



BALISTRERI NEWS!

Issue 2005
Newsletter

Happy Holidays Everyone!!

Merry Christmas and greetings. Welcome to another year of the Balistreri's annual newsletter. We wish everybody all the best during these year end festivities.

The year 2005 seems like it went faster than we expected. We started the year with a bathroom, kitchen and a family room remodel and were happy to finish in May. Fred finally got his "macho" Thermador 6 burner, built-in griddle gas stove so he can finally cook just like the "Iron Chefs" and we are just happy to enjoy his cooking. We certainly learned a lot from this experience and have some good "war remodel" stories as a result. Anyone contemplating such a project may want to speak to us before diving in to such a project. At the least, you'll get a good laugh, and for some of you, it may change your mind. But it's all done (for now) and the results were well worth it.



In retrospect, maybe it wasn't that bad of an experience after all (cost aside). Thanks to Aurello for all his help with the remodel.

On the world news, the New Orleans disaster struck close to home.

Clarisse's high school teacher almost lost her home on account of Katrina.

On a more positive note, the year has gone by so fast and Gerome has grown so much he no longer is a "kid" and has entered the teen years. (God

help us all.) The arguments get longer and the decibel level much higher. I guess we're all a bit older if not wiser. He is a good kid though and has great expectations and intentions. Fred and Clarisse enter into their fifteen years of marital bliss this year. It sure went by fast, but boy was it fun! Looking back at some of the old pictures made me realize that we both need to loose weight. ■

"All love is sweet,
Given or returned.

Common as light is
love,
And its familiar voice
wearies not ever."

Shelley: Pronetheus
Unbound

Inside:

<u>About Gerome</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>About Work</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>About Travels</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Pictures</u>	<u>3</u>
About Family	4



About Gerome



Gerome is in eight grade and getting ready for high school. It's hard to believe but true. He is also growing taller. Between summer vacation and now, he is over an inch taller than Claire.

The grades are good this year, and he has settled into his routine nicely. However, applying to private high schools is a very stressful experience. Hopefully, it will all work out and we'll be better prepared for what's to come for college.

He spent a lot of time playing soccer both in the spring and fall this year. Gerome and his buddy Gaetano both had a blast playing soccer for "dad". They were able to play at halftime at the Earthquakes professional soccer game. You should have seen the expression on their face, I've never seen such seriousness with these kids. What an experience!

Other than soccer he spent summer time swimming, biking and giving mom and dad a hard time.

He also had a week- long trip with his



grade school to Yosemite. By the sounds of it, he had a great time and learned a lot about nature.

He is entering puberty to be sure. Acting more and more like a teen every passing day. He has replaced video games and is listening to rock music , but occasionally plays on-line games, and did I mention giving mom and dad a hard time. I don't remember growing up being like this. It sure brings meaning to the word perspective. ■



Gerome & Gaetano @ Spring Soccer



Gerome with his favorite tie-dye shirt at his school's Spring Sing

About Dad and Mom

Nothing new with Fred and still working at Apsim Tech. He does have a bit more gray in his hair, and has less of that as well. He is looking forward to the winter Olympics and the world cup soccer tourney this summer. Coaching Gerome's soccer teams really give pop and son some bonding.

Dad's soccer skills are not what they used to be but it's still a challenge for Gerome.

Claire has settled in at IMPAC Medical Systems. She is attending bible study class, does all the school and church brochures and is on the Board of Directors for AVYSL soccer association.





About Travels

This year, was a year of theme parks, a different kind of vacation than what we are used to, but no less fun. We went East to Orlando, Florida for our vacation. We visited Disney's Epcot Center, all the Disney water parks, and the Universal Studios and generally hang around the greater Orlando area. We became experts using fast pass. One thing we can say about Orlando is that you can set your watch by the time of day the rain starts, yup every day. The thunder and lighting is nothing like we have experienced in California. There is water everywhere in Florida, and we mean everywhere.



Marriott Grande Vista, Orlando FL

We also managed a short trip to Southern CA and had time to visit our good friends Bob and Myrna Bremer. Many thanks for their wonderful hospitality. We managed a day at Disney, which is always fun. If that was not enough, we also went to Great America. It will be a long while before we go back to a theme park again.

Meanwhile, Fred & Claire took a weekend trip to Las Vegas with our cousins, the Balistreri's. We ate, walked a lot, gambled a bit and watched the musical "Mama Mia". ■



Claire & Gerome @ Epcot Center in Orlando



Fred & Gerome @ Universal Studios in Orlando



The Balistreri's (Fred, Claire, Sal, Catherine, Bina & Aurello) @ The Bellagio in Las Vegas



Gerome with his classmate Matthew at Science Camp in Yosemite



Gerome at the exhibition game in Spartan Stadium during the Earthquake's half time.



Written by: Fred Balistreri
Edited by: Clarisse Balistreri

991 Mazzone Dr.
San Jose, CA 95120
Phone: 408-268-7298
Mobile: 408-307-6890
Email: c_balistreri@yahoo.com



Family News

It seem like all of the nieces and nephews are getting older and taller. It was great to see everyone at Bob's birthday party. Nichole and Franchesca have been pretty busy with softball and traveled nationwide with their respective teams. Cheers and congratulations to Jimma (Claire's sister-in-law) for passing her RN exam, we wish her the best and more power to a bright future. Alex, as usual, is doing great in school getting ready for college, while her brother, Chad, surprised us at Bob's party as a great dancer. We think, he must have gotten Bosse's talent. Bosse' and Nanay are pretty much the same. Gerome had a chance to spend the summer with them and had fun learning Garote (stick fighting) from Bosse.

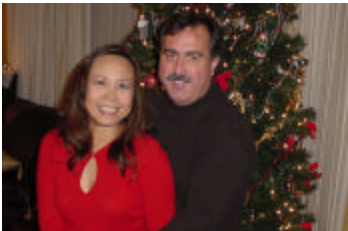
On the Balistreri's side, Lil Anna is now in Kindergarten and Lil' Anthony will be turning 2 in February. Nonno and Nonna are also pretty much the same and has kept themselves busy picking Gerome and Anna from school.



Celebrating Mother's Day with Nanay.



Carmelo, Huyen, Lil Anthony and Lil Anna at Hanna (Huyen's sister) and Leo's wedding.



Well! that's all folks. May you have a great 2006. Till next year over and out. *Fred, Clarisse & Gerome ~*