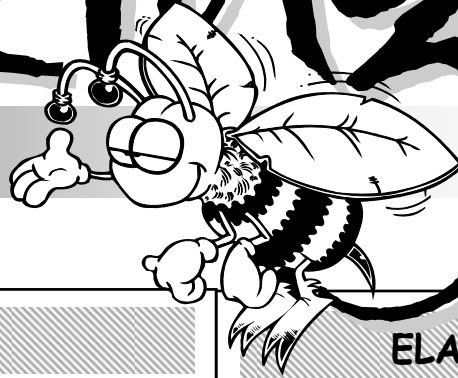


Buzzings

The latest happenings from the family of
Albert & Rena Bakker



GRANDMA BAKKER

Just a bit for the Buzzings:

March 10—Saw a slide show on Hawaii.

March 23—Easter Sunday. To Moline Church AM then to Oscar and Elaine for dinner. Steve and Brenda and Todd, Sari too. At night to a program of Choirs of all the protestant churches around here at First Byron Center Christian Reformed Church. Very good. Elaine took me.

March 26—To big dinner at Moline Christian School to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Moline Christian Reformed Church. Afterwards a program at church. Now things are getting back to normal. All 4 girls went with me to the dinner and program. What a blessing this was.

Mon—back to exercise, discovered all the curtains were down so we heard the windows hadn't been changed in at least 10 years.

Yesterday a group of ladies came and sang some hymns for us. Then a group of Byron Center pupils came carrying pansies. They walked here. We could pick one out and take it to our room. They were planted in dirt.

This afternoon they are mowing the lawn here. Second time.

This is it for now.

God bless you all.

Grandma

ELAINE

Although the past month has been difficult the Lord who has planned all things from eternity held our family in His hands with the illness and passing on of Oscar. We have wonderful memories of his hope for heaven heard in his singing of the Psalms and hymns in his final days.

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints". Psalm 116:15

Your thoughts and prayers, phone calls and visits gave us much encouragement. We could feel your love and support. We will miss our dear husband and father but we know he is at home with the Lord. This truth gives us much peace and joy as his suffering is over.

With thanks for you
all and love in Christ,
Elaine

Steve & Brenda, Todd
Shari

Abi is Graduating....



The graduation ceremony is on Sunday, June 1 at 2pm at Crossroads Charter Academy, 215 W. Spruce Street, Big Rapids.

Open House for friends and family will begin at 4:30 at 321 Williams Street in Big Rapids.

BOB & ARLA

Hi family; Spring is here and everything is Bee-uti-ful !

Bob and Arla spent the month of March renting a condo in Bonita Springs, Florida. This year we took Bob's 90 year old father with us. Bob and his dad went golfing 4 different times and Arla had fun going to thrift shops and church sales.

Scott, Shelly, Whitney and Cameryn came down and spent 4 nights with us. (Guess who slept on the floor.) We all enjoyed picking up sea shells at the sea shore, and we learned the shells 'stink' really bad if you don't first wash them in bleach. We also enjoyed our visit to the Naples Zoo where we took a boat ride around The Monkey Island to see the monkey's, croc's and gator's. Bob did all the driving, and we went 3,850 miles. Gas was only \$3.31 a gallon in Florida. We are thankful we each have a pocket change job and that helps put more gas in the tank.

That's all from this leaky air-mattress.

Enjoy Gods Bee-uti-ful creation.

Arla and Bob

Next newsletter deadline: AUGUST 1, 2008

TOM & DENISE

The Minnesota Bakkers and doing well but aren't very exciting! We haven't done anything newsworthy.

Tom keeps trying to find wood to burn since fuel is so expensive and winter won't go away. We've had three big snowstorms in April and it isn't very warm. The last snowdrift is melted and our field appears to be the first worked up. We plan to plant some trees and grass in a buffer strip around our farm.

Janine has been playing Junior Olympics Volleyball. She has all day tournaments on several Saturdays. One day I was there with her for 12 hours - and that was an hour and a half away. It is fun to watch and she enjoys playing.

Daniel, is a true Bakker - he loves garage sales! Saturday, even though the weather was very nasty, we dropped him off in Prinsburg for garage sales. He had a wonderful time and got some great deals on toys. He even bought me great big, big blue earrings that match my shirt, a small live trap for Tom, and some shower gel for the girls! Some of our friends who've had sales tell us what a wheeler dealer he is. The next day was his birthday - it just doesn't get much better!

Katrina is looking for a job in Computer aided graphics and such. She will need to take a couple of classes next semester to finish her degree and she got a scholarship for that.

Trevor will be graduating from the Auto Body class and hopes/needs to find a job after that.

Marie is also finished with her schooling and needs to take her tests to become an RN. She already has a job lined up at the hospital in Pierre. She has a pinning ceremony on May 11.

In January all of us met at a motel in Sioux Falls, SD for a weekend of swimming and visiting. We had a nice time - the little kids love swimming. Jason lost his wedding ring there but it miraculously showed up in Becky's washing machine?!!

We have two calves at our place again, Supper and Dinner. We have five hens that survived the winter and are starting to lay again, with the price of eggs going up it is nice to have them our back yard. We have many cats and two dogs. Several fish in our "pond".

Well that's it for now folks. The Minnesota Bakker's

DAVE & KAREN

The VanderGoots were very glad to see that the piles of snow by their house had almost disappeared when they got back from their vacation during spring break the first week of April. It was certainly a long, cold, snowy winter in Big Rapids. We enjoyed our trip south and really enjoyed seeing green grass and flowers. First we spent a few days in Ocean Isle Beach, a quiet beach resort in North Carolina. It was a bit rainy, but no snow! After three days there we headed up to Fredericksburg, VA to visit Chris. He treated us to a round of golf at the golf course he now works at there called The Gauntlet. Then we just had to see if the cherry blossoms were out in Washington DC and yes, we did take our usual walk around the Tidal Basin and the cherry trees were blooming nicely. We spent one night with Emi and Mike, and then headed home. What had been over 6 feet high piles of snow by our driveway were only a little bit of ice. But, even that is all gone now, and we are enjoying the tulips and a few other signs of spring!

Abi is looking forward to the last few weeks of high school and then Graduation on Sunday, June 1, at 2pm. You are all invited to come for that, but if not to the actual graduation, we are having an Open House for her at our house from 4:30-8:00 that day. Come help her celebrate! (yes, there will be food!) Her plans are to try to find a job (any job!) for the summer and then go to Baker College in Muskegon in the fall to study to be a surgical technician. She is getting some "hands on" experience with that at the local hospital through her Allied Health class. She also went to the Grand Traverse Resort for two days to be a part of HOSA which was competition for high school students in the medical field. To be able to get to that she passed the regional competition in the area of "medical terminology spelling." Both Abi and Zac enjoyed bowling on the school team this year. Zac also played basketball and is currently playing both baseball and track. Yes, they also study from time to time and both have been on the "honor roll" all year! They also both participate in band and once again they received all "Ones" in the high school state competition. Zac is looking forward to trying to find some work this summer, but also plans to attend the Youth Unlimited (formerly Young Calvinist) Convention. This year it is in Bozeman, Montana. Dave continues to be busy with his job as assistant principal and curriculum director at the Reed City Public Schools and Karen continues to try to sell houses, land, and especially a very nice farm!

May God bless you all!

Dave, Karen, Abi and Z

RYAN & JAYNE

Hello everyone!

Hope this newsletter finds everyone able to catch some sunshine. We are getting outside every possible moment. Especially since Jake realized he won't melt if he gets a little rain on him. The kids have been almost living in their sandbox this year. Darcie is asking everyday to get the pool and sprinkler out. Natalie is thinking about crawling, but it's still faster to just roll wherever she needs to go!

Ryan just finished up his bachelor's in science- Fire Science degree from LSSU, and is will continue his EMT class through June. He has earned the summer off! We hope to side the house this year and put in new windows. That should keep him out of trouble for a while.

I have had a few weddings this spring, which is work that I love to do. The one I had this weekend (the 3rd) was supposed to be the 24th. But they called me this week and told me of a "change in plans" after the groom will be sent to Japan with the Navy. Everything came together nicely, in spite of the short notice!

Happy Spring!

Jayne and Family

CAL & LISA

The snow has finally melted, and things are just starting to turn green.

Anna and the boys have been living with us since before John died, but they will soon be in their new house, about half mile south of us. We've been plenty busy painting and replacing carpeting and flooring to get that house ready. We finally got all her stuff moved in the last couple of days. Cal is working on getting new flooring in the kitchen, dining room and master bath as soon as he can make the time.

Anna and John's baby, Braden John, is due to be born some time in late August or early September. Anna plans to be off work for six weeks. Grandma and Grandpa Bakker are eagerly awaiting this birth, too; Grandpa sure loves "his boys", and Grandma just loves kids. Morgan will be traveling to spend six weeks with his father in North Carolina and Louisiana this summer, then will spend the school year in Gaylord again next year in order to be here for the arrival of his new baby brother and help his mom the first several months. Both of the boys have been a great help to us in getting the new house ready for them to move into. They're looking forward to decorating their new bedrooms that will soon be built in the basement. The second upstairs bedroom will be used for their new brother's room, as well as for their sister, Aleena, when she comes to visit. Johnathan can join Morgan in his nice, new, bedroom during those visits. Anna and Lisa plan to travel down to Grand Ledge to watch Johnathan's 6th grade spring band concert on Tuesday evening this week.

Cal made his annual trip to Florida with the high school youth group. All went well—perfect weather and no problems with the busses, and 65 teenagers behaved themselves. We did have to make a stop to watch TV. Our youth pastor, Newell Cerak, and his wife Colleen had filmed the Dateline show a couple of days before. This was all about what they went through when they buried their daughter Whitney, only to find out five weeks later that she was still alive. Their book, Mistaken Identity, which tells the story was just out. NBC reserved a conference room in a hotel in Louisville, KY so we could all watch it. It's interesting to watch people on TV while they are sitting in the same room with you. Newell and Colleen said there were a few things they wish were included in the interview, but they were mostly satisfied with the way the media treated them.

Jared is all set to graduate from Wheaton College on May 10 with his master's degree in Clinical Psychology. He hopes to continue to work in the Wheaton/Naperville area of the "Berbs" of Chicago for the next couple of years while he gets through is licensing internship. His eyes are on The Lord, and he's seeking God's direction for his future. If you would like to pray for God to show Jared what path He would like him to seek, that would be wonderful. Jared plans to move on to his doctoral studies in Neuro-psychology as soon as his licensing, and funding, allow.

Lisa will soon be making a job change – as a staff accountant with a different Gas and Oil company in the area who has offered her a nice package. It is a large company with a lot of people and a lot of room for growth. Lisa was one of 80 applicants for the position, and the only applicant interviewed. The job change will probably take place early to mid-June, and it will mean she won't have any vacation time to speak of for this year. However, she plans to "vacation" some at the local county park with Anna and the boy as much as Cal will allow. The first two weeks "vacation" is due to begin on May 17th, with the whole family joining her over the long Memorial Day weekend. Lisa leaves for work each morning after celebrating the sunrise and joining with The Lord in prayer and bible study at the lake. What a great start to a day! The sunrise over a lake is so much more splendorous than it is over a field of pine trees!

Wishing you all a wonderful spring, filled with fun family times and great memories.

Cal & Lisa, Anna, Morgan, Cody and baby Braden

SCOTT & SHELLY

The Boermans are happy that spring is here!!! The other day Whitney said "Mom, why can't we just go to Florida in the winter time, so we never have to be cold again?" Why indeed! Yes, the big news over the past quarter is that Whitney and Cameryn took their first plane trip when the four of us went down to Florida to stay with Grandpa and Grandma and Great-Grandpa for 5 days. We had a wonderful time collecting shells, swimming, and going to the zoo. The girls got their "wings" from the flight attendant (I didn't know they still did that). Our other news is that Whitney is having her tonsils out on May 15. She has had strep throat 4 times in 4 months, so the Dr. said it's time. It will be an outpatient procedure at Zeeland Hospital. She has to be out of commission for about 10 days, so Daddy will stay home with her most of that time, since his work provides paid benefits for that! Scott was also promoted to an Assistant Vice President status back in February , and there has been down sizing at Fifth Third just like everywhere else, so we are thankful for his job. Shelly continues to work for Tendercare as a regional consultant—with a region that extends up to Sault Ste Marie! Jason has offered Shelly a ride next time he flies up that way! Cameryn is getting started on potty training, though not as fast as her mother would like. She has a more stubborn streak than Whitney did so we are trying to take it slow (I wonder where she gets that?!). In the mean time , she is learning her numbers and ABCs, and will soon graduate to a "big girl bed". I think that's all for now.....

little seeds

by Else Holmelund Minarik

Little seeds we sow in spring
growing while the robins sing,
give us carrots, peas and beans,
tomatoes, pumpkins, squash and greens.

And we pick them,
one and all,
through the summer,
through the fall,

Winter comes, then spring, and then
little seeds we sow again.

ALAN & LYNN

We have had a lot of travel events in the late winter. Lynn went to New Jersey to help prepare her mother's house for sale, and drove most of the way in an ice storm. A few days later, Alan and Ben went to New Orleans to assist with the continuing Hurricane Katrina clean-up. They rebuilt a house in a neighborhood where the houses were still standing, but damaged. They also toured the 9th ward, where, as they got closer to the water, there were less and less houses, then just foundations, then nothing but the streets. They did go through downtown New Orleans as well, one evening, where there were lots of people and policemen on the streets.

A few days after they got home, our family left to follow the Santa Fe trail. We went up in the St. Louis arch, crossed the prairies, and saw many of the landmarks the pioneers did, like forts and ghost towns. After climbing the mountain passes, we found the Grand Canyon, and spent three days there enjoying the scenery. There was some snow left there, was about 48 degrees and sunny during the day, and 19 feet of snow still on the North Rim, which we could watch get snowed on from the South rim where we were.

From the Grand Canyon, we headed south, and finally found some weather warm enough to swim in an outdoor pool in March! And we saw cactus! And cows! Visited the Alamo and searched for diamonds in the Arkansas Ozarks on the way home.

Alan then left for New York for an apple meeting. As a result of that meeting, we planted more apple trees, about 4000 more, on our farm. Alan continued planting 1300 more trees for Cherry Bay as well. He will soon be spraying a lot. Had a bit of warm weather, and then it got colder, causing some damage to the cherry and apple blossoms. There has been lots of rain lately to water the trees. We are considering putting in another large well by our barn for apple irrigating.

This last weekend, the Boy Scouts enjoyed the rain and ice as they camped on Cherry Bay Orchard land. Our troop hosted 150 other Scouts at an event called Camporee, that Lynn was in charge of planning. They got to throw tomahawks, shoot slingshots and black powder, learn about furs and trapping, cross a rope bridge across a swamp that Ben and Josiah helped build, shoot bows and arrows, and start fires with flint and steel. Was a very fun weekend.

RICK & MEL

We spend a fantastic week in South Carolina for Spring Break in early April - the weather was gorgeous! We visited many fascinating places as well - Brookgreen Gardens (like Meijer Gardens in GR only all outside), Myrtle Beach, Patriots Point (a retired aircraft carrier, battleship, and submarine), Boone Hall Plantation, and South Carolina Aquarium and Turtle Rescue Hospital. We saw tons of wildlife too - alligators, turtles, cranes, dolphins, pelicans, and lots of other animals that weren't quite as exciting! We drove straight through on the way home - the kids did fantastic! A few minor melt-downs, but it was so much better to just get home (in a snowstorm).

Two days after getting home from SC, Rick was very unexpectedly laid-off from his job with Contech Construction Products. We know that God has a plan for us and Contech just didn't fit in that plan anymore!

Wildlife in our yard/neighborhood has been interesting to say the least...when we got home from SC we opened the grill to find a HUGE nest from a cowbird (the pesky black things). The nest was fully encasing the interior of the grill. We had never seen something so large. It took quite awhile to untangle the mess to get the grill in working order again! Another exciting discovery over the past week or so was that of a Fallows Deer (from Europe) wandering our neighborhood (and eating Mel's lilac shrub that was actually going to bloom this year). A few of us neighbors called the DNR and we haven't seen it since. This was a huge male with an enormous rack of antlers. Nathan wanted the DNR to "take care of the deer, but give us the antlers and the head". It was a little intimidating when we would walk to the bus stop in the morning, but it did keep to itself.

Nathan is playing coach-pitch baseball this year - this is new to him so it should create some interesting moments...

Ashley is starting her orthodontics this month as well...braces are so different then they were 20 years ago. Hopefully she handles everything well.

That's it from Rockford! Happy Spring!

DON & MARY

Happy Spring to you all!

Early in March Jas & Jo invited us to their barn for a 'picnic' supper and we showed our pictures of St Croix. Seems now that our vacation was a long time ago! We had Matt & Joni's 6 kids here for 2 nights in late March while they went to a conference in Kalamazoo. Now we know why you have children when you are young. They were very very good and we even managed to take them all to 9:00 AM church service with us.

At our zoo, Meow has new kittens 2 weeks ago. Purr and Puff control the mice in the barn. The peacocks are laying eggs. We have only 4 left since we sold some last fall. One guinea survives. Lily is much happier lately with all the attention she gets from customers coming and going. Some even bring doggie treats for her.

I bought 2 dozen eggs so far from Michael. Anyone with extra egg cartons can give them to their family or leave them with us or even with Mom. The price of eggs went up in the stores too and these are \$2.00/dozen (ouch!) and from cage-free hens. If you ask the kids they will tell you more.

We had "Water Garden" seminars here Apr. 18 & 19. It's a lot of work but we had an excellent turn-out this year. We have hired 3 new employees, one college and 2 high school. So far no comment. Where do you find good farm kids who know how to work??

That's it from the two of us, Don & Mary



Rick and Mel with the kids in South Carolina for Spring Break.