy in Hicksville, our parish school. (Theresa, you did a mission there a few years ago - I found out aft. the fact, when I saw your picture in our parish newsletter!) Micqui^{!!!} has been in a Home-based program for 1 1/2 years (6 visits/week from various teachers & therapists), but now they feel she would benefit from the routine & socialization of being bussed to a center each day. We are trying to weigh everything & decide what would be best for her starting in January. She still has many delays but is considered very bright - unfortunately, she'll be two on New Year's Eve & still can't walk, stand or even crawl. (She continues to make progress in pre-crawling actions, so they tell us she still has the potential to walk eventually.) The combination of high cognitive functioning with low mobility makes it difficult to place her.

Our life has also been somewhat complicated by my going ~~back~~ to work part-time. Northwest Airlines called me back from layoff in May, & my hours are 6-11 PM (after Bill comes home). For a few weeks in a row, I can get away with only working 2 nights, & then we'll suddenly have a promotion (or another airline will go on strike!!) & I'll have to work 6 nights. But Bill's job at Grumman is still so insecure that we take one week at a time with my job, so we have something to fall back on. So the next time there's an airlines price war, it will be good news for some of you, but you'll know the Zirkel House is in chaos once again!

God bless you all, & have wonderful holidays!

Love, Bernadette & Bill, Kristen & Michelle

P.S. It's now 12:30 AM, 29 NOV & I just walked outside & saw the lunar eclipse as clearly as possible. "Awesome", as they say!

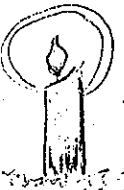
Dear Family,

As I see it, it has been 8 mo since my last writing — not bad! There really isn't much news here except that Christmas is near and a very hectic time at this household. Little Robert who will turn 4 on the 12 keeps Santa alive and well here. I really thank God for this little one who tells me each day how much he loves me. I must admit he's a little spoiled with all the teenagers around. Today Adrienne turns 14 and once again another Birthday cake at this house.

Congrats to Lorraine — how exciting for you! And Steven + Gina — would love to see the baby! As the Christmas season is upon us, once again the memories of Christmas past and parties with Aunt Ann — remember? We sure did have fun, didn't we all?

And with that I'll sign off wishing you all a most Blessed Christmas — and prosperous 1994 —

Love you all
Alex, Maria +



oops wrong pen

Dec 8th, 1993

Dear Everyone, [Feast of Immaculate Conception] the gang —

Congratulations on all the great News! A lot of excitement going on in the Family! Where all are in Florida. Ralph's Mom was in hospital (isolation) for 22 days with T.B. but is fully-recovered now. How quickly now with new medication. Brent's still at UF studying for next week's tests. Taken Raper to get into nearby school for L.P.N. (with hopes of eventually becoming a R.N.). Gannae is in a very sporty legally allowed by law plus adult chair which means Hot Dogs for supper as I'm always at a time! HA! Ralph's still squishing little bugs for the State. I enjoy every word everyone writes & see the sense of humor & really laughed at. There's a "a mother's work is never done" — cute. Barb with "I had P. L. Y. - Vanna?" Aunt Helen

Commenting on Lorraine's presence not knowing how to spell his name.

12/20/93

It's a jolly group & I wish each & every one of us the Peace of Christmas. Love, Madeline & James
Ralph, Brand, Saleen, James

Dear Family,

12/20/93

I'm writing this from Floral Park with Nicole perched on my lap while I pull some P/T "Nanny duty." I won't bore you experienced grandparents with raptures about how adorable my first grandchild is (who it is true), but I'm constantly amazed at her. I guess the passage of time has dulled my memory of baby care -- or is it that I was just too busy with my own children to really enjoy them. Just like in the commercial!!!

The holiday season brings Auntie Anna to mind in a special way - oh how we miss those family get togethers. By now, it seems only a wedding will lure everyone to celebrate together. Lorraine will oblige next July 16th, but I'll let her fill in all the details.

Meanwhile, our house (and barn) on Lockawack is always open with the Welcome sign out for everyone in the family. We've already had our first snowstorm of the season which has blanketed us in beauty. Come see it.

Best wishes to all for a happy, healthy, blessed New Year.

Love,
Ed and Clair

Ki! It's so great to hear from everyone! It just reminds us how lucky we are to belong to such a terrific family! All the good news (for the most part) is great to hear. I have some good news to add as well. We set the date for the wedding - July 16th 1994. It's a Saturday evening so I hope that those of you who are far away could schedule a visit to good old New York at around that time! It would be nice to see everyone again before we forget what each other looks like (haha)!! Other than wedding plans, life has been good - new job at "Parents" Magazine, new cat, planning on Hawaii for the honeymoon & enjoying time with Nicole my gorgeous new niece. I'm ^{finally} an AUNT! Love to all - Lorraine.

2/1/84

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Dear All -

Merry Christmas, HAPPY New Year, HAPPY Super Bowl and HAPPY Ground Hog Day! Some Things have changed since the last time the letter came our way. But some things have not. Our dryer backed-out, so we are still in our cozy little co-op. Well - at least it fosters togetherness.

I received a major promotion at work. I am now the full-time producer of the 10 o'clock news on Channel 5. So, you can see my name at the top of the credits (whenever we run them.) It's a lot of fun - and of course there's the pride of knowing that you are educating the public in the truly important news - like Michael Jackson's legal troubles and Donald and Marla. (Well - it's a living.)

Mary Jo teaches part-time at Molloy College - French on Tuesdays & Thursdays, English to recent immigrants on SATURDAYS.

Joseph continues to grow and grow - at 18 months he was just under 35 lbs. and 37 inches tall. He is now testing the bounds of the "Walker #3" draggers. I am just grateful that my hours allow me to spend every morning with him. Hope to see you soon.

Love
Joe & Mary Jo +
Frank

2/20 Dear Family,

The Lenettow branch of the family did not get off to a very good start in '94. On Jan 8 Augie suffered a mild heart attack (He make some pain don't we?) He went into the hospital for tests on '15 + they found some blockage + while he waited to be transferred to Stinchrop Hosp for an angiogram, he had the attack. Fortunately, he was in the right place when it happened + there was minimal damage to the heart. They did an angioplasty to clear the blockage + he's been doing fine ever since. He is still home from work recuperating but is now able to drive + go for walks etc. The rest of us are doing okay. Patti has been doing very well at CW Post + expects to graduate in May with a degree in Graphic Art + Design - anyone know of any jobs!!

The latest from the Krause's - can you believe Larry will be turning 30 next month? I had a visit from Jimmy over the holiday. He was in from CO. with his wife + step-son. He is an exact replica of Ted, so much so that I took a double take when I saw him. Last but not least, the big news, Kressy is expecting in Sept. Congratulations all upon great-great aunts + uncle.

I have my calendar circled + I'm looking forward to seeing everyone on Lorraine's big day. Till then, our love and prayers to you all.

Love,

Ronnie

John