

*April 2012*  
*ISSUE 174*

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*APRIL 2012*

The flowers above and below were found in the Dominican Republic. Gina and Kathy provided these photos for us. The beauty was incredible in the Dominican. Those who went were Mom, Larry and Maggie, Curt, Kathy and Kristen (who joined us), Betty, Gina, Mysti Lynn and Linda. It was a wonderful 8 days.

God's Blessings to All. Love ya, Linda



## *April Birthdays*

Michelle Mages	Apr 01
Carter Wilson	Apr 01
Owen Rath	Apr 02
Anna Mages	Apr 06
McKenna Mages	Apr 09
Natalie Goblirsch	Apr 15
Josh Deegan	Apr 19
LeAnn Mages	Apr 22
Curt Mages	Apr 24
Trish Mages	Apr 25
Jermayne Mages	Apr 26
Kevin Plath	Apr 28

## *April Anniversaries*

Dan & Arlene Mages  
April 16          42 yrs

Tom & Sharon Mages  
April 30          24 yrs

Ryan & Laura Wolf  
April 27          10 yrs

Chad & Sarah Mills  
April 26          09 yrs

Greg & MaryKay Mages  
April 09          07 yrs

[www.magesonline.com](http://www.magesonline.com)

### **News Deadline**

20<sup>th</sup> of each month.

Send articles and photos  
to Linda  
[lindagall@rocketmail.com](mailto:lindagall@rocketmail.com)

## *Coming Events*

March 25,2012- Michelle's Choir-Albert Lea

March 31, 2012- Branson, Missouri, Michelle's choir

June 02, 2012-Michelle Mages Graduation Party

July 2012- Baby due for Tim and Lindsey

July 2012- Baby due for Greg and Mary Kay

August 2012- Baby due for Alan and Julia

July 14, 2012- Saturday Mages Family picnic at  
Sportsman's Park, Sleepy Eye, Mn Supper 7p.m.

July 27,2012- Wedding of David Nelson and Samantha,  
St. Peter, Mn. Gustavus College

August 23, 2012- September 06,2012- Trip to Germany.

September 22- 2012- Annual Kodet Sister's Day Morton  
Senior Center, 9 a.m.

Dear Larry,

Thanks for starting the weight loss program. Do you offer a one month membership? We are certain that we could lose the most weight, and win the prize if you allow us to join just for the month of July!

Even if you don't offer a prize we will each bring home our own prize in the form of new babies born in July.

Sincerely,

Lindsey and Mary Kay Mages

# Michelle Show Choir



On February 25th I had the pleasure of taking a whole car load of young women up to see Michelle's show choir competition on "Swingin on the River" located at Hasting High school. Along for the ride were Madeline, Jessica and Rebecca Schmitz, McKenna Mages and Emily Schotzko (Tony's niece from Cathedral in New Ulm who is also a friend of McKenna's). When we arrived at the High School almost the first person we saw as we were purchasing our admission tickets was this beautiful model wearing all of the latest styles in season direct from the runways of New York City. After further consideration we realized this was "our Michelle" looking terrific as usual in her Liz Claiborne dress suit accented by a Ralph Lauren brown leather jacket with matching beaded Vera Wang handbag. Her Calvin Klein shoes were perfectly suited to her gorgeous "Miss America" like stature and we were all completely and utterly in awe of this shining star. Soon her sister, Suzanne, wearing Perry Ellis boots and an absolutely fabulous Chanel scarf, joined us and our day was off to a great start.

We chatted happily with Suzanne and Michelle as we were all so excited to witness this big day full of show choir after show choir of very unique, totally entertaining, Las Vegas like acts. The day was all about the music, the singing, the dancing, the GOOD LOOKING GUYS, the beautiful voices and of course the fashions worn by these talented high school show choir performers from across the State of Minnesota and even our great nation.

We knew Michelle's act, Hastings Riverside, would be on stage last and that the whole day would literally build up to this incredible peak performance.

It was fun to see the reaction of those in our group who were witnessing this competition for the first time. Madeline was quoted as saying, "My senses can not even take this entire day of performances in because the stage is so full of exhilarating and stimulating entertainment all at one time."

The young women who attended with me last year were on the look out for all of the good looking guys they had seen performing the year before. They were not disappointed as Totino Grace's main man, "Tom Cruise's look a like" was back and entertaining the crowds again. Following his act, McKenna made sure she got a picture with him and his autograph after crawling over many rows of seats to reach him and introduce herself. (Is she a Mages or what???)

Following Michelle's incredible performance where she wore not one but two Vera Wang evening gowns, we headed back to Curt and Kathy's for a night of constant chatter, fun food and some serious hot tubbing. This time Rebecca took the dare to run around the house at Midnight in her swimsuit through the snow and then jumped right back into the hot tub with the rest of her cousins. (I guess she too had to prove that she had some Mages in her.) I was so proud of her! Thanks for the great times girls! And thanks for hosting this fun evening at your home after the competition Curt and Kathy (even though you were miles away in the Dominican Republic.) We all had a great show stopping time! Lisa Schmitz



L-R, Lisa, Madeline, Michelle, Becca, Jessica, Suzanne, McKenna and Emily.



# *Sister's Weekend Update*



**Mark your calendars for Sisters Weekend to be held Sat., Oct. 6 & Sun., Oct. 7, 2012**

On **Saturday** we will attend Morgan Creek Vineyard at 23707 478th Ave, New Ulm, MN for the Cambria Crush: The Annual Great Grape Stomp with the Rakstar belly dancers and the traditional Morris dancers performing on the grounds. Please go to this site for more details...

<http://morgancreekvineyards.com/events.php?eventid=20>

We will meet at the Fischer farm at noon, to car pool together to witness the first stomp competition at 1pm and again at 3pm. On May 5th is sign up day for the stomper teams, which fills up extremely fast. I will do my best to get us team: "Sisters Weekend" team of 4. Bring lawn chairs or a blanket to sit on the hillside grounds. They sell food on the grounds, so only bring in a few treats in your costume purses to munch on, if desired. The cover charge cost is \$5.00 at the gate. If wish to do wine tasting, inside the big tent, there is another \$5 charge with glass. **Please let me know soon if you wish to be a stomper.** There is a \$15 entrance fee per stomper if participate in the stomp. Top stomping team prize is (\$200.00 value) free case of wine. Plus best stomping costumes win a bottle of their famous seasonal dessert wine.

**Our Sister's Weekend categories this year are again: Aprons, Hats and Purses.** Being most people attending are in costumes at this Morgan Creek Vineyard event, we will fit right in the celebration. Last year's winners, please gets your traveling trophies ready to return for this year new winners. This fun event is over at 4pm, we will then head back to Fischer farm to freshen up for St. Mary's Catholic Church at 5:30pm. To followed up with eating supper at Carl's Corner in Essig, MN and announce the costume competition results. We will head back to Fischer farm for Fischer wine tasting, good laughs, rest and relaxation.

On **Sunday**, we will arise early, share and enjoy our famous many-course breakfast. **We will exchange our \$10-\$15 gifts** (optional to participate). Followed by **announce winners of the categories: (New)best impersonator grape stomper/belly dancer, (original)best food, drink, joke, laugh, story w/husband, cutest pj's, ugly socks/slippers, and theme song.** RSVP your plans, we hope you can attend both days or maybe one day, to either Sister Deb or Mother Barbara who are your hostesses this year.

## *New E-mail*

Debbie

We have new email addresses for Dean and Donna  
Dean [dnelsonag@gmail.com](mailto:dnelsonag@gmail.com) and  
Donna [donna1528@gmail.com](mailto:donna1528@gmail.com)  
My work is still the same at  
[donnan@kadyl.com](mailto:donnan@kadyl.com)

# *The Dominican Republic*

Hello family,

Just wanted to drop a note and say thanks to all the Mages' that visited me and donated to the orphanage I work at here in the Dominican Republic. Last week, Larry, Maggie, Betty, and Grandma made the trip all the way from the north coast of the DR to the south where I'm at in San Pedro de Macoris. We spent the evening doing a tour of the home and hanging out in the park with the kids. Larry even pulled out the guitar and we did a little sing-a-long. The most popular song for the kids was "Na-na-na" (they don't exactly understand English!) And then Larry gave a couple impromptu guitar lessons. It was all a lot of fun! Later in the week, mom, dad, and I met up with the rest of the crew—Linda, Gina, and Mysti. We spent a day snorkeling, got in lots of beach and pool time, and had some nice suppers together. Anyways, if anyone feels inclined to visit the Dominican Republic in the next year, you are all welcome to visit and stay with me! I'll be here until February 2013.

Here's my contact info:

**Email:** [kristen.mages@gmail.com](mailto:kristen.mages@gmail.com)

**Dominican phone number:** 829-201-2620

**Blog:** [www.kristenmages.blogspot.com](http://www.kristenmages.blogspot.com)

**Address:**

Kristen Mages

Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos

Apdo. 800

San Pedro de Macorís

Dominican Republic

For more info about the orphanage: [www.nphdr.org](http://www.nphdr.org)

Muchas gracias y un abrazo fuerte desde la República  
Kristen

Larry and child playing guitar



Kathy and Kristen with the children



Kathy, Betty, Mom, Maggie, Kristen, Curt and Larry



# *The Dominican from Curt and Kathy's View*

## Curt & Kathy's Trip to Kristen's Orphanage in the Dominican Republic

We left for the DR on Feb 24<sup>th</sup> to visit Kristen. Kristen picked us up at the airport in Santo Domingo. We drove east toward San Pedro about 50 miles to Kristen's NPH orphanage. NPH is located about 5 miles from San Pedro in the middle of sugar cane country. NPH's site is about 50 acres in size and is bordered by an 8 ft tall block fence. Inside the fence is a very organized orphanage campus. At the center of the campus is a park about 2 blocks long and one block wide. On one side of the park are 6 boys homes with about 20 boys in each house and on the other side of the park are 4 girls' homes, one baby house, and one handicapped house. In total, there are about 215 orphans. Each house has two large bedrooms with about 10 kids sleeping in bunk beds in each bedroom. Each house also has a bedroom for the Tia (mother). They also have a Haiti house, in which they house kids from Haiti that are staying for medical care that isn't offered in Haiti. The campus has a volunteer house where Kristen and about 15 other volunteers stay. There is a church where we attended Sunday service, a central kitchen building where all meals are cooked, an elementary school, homes for the directors, the priest's house, some visitor homes, the administrative center where Kristen works and few other support buildings.

Kristen's has several duties. Her main two jobs include sponsorship and communications. She translates letters to and from sponsors, she helps organize events such as their recent international meeting in which directors from sister orphanages and sponsors from several countries attended, and other administrative duties. Her other job is to spend time with the kids. She is assigned a house of 11-15 year old girls who each love her dearly. Kristen spends time with the kids in the evening and on weekends. She recently took a girl with her into San Pedro for a trip as she talks about on her blog at [www.kristenimages@blogspot.com](http://www.kristenimages@blogspot.com). Kristen spends time with all the kids. She knows all 215 by name. From what we saw, they all love Kristen very much. She really connects well with each one of them.

The kids seem very happy at the orphanage. They have what they need but not much extra. They can spend a lot of time enjoying the simplest of things such as pulling each other around on toys, flying kites, or playing ball. We ate at Kristen's girls' house for 5 meals (3 evening meals and 2 lunches). One evening we ate a bun and a hard boiled egg for supper. The next night we had 3 flour pieces with sauce and the following night we had two buns for supper. As you can tell, the evening meals are pretty meager. Lunches were better as we had a plate full of food consisting of rice & beans, a little coleslaw, a little pasta and a slice of tomatoe. We didn't eat breakfast with the girls but their typical breakfast consists of a bowl of oatmeal porridge. I didn't see any overweight kids. Amazingly, I never heard any of the kids complaining about being hungry. I don't think I'll ever complain again about not getting enough to eat.

There was a great group of volunteers from Canada staying while we were there. We went with them to the beach one afternoon, to the Independence Day parade in San Pedro, to a local village one evening, and they even gave me a burger one night when I was hungry.

We had visitors on our 3<sup>rd</sup> day. Larry, Maggie, Mom, and Betty stopped in for a visit. Kristen gave us all a nice tour of the campus, then Larry played guitar in the park and gave a few of the kids the chance to play his guitar. The kids love it. Later we took our visitors for a visit to a local bathey. Batheys are



## *The View Continued*

villages that located every few miles in the sugar cane area. The men work in the sugar cane fields. The village we visited had about 40-50 homes. A typical home consisted of a weathered wood structure about 12 ft X 12 ft in size with a rusty corrugated steel roof. One of these buildings was used as a colmado (store). This colmado doubled as the local bar and had a concrete slab next to it. Hector, the owner, made us feel very welcome by putting out a table and some chairs. We had a Presidenteer beer at his bar and got the chance to experience the local culture. The Dominicans are very warm and friendly people and they love music.

For supper Kristen made of a nice meal. We ate by candlelight as the power commonly shuts down unexpectedly. It was very pleasant. That night we all slept together - we must have had one too many Presidenteers. We were all in one bedroom with bunk beds, similar to the kids. The next morning Larry, Maggie, Mom, and Betty headed back to Peurta Plata.

The following day(Wednesday) Kathy, myself and Kristen headed to Peurta Plata. We got a chance to see the rest of the Dominican. The DR is a very diverse country with many different resources. We saw sugar cane fields, banana, pineapple, and other fruit plantations, cattle ranches, etc. Driving was a challenge but I learned to be aggressive and defensive at the same time.

It was fun spending time at Peurta Plata with the rest of the gang. We had a great week in the Dominican. We feel that we had a true Dominican experience. Thank you Kristen.

Supper at the orphanage



Dominican homes



Kristen's room



Orphanage Nuns



## *From Sea to Shining Sea- By Mom*

Linda, Gina, Mysti, Betty, Larry Maggie and I arrived on Saturday night at Santiago , Dominican Republic airport. We traveled by van to the resort which was more than an hour away. We checked in and got beautiful rooms.

We missed the Sunday Morning Mass right at the resort. The clerk had told us Mass was at 4:30p.m. Sunday afternoon, but it actually was at 12:30 p.m. The clerk had given us the Saturday schedule.

We soon learned a few Spanish words. Banyo meant rest rooms and ollah was hello. One morning Linda would say OLAY to everyone she met, and they would smile at her. She soon learned to say OLLAH We teased her about that.

We were so pampered, meals and drinks were all provided and also entertainment. It was so restful to lay on a lounge at the beach in the sunshine, and watch the breakers come in from the Atlantic Ocean. The water was all shades of blue and turquoise.

Larry and Maggie, Betty and I took an overnight trip to visit Kristen at the orphanage at San Pedro. It was 290 kilometers away (about 180 miles) through 3 big cities of Puerto Plata, Santiago and San Domingo. The scenery was beautiful through the mountains and along the Caribbean Sea on the south side of the island. Larry was the driver and Betty was the navigator. It was very difficult as they don't believe in many signs. The traffic was something else, and the drivers too. There usually were 3 lanes of traffic on a 2 lane road. Many, Many mopeds, some with 5 people on the back. It didn't take Larry long to get used to the Dominican drivers. In fact, I think he became one and he was enjoying it. We didn't see any accidents, but if anyone had a flat, they stopped on the road and everyone went around them.

The orphanage was so special. Curt and Kathy were there and Kristen was a special hostess to all of us. They showed us all around the grounds where 210 children live with their house Mother. It is quite a community of homes, 20 children in a home where the older children help the young. They have a school, teachers, church, priest, gym, big kitchen, garden, orchard, animals and a beautiful park in the middle of it all. Larry had brought his guitar along and the kids loved it.

We stayed overnight in the guest house, 4 sets of bunk beds in one room. We all snored in "harmony". The Canadian volunteers slept on the other side of the house. The roaster crowed in the morning.

On the next day driving back to the resort we said the rosary, one decade at a time. We had so many requests, we didn't want to " put God under too much pressure". We arrived safely without a scratch or a dent.

Curt, Kathy and Kristen joined us on Wednesday and they stayed till Saturday. Kristen had a few days off from the orphanage.

Food was everywhere, big buffets, bars in the main restaurant, buffet, hotel in different area, and the pool area and on the beach, the Mexican restaurant, Brazilian restaurant etc. Also a big BBQ buffet at the beach.

The ribs were so tender, and the sauce was soooooooooooooo good. Second only to Theresa Wagner's BBQ sauce.

On Friday night we had a reservation for 10 people at the pool house restaurant. Dress up only, no shorts, or capris allowed. So we all met in our best duds. The tables were set with candles, goblets, and all kinds of silverware. Sea Food menu, We had salad, soup, entree and dessert. It was Mysti's birthday so they brought her a delicious cake and sang "Happy Birthday". There was a trio playing guitars and serenading us all the while we ate.

There was entertainment every night, a regular sing and dance show. Many times they got people out of the audience to help along in their variety acts. Gina and Mysti both won prizes for being Hula -Hoop Queens, Larry and Curt both had stunts to perform and Kristen and Kathy got called up on stage also. O MUCH FUN.

But all good things come to an end. We flew home to Miami through customs. I than Betty for putting wheelchairs on my ticket as I'd never made it through all those lines. I even had my suitcase searched. He opened every zipper and checked- then he started taking out all the clothes. Thank God I had my undies in a plastic bag-ugh- He finally found 3 small bottles from the resort bathroom, I had slipped into my suitcase. He found the plastic bag that had jewelery in it, and put the bottles in there. I don't know if he talked English- he didn't say anything. Then he put everything back into the suitcase. I wonder what he was really looking for?

Then Betty and I flew to Tampa where she had her car, and I continued on to Phoenix. A 4 1/2 hour flight, and I was so thankful for the wheelchair waiting for me in that big airport.

I came home from a fabulous vacation at a 5- star resort, and I rested for 2 days to catch up with all the memories. Love, Mom



## *Driving across The Dominican*

The first thing we (Mom, Linda, Betty, Gina, Mysti, Maggie and I) realized as we took off in the van at the airport was that the traffic was nothing like we were used to. We had about an hour and a half ride from the Santiago airport to our resort in Puerto Plata. The driver seemed to drift in and out of his lane, go through red lights, hardly anybody dimmed their lights in the pitch blackness, motorscooters were all over the place, many without lights, especially taillights. Somehow we got to the resort around midnight and found a whole nother world. Five star everything. What a contrast. After spending a day exploring the resort, it was time to rent a car to drive about 325 kilometers (195 miles) to Kristen's orphanage which was completely across the Dominican. Mom, Betty, Maggie and I would go, as Kristen only had room for 4 to stay over night. We rented a 2011 Nissan Sentra and left in the morning, not quite knowing how things would go. Right away we got lost trying to get out of Puerto Plata. We got a pretty good cross section of the city. Moto-scooters are everywhere. They sneak through any crack there is in the traffic, so you need to be constantly aware of them. Hardly any traffic rules are followed, it's pretty much, do what ever you want as long as you adjust to everyone else. The roads are also very poorly marked so we struggled to find our main highway. There are no freeways, so when you get into big cities, what seemed like a main highway, quickly turns into congested city streets. We had to go through two major cities, Santiago and the nation's capital of Santo Domingo. In Santo Domingo, there was a detour to make it even more interesting. When it gets congested, you have no choice but to stick your nose out into an intersection enough to get the other guy to stop. If you don't, the cars behind you start laying on the horn. It was pretty rattling, but by the time we made the return trip, we were the ones laying on the horn.

Mom suggested that we do a rosary for a safe trip, While she was leading the Hail Mary, A truck was passing and coming right at us in our lane, her words were "Hail Mary FULL OF GRACE THE LORD IS WITH THEE blessed art thou", as we were able to take the shoulder in time to avoid the truck. Of Course, had there been a poor moto-scooter beside us at the time, he would have been outta luck. Along the way, we passed many small villages, everyone had 5 or 6 roadside stands selling their wares. As you crossed the country you could see what was prominent in that part of the country, just by what they were selling. Bananas, coconuts, yucas, some kind of tree roots, tangerines, rugs, clay pots, cement statues, live and butchered goats, beef, hogs, chickens, ducks, cheeses, local jewelry, cigars, it was a virtual supermarket along the road. A farmer climbed a very tall (40') coconut tree and tossed down several coconuts for us and gave us a taste. There are lots of cow herds, mostly brahma, and most every animal we saw was skinny. Some farmers still use mules and horses. At every red light in the cities, they were trying to sell everything from newspapers, to phone chargers, fruit, and the dreaded windshield washes. What with all the traffic congestion, there were always plenty of people in the street as well. We saw our share of one legged pan handlers at the intersections as well, so I'm sure at one time they sold some sort of ware at that red light.

What a contrast of prosperity. There were many luxury vehicles on the roads, and then the farmer's overloaded old pickups, Many moto-scooters, buses, and people that walked everywhere. We stopped on several occasions. Gas was about \$2.70 a gallon American. We shopped at a shopping center, a pair of Dockers pants was \$34 American, a shirt \$20. Food also was fairly spendy considering the income level of most people. Judging from what most homes look like, I'd say most of their income goes toward necessities, as many of the homes are just little tin shacks.

We were pleasantly surprised to find out that the orphanage that Kristen is at is pretty modern, all built since 2005. Nothing fancy, but all functional. Most buildings have no windows, only shutters. She really lives in an area on contrasts. Just outside the orphanage's 100 acres or so, are two extremely poor villages. The people work in the local cane fields, and between the orphanage and one of those villages is an ultra modern Major League ball park, two more can be seen in the distance. Put up by The Brewers, Blue Jays, and the Yankees, they're used for major league winter ball and recruiting etc. They have armed guards watching over them. We visited one of the village's beer garden for a beer.

Kristen is well known there as they dance there most Saturday nights. The owner of the bar was very cordial to us, thus relieving some of the stress of being looked over pretty closely by the locals. It was a great experience.

Back at the orphanage we arrived on the DR's Independence Day, so there was no school. There are 215 kids there and they all love Kristen. They were excited to meet Kristen's family. Curt and Kathy arrived there a couple of days before us, so knew their way around pretty good already. I can see lots of tears happening when Kristen leaves, these kids are all right in there getting to know you and they are precious. We found out that at night they don't have electricity, so we ate by candle light and found our way to our quarters by battery light.

We made it back to Puerto Plata in one piece, no scratches. Mom's rosaries worked. It was a great trip within a trip Larry and Maggie

*The Dominican Republic by Picture*

Front: L-R-Betty, Mysti Lynn, Gina, Linda, Mom, Maggie, Kristen Back: L-R- Curt, Kathy and Larry



Mystique's 19<sup>th</sup> Birthday



Larry drinking from a coconut



Tobacco Shed



Scary traffic



Curt with the children



*Dominican Pictures Continued*

Four Generations in the Dominican-Gina, Mom, Linda and Mystique



Larry singing off his balcony



All of us at the arches



Playing cards by the pool area



*More Dominican Pictures*



Brahma Bull



Brittany Curt Spears

The 2 pictures at the right is just some of the lobby



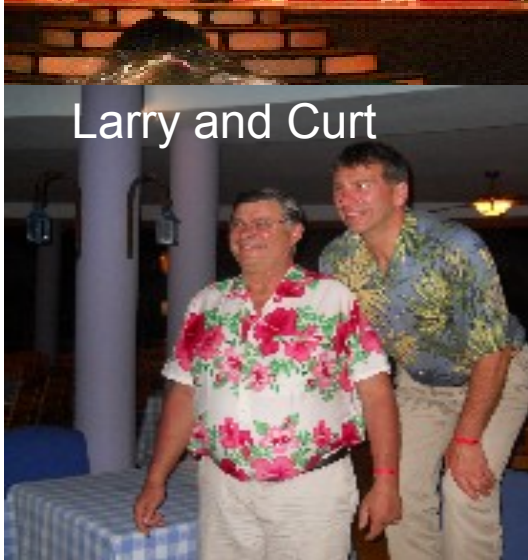
Curt and Larry



Mysti behind Gina  
Taking dancing lessons

Kristen

Below the "Family Reunion" in the Dominican



Larry and Curt



## *King-O-Sa-Be Dominican Republic -by Linda*

First of all we all want to thank Gina for not giving up until we had all the changes, and adaptations we had to make done. We were hitting one brick wall after the another, but Gina didn't give up, and we all had such a wonderful time. It was so wonderful for all 10 of us to be together.

It wasn't almost Paradise as the song goes- it was Paradise. What a beautiful country the Dominican Republic is. The people are just as beautiful as the country.

Gina, Mysti Lynn, Larry, Maggie and I started out at 6a.m. Feb. 25th, and flew from Mpls. St. Paul airport to Miami International where we had an 8 hour layover. The highlight of our day so far was Maggie getting the Pat Down going through the security system. We thought we might have to make a cake with a file in it, but she talked her way out of it. Actually the metal from her knee surgery gave her the pleasure of a pat down. During this time Mom and Betty flew in from Arizona and then Tampa, so we all flew together to the Dominican. We had a 11/2 hour shuttle ride to Iberostar Casta Dorada in Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic. We tried to change our tickets for a closer airport, but it would have cost each of us &300.00 more a ticket.

The driving in the D.R. Was the most interesting, and heart stopping experience, and both Larry and Curt drove in the D.R., so my respect for them has more than doubled. There are no rules in the D.R., and we never saw a policeman or police car or an accident either. They drive 3 abreast at times to pass on a 2 way road, don't stop at stop signs or red lights, pass with traffic approaching, don't dim their lights at night, and use their car horns constantly. There are also motorcycles everywhere driving every direction whether the wrong way or not. Maybe they have lights (even in the dark) maybe just a taillight. How they don't get smucked I don't know.

Larry, Maggie, Mom and Betty left Monday and traveled 6 hours to see Kristen at the orphanage, and meet up with Curt and Kathy who have been there since Friday. They got lost a few times, and wondered where they were, but Mom's rosaries pulled them through. When they returned on Tuesday afternoon all in one piece I must say we thought THANK YOU GOD!!!!!!!.

Curt, Kathy and Kristen joined us Wednesday morning. Larry was really upset that Curt never got lost really good at least once on their way to join us. Of course they had Kristen along, and she could actually read, talk and understand Spanish. Larry questioned Curt why he only brought 2 women with him when he brought 6 with him.

We all enjoyed the beach each day, Our resort was all inclusive so food and drinks were 24-7. Each evening a spectacular performance was put on by the employees. Different show each evening, and Las Vegas style entertainment. There was always a pre-show which our crew was always picked to be on stage. Gina placed 1<sup>st</sup> in the hula hoop contest, and Mysti Lynn placed 2<sup>nd</sup>. Larry, Curt, Kristen, Mysti Lynn and Gina got dancing lessons, and Curt was a beautiful Brittany Spears in the Mr. Iberostar in which he placed 2<sup>nd</sup> with the help of his partner Kathy who was also on stage for part of it. We wonder what they did after we left as our group was picked each night.

Seven of the 10 went snorkeling which lasted all day. Gina and Mysti Lynn went horseback riding, and full speed gallop in the pouring rain. We played Bingo everyday. Gina won at that the first day we were there.

Gina had been schooling me in Spanish about the last six weeks before we left. When Kristen was with us we relied heavily on her knowledge of the language, but before that Gina was our go between. One morning as we were headed to breakfast maintenance was painting outside our room, and housekeeping was also there. I greeted everyone with a smile and a confident "OLE" I noticed all the smiles and felt good that I could say Hello in Spanish. I did notice Gina and Mysti Lynn were smirking too, but I figured they were really proud of their old Mom and Grandma. As it turned out I was saying "OLE" like when you are watching a bull fight and they are waving the red cape, and it means HURRAY. I should have been saying "OLA", which is Hello. Mysti Lynn said she was trying to whisper to me "OLA", but I told her at my age I don't hear whispers. We had a good chuckle over that.

On Saturday March 3rd, Gina, Mysti Lynn, and I left Iberostar at 5:45 a.m. For the Santiago airport. Curt, Kathy and Kristen enjoyed breakfast first, and left for San Pedro to return Kristen to the orphanage, a six hour drive. Curt and Kathy flew out of Santa Domingo at 3p.m. Gina, Mysti Lynn and I landed in Miami at 11:30 a.m. Their time, and had another long layover. Shortly before our plane was to leave at 7:15 p.m. Curt and Kathy found us in the Miami airport. Our plane was delayed so more time on our layover. We 5 flew back to Mpls-St. Paul airport together. Rough ride as we had to fly over Georgia, Kentucky, Illinois, Wisconsin where all the turbulence was. Joe met us at the baggage claim, so we had one last visit together.

It was so wonderful and enjoyable to have 4 generations of our family represented. Mom, Linda, Gina, and Mysti Lynn. We all enjoyed each other.

Mom, Betty, Larry and Maggie returned the following day. When talking to Mom while we were all eating supper one night in the D. R., she stated, "Boy it is sure a good thing I don't have to speak in Spanish, as the only word I know is "King-O-Sa-Be". We all had a good laugh about that, and teased her about it for a couple of days. Mom is sure a fun person to travel with. She kept all of us in stitches laughing. Love, Linda



## *When The Cat is Away The Mouse Will Play*



### Duane, Dan, Tom and Joe

On March 2<sup>nd</sup>, Duane, Joe, Dan and Tom celebrated Duane's 59 1/2 birthday at Happy Joe's Pizza in New Ulm. He was treated to an ice cream sundae, and everyone sang, "Happy Birthday." They then went to Dan and Arlene's house for an afternoon and evening of cards. They were joined by Stretch and Jeremy.

The celebration continued at Applebees in Mankato with Jeff, Nancy, Barb, Kevin, Joe and Duane enjoying the fish supper. Lo and behold they brought out birthday dessert to Duane and sang, "Happy Birthday" again.

The party then moved to LeAnn and Jeff's house to play more cards. Happy 59 1/2 Birthday Duane. Love, Arlene

I WOULD JUST LIKE TO SAY THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO TOOK SUCH GOOD CARE OF JOE WHILE I WAS GONE. I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN HE WOULD NOT BE LONELY FOR LONG. LOVE, LINDA

**Julia, Alan and Abby Strand are excited to announce the future arrival in August 2012 of a precious new baby to their home. Congratulations from the whole Mages family.**





# *Green Bay Taxidermy Competition - Ryan Wolf*

Here are some photos to enjoy from our Green Bay Taxidermy Competition which was held Feb 22-26th. I also included some fun photos of our snow storm from Feb 29th, 15 inches of snow fell within 16 hours. Very heavy and difficult to plow. Lots of fun playing in the 15 inches of snow. Laura



**Brooke and Ashley  
Wolf**



**1<sup>st</sup> Place**



**1<sup>st</sup> place hand sewned baby raccoon and best in  
catagory**



*David and Samantha's Shower March 17, 2012*

Samantha and David



Grace singing and Mary Kay playing the piano



L-R- Amy, Mary Kay, Grace, Geralyn's daughter, Becca, LeAnn, Curt, Jane, Nancy, Arlene and Anna

Sing que sera sera with different words. Some of the hostesses with Lisa and Debbie



Notice Anna's folded hands during the prayer.



The Moms- Sherry and Donna



Samantha's aunt Geralyn is our Dad's 1<sup>st</sup> cousin on the Zins side. Small world. L-R- Front: Donna and Geralyn. L-R-Back: Lisa, Debbie, Nancy, Cindy, Kathy and Linda