**MARTINI NEWSLETTER ~ 2017**

Sorry this wasn’t ready as usual at the reunion but the sudden death of Bob & Arlene’s daughter, Karen, on the 16th, just threw all of us for a loop; it was difficult enough to make final preparations for the reunion itself but thanks to our families who pitched in and made it happen. I had worked on this prior to then so here is the 2017 edition. It will be sent out via e-mail to those whose addresses I have and will also send some out by snail mail. Hope it reaches all who want a copy.

The 2016 reunion of the Martini cousins was held on Sunday, September 25, 2016. A fine, fun day was provided by the family of Uncle Steve & Aunt Margie. The only “down” element (if you want to call it that!) was that it was also the date of the first home game for the Bengals and several cousins had tickets for the game, but not to worry as a TV was on site for those who chose to watch them lose to the Denver Broncos☹. There was a large turnout though no numbers are on hand as we no longer have folks sign in. The shelter at Kuliga is beginning to be borderline to accommodate all of us, however it is sort of traditional so guess it will remain the site of choice. The usual games were played, also part of the tradition and the following were winners: Chris Romito ( repeat winner!) and Andrew Proffitt took honors for Cornhole then Andrew and his sister, Ashley, won the Egg Toss. Betty Martini correctly guessed the exact number of M&Ms in the Candy Jar. Paul was the oldest cousin present having turned 88 two days prior. Our granddaughter, Sophia, was the youngest being 3 months, 9 days old!! It was great to see several “out-of-towners” including Peggy from FL; Mike & Mary Ann from MI and Larry & Marge came up from Lexington. It just keeps getting better and bigger all the time☺

Chic had started a project to track down the watches our fathers/uncles who on their 21st birthdays, had received from their parents. He managed to get photos of all, with the exception of Martha, who did not get one and Phil, for whom none could be traced. Lots of them were on display. His son-in-law, Dan Haney, took his notes and produced a wonderful, keepsake booklet describing each watch and details of its owner. Each first cousin was given one; I’m sure it will be passed down with other family treasures. Many thanks to Chic & Dan for sharing their time and talent in this endeavor.

The CUZ enjoyed their annual get-togethers: Christmas party at Diana’s home which is pretty funny since we started exchanging “White Elephant” gifts, amazing stuff shows up!! The picnic at Delhi Park is always fun finding out who your “Secret Cuz” was; we must be getting old as not as many knew who theirs was this time. The luncheons continue at various restaurants on the 3rd Monday of each month.

**JOE:** No updates were noted; Mary continues to reside at Hillebrand. Arlene has been visiting her frequently and said she is always grateful for cards or visits.

**FRANK:** Rose as usual, gathered her family’s info; she has more time on her hands as she no longer watches her grands but she also finds it lonely at times. All of the news centered on Jim & Jackie’s family. Sadly, son Jimmy’s wife, Terri, passed away on January 1 after battling cancer. His daughter, Sarah married Jeremy Niesen on June 24. Double congrats to Granddaughter Sonya and hubby, Ben, who welcomed identical twin sons, David & Daniel on April 10. Grandson, Mitch, has joined the Peace Corps and will be leaving for Guatemala soon; best of luck to him.

**CHARLEY:** By now, all are probably aware that Arlene & Bob’s oldest daughter, Karen, died in her sleep on Aug. 16. Karen never met a stranger and was devoted to the well-being of the elderly. She worked for 28 years at Cottingham Retirement Community until last year when she became the Executive Director of Artis on Bridgetown Rd., a home for those with memory issues. The lives she touched was evident when 300 showed up at an impromptu candlelight vigil held at Mother of Mercy the evening she died, the nearly one thousand who came to the visitation and the crowd at St. Catherine’s for her Mass. She lived Mother Teresa’s words by “doing small things with great love” and will always be remembered by everyone who knew her. Your kind messages of sympathy are sincerely appreciated. Chic with the help of his son, Mike, has created a family crest using some ideas from one sent long ago by Franz Klee (a distant relative from France whose mother was a Martini). They did a great job of combining our heritage from here and abroad.

Our granddaughter, Katie Gray, was married on July 28 to Greg Hoelle. It was a lovely, fun evening.

Apologies to Dillon for failing to mention his graduation from MSJ in last year’s letter; he is employed by Hamilton County Children’s Services, a great fit for him! Our family is well represented at UC this year with 3 Doerger granddaughters and 2 of our grandsons attending!!

**ANDY:**  Mary Jo was quick to respond to my appeal for info this year. Don’s granddaughter, Katie & Ben welcomed a son, Abram, on 6/8/15. Dick’s family added two more “grands” with the arrival of Henry Ingram on 4/1/17 and AnnaLynne Lane on 6/6/17. Granddaughter Megan wed Micheal Thomas on 10/22/16. The youngest grandchild, Mitchell, graduated from LaSalle this year. Jan gathers all the family each month for a pot luck, keeping everyone connected ~ a very good idea!

Tony & Barb have their first “grand”, Anthony, born on 5/1/0/17 to James & Natasha. Tony is doing well while Barb recovers from a shoulder injury; always challenges to face.

Mary Jo & Dave continue to camp, exploring new regional parks; all is well with them and their family. **Their annual Martini Family Group Campout is scheduled for 9/8-10 at Brookville Lake with 12 current reservations. All are welcome to visit on Saturday.**

**RAY:** Max sent word that Bob’s daughter, Debra Mefford has had a busy year welcoming their first grandchild, Mason Adam (Adam & Amy) arrived on 9/2/16 while son, Jesse wed Sara Masek on 4/22/17.

**MARTHA:** Bionic Barb is recuperating from recent knee replacement hoping it goes as well as her new hip☺. Her report all centered on Betty’s family. Elizabeth Groeschen married Andrew Haglin on 7/1/17 at her parents’ home; As they both taught in South Korea, there was an Asian influence in food & drink; they are residing in NY, NY. Marie Cooper married Cole Musical on 6/3/17; the wedding took place in a field under a blistering sun! She recently completed her Masters at UK. Austin & Kim Cooper along with new baby, Adelyn (5/16/17) have returned to NK from Baton Rouge. Kim will be practicing pediatrics on the East Side. Joshua & Rebecca Cooper welcomed Lily on 12/28/16. Blessings to all these happy couples! Joyce had back surgery in December and is happy to be pain free. Audrey broke her hand in a fall earlier this year but it is now OK. Edward has had a rough year after falling in April. He has been in and out of Christ Hospital several times and is now back at St. Andrew’s in Batesville going through therapy. He appreciates all the cards, good thoughts and prayers he has received.

**BUD:** Didn’t hear from Dave so hope “no news is good news”! Larry & Marge’s family has had another busy year, as he said “lots of moving forwards” which is good!! Grandson, Marcus Biega graduated from UC and has retained employment here. His sister, Carly, completed her freshman year in UC’s DAAP program and both now claim Cincy as “their town”!! Grandson Matthew Payne graduated from Louisville and found employment there. His brother, Harrison is a junior at Alabama and sister, Morgan is attending EKU in Richmond, not too far from Lexington! Jules & Doug Guedry from Atlanta will be sending Lane to Samford U in Birmingham, AL. Their daughter, Ella, is a Jr. in high school and spent the summer traveling to basketball tournaments from Chicago to Orlando. Mike & Alisha live in a beautiful area of the USA, Mt. Pleasant, SC. Their sons, Jack & Graham keep busy with school, working & kayaking while Hayes enjoys everything, especially ballet. Larry & Marge are grateful for their many blessings, family and friends.

**EPP:** It was so sad to hear of Ginny’s passing on August 1st. I had received an e-mail from her the Wednesday before. She had just begun a new round of chemo and radiation which she said was exhausting and the humidity made breathing difficult, the only negative reference she ever made to me about her illness. She also said to have fun at the reunion and to tell everyone hello and she will miss being there. Growing up, she was my closest cousin as we were the same age (though she insisted she was “older” but only by several months!). It was good to meet her family at this past reunion and kind of them to make the trip. You can see Ginny in several of them, in looks and mannerisms; she spoke of them often and know she loved them very much. Diana, Dale, Jessica, Ashley & Lou traveled to PA for her Mass which incidentally was on her parents’ 80th anniversary. She was such a character and will be missed. Seems Diana is enjoying her retirement and traveling, visiting Niagara Falls and looking forward to going to England, Ireland and Scotland in May. Lisa and family vacationed at St. George Island, FL and Sophie is already five and is attending Pre-K!

**STEVE:** I received a nice, lengthy update e-mail from Christina, Carol & Mike’s daughter-in-law who has offered to take over my job; I’m thinking about it and will decide next year! Meanwhile I must finish this one☺ Steve & Marty are the proud grandparents of 3 grads. Abby will attend the OSU, Nate going to MSJ and Zach has joined the Navy; we thank him for his service and wish him well. Congratulations and all best wishes to Lou and Patty on their engagement which they announced at the reunion. We needed good news and happy that two nice people found each other!! Aaron came to town for their annual Martini Cornhole Tournament which was won by Ian who is also a pitcher for Elder’s Reserve team and made the honor roll all 4 quarters ~ kudos to this accomplished young man☺. Ray & Joyce both enjoy being retired. Their twin grandsons, Alex & Nick spent the summer in FL at baseball camp and tryouts while brother Logan is in LA teaching Yoga. Marc, Amy & family spend good times at Cumberland on her Mom’s houseboat which sounds like a lot of fun. Joe, Vanessa & family go camping a lot and are enjoying a long visit with her parents from Argentina. Tim & Karen enjoy visiting family and vacationing. They hosted the Cornhole Tournament for Jeanne & Frank who experienced storm issues. Carol & Mike are still trying to fit a trip out West in their plans! Mike & Chris surprised their girls with a trip to Niagara Falls. Olivia hiked a part of the Appalachian Trail this spring with her high school group ~ that sounds ambitious! Farming & remodeling their home keep Rick, Mindy and their family busy. They did welcome two new additions and are expecting three more ~ calves that is, keep building the herd☺. Marge & Virg welcomed Keegan on Feb.7, daughter of Julia & Kyle. Julian is thrilled with his new sister. Jill continues to coach Seton’s dance team which does great in national competitions. Jodie & Ross plan to celebrate their 5th anniversary in Oct. at Disney World with Harper & Ben which should be great fun! Margie & Diane went to Australia for a 2 week visit to Diane & Denny’s son, Ryan, who has been teaching there. He proved to be an excellent driver/tour guide as they traveled from Brisbane to Sydney to Melbourne with lots of fun & adventure along the way despite having a kangaroo hit the car! Virg & Marge still like to take golfing vacations ~ life is good! Jeanne & Frank were blessed with another grandson, Arlo Peretzky, who arrived on 5/1/17, son of Sherri & Zack. That makes a total of six, five boys and one girl. They happily spend two days a week helping out and babysitting for them. Denny & Diane are first time grandparents! Amy & Blake welcomed Peyton on 7/16/17. All are thrilled and healthy. There is truly something special about that first grandbaby ~ enjoy!! Son, Ryan, is undecided about remaining in Australia to teach or joining the Peace Corps, either choice seems very interesting ~ good luck on your decision.

He will be home in September to meet his new niece.

**PHIL:** Did not hear from Mary Louise so hope all is well with her and all the family and that we will see her at the Cuz Christmas Party.

Next year’s reunion hosts will be Uncle Ray’s family. I will be updating the family tree shortly and will send it out. Thanks again to all for the family news you sent; couldn’t do it without you.

That wraps up another yearly chapter in our family history. Lots of good news but as always, there’s sadness along with it. The following was a FaceBook posting which I think is a good way to look at life:

BE KIND

WORK HARD

STAY HUMBLE

KEEP HONEST

STAY LOYAL

TRAVEL WHEN POSSIBLE

BE THANKFUL ALWAYS AND LOVE….

Until next time, take care and God Bless! Later, Love, L