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in this issue

DEPARTMENTS

FRONT WORDS – 4

ALUM & I – _

Remembering those who are gone by *John Folmar*

Reader share class reunion experiences, 77 year fraternity anniversary, class finds teacher, 50+ reunion, 70th reunion, technology brings class closer, faster

SCRAPBOOK – 14

Reunion School

Peace Corps group reunion by *Donald Goldberg*

Reunions of a Garden Party, Ice Capades, orphanage

NATIONAL FAMILY REUNION CONFERENCE – 22

MASTERPLAN – 26

Our family quilt by *Jackie Utley*

Crafting traditions – pass them on by *Gilda V. Bryant*

Almost like coming home by *Patricia Helmberger*

Reunion to plan a reunion by *Patricia Frigden*

And more families. Hubbard, Maynard, Branch/Outlaw, Williams and Scoresby

REUNION VENUES & PLACES

TOWN REUNIONS – 38

Going home again by *Maureen Taylor*

Obscure towns and community reunions of Leaf Rapids, Manitoba, Canada, Nutley, New Jersey, Hayes Crossing/Haldeman, Kentucky, Chelsea, Massachusetts, Ridgeview, Pennsylvania, Highlandlake, Colorado, Davis County, Iowa, Port aux Basques and St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada
Generous genealogist gives back

CRUISING – 43

Cruisin' for family fusion by *Jacky Runice*

Celebrating 60 on the high seas

Cruise myths, girlfriend cruise getaways, class reunion cruise

Just the facts on old Jax by *Jacky Runice*

MILITARY REUNION NEWS – 55

USS Louisville donates model, Air Force Memorial dedicated, press release assistance and news from reunions of WWII groups of the 251st Station Hospital, 83rd Infantry and Bataan Death March survivors.

REUNION RESOURCES – 56

A directory of reunion-friendly places, services, vendors and products.

ABOUT THE COVER

Windjammer reunion cruises are perfect adventures.

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No winter doldrums for reunion organizers!

Now's a great time to work on (or cajole others to work on) some of the details for next summer's reunion. It's time to put some energy into fundraising projects you hope will be ready for summer (cookbook, directory, memory book, quilt, calendar, t-shirt design and orders).

But best of all, March 15 to 18th is the National Family Reunion Conference in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. It's an investment in yourself and your family reunion and, as Shamele Jordan of the Toomer Family Reunion, says: "It's a retreat for family reunion planners." Imagine meeting others who face the same dilemmas you do, and others who have overcome them creatively. It's a place to learn lots from others who, like you, are devoted to their family reunions.

To entice you to get serious about attending the conference, we have included the program (subject to change, of course) in this issue. There are always more workshops than there is time, offering exciting ideas just for the taking. The program is also online at www.reunionsmag.com, so other family members can see it, too. Note there are discounts for additional family members attending.

You can also see comments at our forum, <http://forums.reunionsmag.com>, from people who've attended past conferences and who'll be there this year. Add your comments or ask questions on the forum.

I'll be at the conference. Will you?

REUNION REGISTRATIONS

Have you ever wished your members could charge their reunion registration fees? Wish no longer. Active.com has developed some easy registration formats for reunions that will give your members a whole new way to register. For information, contact Sarah Lowell at Active.com, sarah_lowell@hotmail.com or call toll-free 888-543-7223, ext 3941. And tell her where you saw this information ... then, be sure to report your experience so we can tell others.

MORE REUNION PRODUCTS ONLINE

We are growing our online products to help you plan your next reunion. Go to www.reunionsmag.com and click on subscribe and shop. We are actively soliciting new products and will add them as they become available. Two recent additions are June Cotner's book of prayers, poems and toasts called *Family Celebrations*. We like it because it

has many ways to answer the question we often get: what can I say in a speech at my reunion? The second book is *Miles of Smiles* by Carole Terwilliger Meyers, for families who are

driving to their reunions and need entertaining ideas to keep at bay that familiar cry from the back seat: are we there yet? If you don't find what you're looking for, please contact us – because if you're looking.

LET HOTELS FIGHT OVER YOUR REUNION

Surveys show that most summer reunions have their accommodations locked up by March. If that's not you for this summer or if you're looking ahead to next year, let hotels fight over your reunion at ReunionsTravel.com. Try it and see!

CAN'T WIN UNLESS YOU ENTER

Don't forget to check online for contests and sweepstakes which we update as we find new ones. An easy way to be reminded is to subscribe to our monthly email newsletter. Send your request to and if you screen your emails for spam, please approve reunions@execpc.com. Last year a *Reunions magazine* reader won the American Airlines family reunion contest. This year? Who knows, but we'd sure like to know, if you win a reunion.

IN THIS ISSUE

As I was writing the Table of Contents for this issue about town reunions, I realized that town reunions are not cookie-cutter events. Many have parades and picnics, most have displays and programs, but not all are even in the towns they celebrate. Some, like Leaf Rapids, Manitoba, Canada, and Ridgeview, Pennsylvania, are for towns that are no longer on any map. Some – like Chelsea, Massachusetts – are held 1500 miles away in South Florida, some have been going on for a long time like Highlandlake, Colorado, for 83 years, and some are special occasions such as Martha Stewart's Nutley, New Jersey, reunion on her TV show. Some reunite every year like Hayes Crossing/Haldeman, Kentucky, while Port aux Basques, Newfoundland, Canada celebrates a "come home year" each decade. If you long for a reunion of your town, you may get some ideas here.

There's lots more, of course, from many families, classes and military reunions and our hope is that you will find much to like on these pages.

See you at the National Family Reunion Conference, March 15 to 18th in Philadelphia! *EW*

Be in touch!

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Remembering those who are gone

by John Folmar

I was quite social in high school, but I had long since lost touch with the majority of my classmates. I was filled with anticipation and some anxiety over seeing them at the 25th reunion of Ocean View High School in Huntington Beach, California. But I looked forward to exchanging information about missing classmates, with thoughts of trying to contact some in the near future.

One thing I had given little thought to, however, was that some people who touched my life so many years ago might have died. Although life takes its toll at any age, this was only my 25th high school reunion. I naturally placed all my thoughts and feelings into what it would be like to be reunited with former classmates. Because I'd never attended a reunion before and had not considered this inevitability, I envisioned an enjoyable evening of catching up and sharing what we had done with our lives.

The reunion committee planned just such an event and did an excellent job of helping us remember those who have passed on, in a thoughtful and tasteful fashion.

After I arrived I had some quiet time to absorb the decorations and memorabilia

display the committee organized. I examined numerous collages of articles, photographs and knickknacks posted on the walls about former teachers, students and events in high school.

Two tables were covered with dozens of flickering candles. There were several dozen 8½" x 11" framed photographs of classmates and teachers, many of whom I once knew. The reunion committee displayed pictures of classmates on one table and teachers on an adjacent table.

We shared what we knew about each individual and discovered how much each teacher and classmate had touched some aspect of our lives. What could easily have become a macabre moment turned into a joyous moment of reflection upon the good of each person.

I discovered later that everyone was grateful that the committee had taken the time to remember those who had passed on and had done so in such a tasteful and thought-provoking manner.

We viewed a DVD that highlighted people and events during high school. Laughing, clapping and occasionally groaning over embarrassing moments, we all enjoyed the sights and sounds of long-ago memories. The DVD introduction included



photographs of each classmate and teacher who had died. No mention or reference was made to when or why the people died; simply memorializing them was enough.

About the author

John Folmar, PhD, lives in the San Francisco Bay area, where he is a practicing audiologist (hearing and balance disorders) and works for a new hearing aid start-up company. He attended Ocean View High School in Huntington Beach, CA. He enjoys golfing, mountain biking and going to the movies.

Reunion highlights 77-year fraternity history

Over 400 (ages 26 to 90) gathered as brothers to celebrate the anniversary of their Cleveland Heights High School fraternity founding, which took place 77 years earlier – one month before the stock market crash of 1929.

The first meeting of Beta Alpha Tau was September 19, 1929. B.A.T. was a fraternity in every sense of the word, representing everything bad (exclusion) and good (brotherhood) that “fraternity” implies. Banned in the mid-1950s, as were all Heights High Greeks, it went underground. When the school board realized it, they accepted B.A.T.’s existence as an extracurricular club and provided an adult adviser. The boys agreed and the fraternity lived on.

Though its members were of one religion (Jewish), as was the fraternal norm back then, B.A.T. decided to banish its religious oneness. Mixing religions became commonplace in Greek societies of the late 20th century, but it was a radical, unheard-of idea when initiated by these 16-year-old high school boys in the early 1960s.

By 1970 the B.A.T. roster, no longer looking like a row of donor plaques at the

local synagogue, was studded with names like Scicolone, Kackloudis, McCarthy and Olmstead, and later Ma and Ishikawa. It just happened.

The fraternity died a natural death in 1997. But brothers insisted upon remaining brothers. One typical enclave, a dozen septuagenarian passives, still meets weekly as “The Monday Lunch Bunch.” Dozens of brothers are related as legacies, sons, cousins, nephews or in-laws.

A year ago a few passives, 60 and considerably older, decided upon a reunion. Over a dozen brothers formed a steering committee. It turned out to be the biggest and – all agreed – the best in B.A.T.’s three-quarter-century history. One member said, “Nine years after our ‘death’ we’re still together and mean to stay that way.”

The 100th anniversary is just 23 years away. Visit www.batboys.org.

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Readers share class reunion experiences

In the *Lincoln Journal Star*, Cindy Lange-Kubick asked Lincoln, Nebraska, readers to share class reunion experiences. Here's some of what was said.

TEN YEARS

Class of '95: "It was a great time, definitely more than seeing who got fat or married." We had a blast. Two nights of partying and lots of laughs."

TWENTY YEARS

Class of '87: No desire to go to her 10-year reunion but she's mellowed. "2007 will be 20 years and I fully intend on going. ... It will be nice to return to my alma mater and catch a glimpse of how we all have developed into our adult selves."

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS

Class of '81: Most difficult was discovering how many classmates had passed away since the 10th reunion. "The best part was seeing classmates I had known since grade school, people I'd been closest to all the way through high school. We literally picked up where we left off and it felt great ... no pretenses, no cliques, no gossiping. It was pure fun!"

THIRTY YEARS

Class of '72: "... no way I was going. I finally gave in to friends and family and promised to go for an hour. ... 24 hours later I went home and am now engaged to the classmate who was the first person I saw that dreaded July evening!"

THIRTY-FIVE YEARS

Class of '71: "At the 10th reunion I was shocked at how many were divorced and so many of the guys were balding! The girls looked great! Now I'm amazed at how many classmates are grandparents and how many of the marriages we thought would never work ARE working."

FORTY YEARS

Class of '66: "I attended my 10th, 20th and 30th, but the 40th seemed more special. Time seems to have made us more special to each other. ... instead of waiting 10 years we will meet again in five years."

FIFTY YEARS

Class of '56: Helped plan her reunion, two days filled with food, school tours and slide shows from the day. "I guess it's kind of like planning a wedding. ... It takes such a long time with much hard work and then it seems to be over so very quickly."

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'Berlin Brats' reunion in a unified Germany

About 230 alumni and former teachers of Berlin (Germany) American High School attended a reunion in the German capital. Few had been back since German unification, so the novelty of moving about the city unencumbered was one highlight many of the "Berlin Brats" enjoyed.

This is one of the more active alumni groups for Defense Department schools, holding reunions every few years. Including family and friends, the alumni party was 380 people. The oldest alum attending was from the Class of '48, while the youngest was from the Class of '92.

A highlight of the reunion was "School Spirit Day." School colors (maroon and white) were the order of the day as alumni toured the elementary school and two sites where the high school existed from 1946 to 1994. Visit www.BerlinBrats.org.

From an article by Kevin Dougherty in *Stars and Stripes*, Washington, DC.

The life of a brat

Up to 20 million men and women were military brats at some point in their lives – the children of active duty soldiers, airmen, sailors and Marines. They learned the elusiveness of permanence, because no matter how deeply they dug in, they were uprooted from friends and school every two to three years.

It's all part of being a brat, or a dependent, as military kids are officially known. They went where dad went, even if it meant leaving a week before the prom or the state cross-country meet.

Donna Musil has always been proud of her brat heritage, including living in Korea, Germany and several stateside Army posts.

After locating several friends from her pre-teen years in Taegu, South Korea, on the internet, Musil decided to create a documentary about the world of military children. She explained that brats really have no hometowns and friends are scattered to the winds.

Brats: Our Journey Home is a 90-minute program shown at film festivals. Musil has been asked to show the movie to reunion groups around the country.

Info at www.bratsourjourneyhome.com.

From a story by Mick Walsh in the *Bradenton Herald*, Bradenton, Florida.

Teacher plans reunion with former students

Ila Ford, Lexington City, North Carolina, taught hundreds of students during her 31-year teaching career and she'd like one more chance to give them a big hug. Former students describe Ford as a teacher who "thought outside the box" and her class as "so much fun." She always made school exciting. Ford has scrapbooks with photos of almost every one of her former students. She often looks through them and wonders where some of her students are today.

Ford and six former students are planning a reunion of her schools. Ford taught at Eanes Elementary and Pickett Primary schools from 1962 to 1969 and Davis-Townsend Elementary School from 1969 to 1985.

In 1967, each of Ford's students adopted a US soldier to write to while he served in Vietnam.

From a story by Jill Doss-Raines in the *Lexington Dispatch*, Lexington, North Carolina.

All-class reunion recalls distant ties

In the 1880s, Dunbar School was the first eight-grade public school for African American children in Brownsville, Tennessee. The school was destroyed by a fire; in 1922 it was rebuilt and became Haywood County Training School to accommodate more enrollments and allow returning World War II veterans to complete their education. By 1950, the school was integrated and became Carver High School. The school shut its doors after the 1970 graduating class. Nearly 800 people converged on Decatur, Illinois, to attend the week-long all-class reunion.

Many African American Decatur residents attended the school and migrated as parents sought work at factories during Decatur's industrial peak in the 1950s and 1960s. The Dunbar/Haywood County/Carver National Alumni Association has chapters in Illinois, Wisconsin, Ohio, Missouri, Michigan, Washington, DC, and Tennessee. The alumni association leased the school building to preserve it and plans on turning it into a museum. The group also provides college scholarships to graduating seniors.

From a story by Sheila Smith in the *Herald & Review*, Decatur, Illinois.

Host 50 plus reunion

Some 288 from 19 states attended the Sixth 50+ Reunion of Humboldt (HHS) and St. Mary's High Schools in Humboldt, Iowa. Those are classes who have celebrated more than 50 reunions. The earliest of 26 classes represented was the Class of 1923 and the newest, the Class of 1956, which just held their 50th Reunion.

A booklet with a list of attendees and copies of letters and notes from those unable to attend was handed out at registration.

A bus tour included stops at local parks, schools, industrial park and the Humboldt Historical Museum complex. History of area schools and families was displayed by the Humboldt County Genealogical Society and the Humboldt County Historical Association.

The popular calendar *Humboldt County As It Was*, published by the Genealogical Society, was available. Pictures from all HHS classes, some St. Mary's classes, and news accounts of other 50+ Reunions also were on display.

A social hour was followed by an evening banquet where classes were seated together, with table decorations and balloons in blue and gold. Alumni who graduated 70 or more years ago were honored.

The sixth 50+ Reunion will donate \$500 to Humboldt High School. The seventh 50+ Reunion will be on September 12, 2009. Contact Carolyn Saul Logan at 515-332-9037.

From a story in the *Humboldt Iowa News*, Humboldt, Iowa.

Time to list your 2007 (and later) reunions now to appear at www.reunionsmag.com. Include the reunion name, date and place and contact info. Email to reunions@execpc.com.

Class of 1931 attracts 15 alumni

Fifteen people gathered at Grand Rapids (Michigan) Christian High School for the Class of 1931's 75th reunion.

Organizers say it will likely be their last. They started meeting every five years and since 1996, they've met annually "because we never know how many are going to be left for the next one," said 92-year-old Pierson "Perry" Boermans.

Turnout for the class of 1931 reunions has always been good. Ten years ago, 58 people attended out of an original class of 128.

This year, however, there were just 15; three men and 22 women from the class still alive and scattered around the country.

Boermans passed around his thin, black leather 1931 yearbook. Inside was the commencement program from graduation.

"Most of the people I associated with in high school are gone," he said. "But it's good to get together, for fellowship and the reminiscing. Our numbers are dwindling, but our spirits are high."

From a story by Morgan Jarema in *The Grand Rapids Press*, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

CHARITABLE REUNIONS

Class Reunion uncovers \$50,000

The Wausau (Wisconsin) East High School Class of 1986 started a bank account 20 years ago with \$210 raised during a bake sale. About 10 years ago, someone made an anonymous \$50,000 donation to the account, which went unnoticed until recently when alumna Wendy Moore, Minneapolis, Minnesota, called the school district's foundation looking for names and addresses of former classmates.

The class reunion committee decided to set up a scholarship fund for future Wausau East graduates. Moore said, "I don't know if it was a former classmate or parent who donated this money, but whoever it was obviously chose our class because they thought we'd do the right thing with it."

From a story on 6abc.com, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Reunion challenges students

At their 50th Reunion, Wheaton College's Class of 1956 chose to support Cupboard of Kindness' local charity. The Wheaton graduates raised \$1,500, then challenged current students to match their generosity in

community service. The class also proposed a challenge to current Wheaton students, faculty and staff to collect at least 1,500 food items to donate to the Cupboards.

From the *Norton Mirror*, Milford, Massachusetts.



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Grade school class finds teacher

In May 2003 Pamela Peak began to search for elementary school classmates she hadn't seen in more than 30 years. To one, she wrote, "Are you who went to Cerveny Elementary School in Detroit in the 1960s? If so, you may remember me."

Of course they remembered her. When they got together on the phone days later, they decided to reconnect with as many of their classmates as they could find.

"Every single person said the same thing. First ... 'I can't believe you found me,' and then, 'Where's Mr. Bell? Where's Mr. Bell?'"

Alvin Bell was the only black male elementary teacher at Cerveny Elementary School in Detroit's white, middle-class northwest neighborhood.

In fall 1966, Peak and the other third-grade students were in his first class at Cerveny. They met a tall, 30-year-old man with a wide smile, a gentle demeanor and a self-deprecating sense of humor. He remained with them for three years. Peak calls him "that once-in-a-lifetime teacher that maybe you're lucky enough to have."

She remembers Bell leading classroom discussions about race, economic inequity, nonviolence, the civil rights movement and other important issues in the racially charged atmosphere in Detroit in the 1960s. After the riots, Peak and her family moved away, as did many other families. They lost contact with each other after the 1968 school year, their last with Mr. Bell.

In summer 2003, Peak and a handful of students widened their search and within a few months, they'd contacted former classmates and began talking about a reunion in Detroit.

Meanwhile, Peak got a phone number for Bell. She called. As they talked, she began to realize that the former teacher remembered each of his students as vividly as he remembered her, and that their dreams for their lives were important to him.

From a story by Valerie Takahama in the *Orange County Register*, Santa Ana, California

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Technology brings class closer, faster

Julie A. Brink, Houserville, Pennsylvania, wrote in the *Centre Daily Times*, Centre County, Pennsylvania, about her 30th class reunion from Moshannon Valley High School in Houtzdale.

The reunion was planned by a woman in New Jersey with a personal computer and almost military command of email. She had a virtual committee linked via email and cell phones that planned and orchestrated the event. Programs, fliers and invitations were composed, written and printed on a home computer system.



Reunited – and it feels so good

About 30 Merry High School committee members plan an all-class reunion every two years in Jackson, Tennessee. (The school no longer exists after its consolidation with Jackson Central in 1970.)

Immediately after one reunion, planning begins for the next biennial event. Each of several committees has a particular responsibility in helping to organize the reunions. Committee responsibilities include decoration, publicity and food. Committee members review past budgets and decide how much prices have gone up. They meet the third Saturday of every month and oftener as the reunion date approaches. The

reunion wouldn't be possible without dedicated people, said one organizer.

SO HOW DO THEY DO IT?

Committee members' dedication is based on their affection for Merry High when it existed and the relationships people established during that time. Most people who attend class reunions find that it is a good time to reminisce and rekindle old friendships. Members of the 1971 and 1972 classes (the 10th and 11th grade at consolidation) received honorary Merry High School diplomas at this year's banquet.

From the *Jackson Sun*, Jackson, Tennessee.

Looking for classmates?

Marge Schwegel, Jenkintown, Pennsylvania, reacted to a question in an earlier issue:

Do classmates want to be found?

Schwegel wrote that classmates definitely do want to be found. They love reunions! She continued, "I volunteer in the Office of Institutional Advancement for Father Judge High School in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Our office keeps a complete database of all graduates, which we update regularly. Also, the school has an alumni association with its own database. The alumni association is always on the lookout for

grads to host class reunions and both departments offer assistance. Our office prints alumni names and addresses for reunion organizers. We can even email the address file to the organizer. We keep data on grade school alums and share those addresses with organizers of grade school reunions.

"We advertise the upcoming reunions on the school's website (www.fatherjudge.com), under events in the alumni Online Community section, and in the reunions column in local papers. We also keep back issues of *Reunions* magazine to aid alumni in organizing their reunions."



Anxious about a reunion?

Monica LaBelle and Emily Seftel, in Gannett News Service, say this about people who are anxious about attending a 10-, 20- or 30-year high school reunion. Don't worry. It gets easier.

When you're going to your 10th and your 20th, you're trying to impress everyone with who you are. After that, it's more about grandchildren than grand achievements.

Stephanie DeLuse, a doctor of psychology at Arizona State University in Tempe, writes about what draws us to class reunions. The curiosity factor is a desire to find out how people turned out

and engage in social comparisons to see how people are doing compared to our own situations. The desire to right a wrong includes apologizing to someone you fought with or confronting someone who made your life miserable. The hope factor is about catching the eye of an old crush or tracking down old friends, or setting the record straight for someone who has overcome high school stereotypes, like the prom queen becoming a scientist or someone who has lost a lot of weight.

From a report by Janie Magruder,
The Arizona Republic.

Memories of school days golden

Long ago in 1920, nine ladies who enjoyed their friendships organized the Newton Falls (Ohio) Schoolmates and Friends Reunion. They elected officers and met the fourth Wednesday of June for a picnic dinner. Picnic baskets were ample enough for lunch and dinner and the afternoon was spent visiting, enjoying contests and group singing.

As attendance grew larger, reunions were held in the Newton Falls Community Center. The 50th anniversary in 1970 had 85 attending. During this year's roll call of classes, 11 classmates stood, representing 1930 to 1939. Laura Clabaugh Cassidy of Sycamore, Ohio, a 1931 Newton Falls graduate, received special recognition for her 75th class reunion. In 1933, teachers were invited and through the years the reunion has honored faculty. Nine teachers were in attendance at the 87th celebration.

Cherokee County Community High School's Class of 1929 in Columbus, Kansas, had its 75-year reunion in 2004, cementing a place in Guinness World Records as the longest running annual class reunion.

From a story by Betty Jane Hewitt the
Tribune Chronicle, Warren, Ohio.

A final reunion

The final reunion of Painted Post (New York) High School Alumni Association was in August. Painted Post High School graduated its last class in 1963.

Following dinner, the classes of 1936, 1941, 1946, 1951, 1956 and 1961 were honored. The group has been active since 1976 but through the years, attendance dwindled. The decision to cease operations following this year's reunion was made in 2003. Over 30 years, the group awarded \$13,000 in scholarships to graduates of Corning-Painted Post West High School.

From the *Elmira Star-Gazette*,
Elmira, New York.



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16th National Family Reunion Conference

March 15-18, 2007

See program starting on page 22.

Contact Dr. Ione Vargus, 215-204-8703; ivargus@temple.edu

Reunion.com reverse people search

Reunion.com says more than 20 million people searches are saved, to provide a reverse people search called Who's Searching for You? This feature reunites old friends, former classmates, lost loves, relatives or anyone else who may be looking for them.

Who's Searching for You? compares a user's name and age to the database of saved searches. If there is a match, you can see who conducted the search, view profile and pictures, and decide whether or not to contact the individual through

Reunion.com's private message service. New members can see who conducted searches for them, even if searches were conducted long before they joined.

Reunion.com's People Search is a free feature that enables members to search Reunion.com's database of over 25 million to find and view member-created personal profiles and photos, as well as query more than 100 million public records. The service also notifies users if a new member joins who matches a previous search.

Cowboy Reunion Rodeo continuing a new tradition

The Texas Cowboy Reunion Rodeo has always been hailed as the largest amateur rodeo in the world. It was designed as a team competition for area ranch cowboys. The big ranches sent their chuck wagons along, and that's where contestants bedded down between events.

It was one of the biggest draws in West Texas. Tens of thousands of people crammed the grandstands. Texas governors led the rodeo parades. Will Rogers came to Stamford in 1935 with his buddy Wiley Post. A month later, he and Post were killed in a plane crash.

Ranches don't participate anymore.

Ropers and riders enter as individuals and are likely to trailer in for the day, compete, then leave.

The reunion, with all its history, isn't just another rodeo. There are nightly dances and sunrise services. The Cowboy Oldtimers Association holds its reunion. There's a chuck-wagon cook-off, a cowboy poetry symposium, an art show, and a spur and bit show.

Contact Texas Cowboy Reunion, 325-773-3138.

From a story by Art Chapman in the *Fort Worth Star Telegram*, Fort Worth, Texas.



'Rickshaw Reunion'

Over 100 Jewish Americans, Australians, Israelis and Europeans recently gathered in Shanghai to relive their past. Some were children of multi-generational Shanghai residents but almost all were former Ashkenazi refugees who settled in Shanghai as a last resort, fleeing Nazi aggression and the horrors of World War II. An "open city" under mixed Chinese and colonial rule, Shanghai was one of the few places European Jews could escape to without a visa.

Shanghai received nearly 30,000 Jews between 1937 and 1941. All foreigners were forced to leave in 1949 when Communists took over China. Many had not been back to Shanghai since.

The group, called the "Rickshaw Reunion," has held nine reunions and this is their second in Shanghai.

This time there is an appeal to UNESCO to declare the old Jewish ghetto in

Shanghai a World Heritage Site. Home to more than 16 million people, Shanghai today boasts one of the world's most modern skylines and fastest-growing economies. Yet pockets of poverty persist, including the shanties of Tilanqiao, the center of Shanghai's Jewish heritage, where tourists stop to photograph a black granite monument in Chinese, English and Hebrew, commemorating the designated area for stateless refugees.

Keeping those memories alive seemed to be a major focus of the Shanghai event, as evidenced by the large number of Jews who donated passports, documents and old family photographs to the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, which is leading the campaign to make the old 69-acre Jewish quarter a heritage site.

From a story by Larry Luxner
from the Jewish Telegraphic Agency,
New York, New York.

Whatever ever happened to....?

The *Carmi Times* and *The Weekly Times* in Carmi, Illinois, publish a special edition full of letters and photographs of former White County residents who now live elsewhere (people who grew up there, formerly lived there, or have close relatives living there). The "Readers' Reunion" debuted in 2005 with about 40 letters and 15 photographs from former county residents. The

purpose is to give former residents an opportunity to bring old friends and relatives up to date on their lives. There is no charge to submit letters and photographs; however, letters should not exceed 1,000 words and include no more than two photographs.

Contact Carmi Times, PO Box 190,
Carmi IL 62821.

Church group reunion

The Crusaders, a 1950s and 1960s young adult group at Oxnard (California) Foursquare Church (now called Oxnard Christian Center), recently enjoyed a reunion. The one-day program included an old-fashioned 1950s-1960s worship service, a movie of Crusader activities, special music by former

Crusaders, lunch and a time for each former Crusader to recount memories and update friends on their lives. Contact Darlene Howery, reunion coordinator, at 805-986-4050.

From a story in the *Ventura County Star*,
Ventura County, California.

Saint Peter's preemies at reunion

More than 300 families, including 12 sets of triplets and 72 sets of twins, had a "reunion" of "graduates" from the St. Peter's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Rutgers University.

Saint Peter's has 54 bassinets in the neonatal unit, the largest neonatal intensive care unit between Washington, DC, and Rhode Island.

About 1,700 infants are admitted annually to the unit, which opened 25 years ago. Of the 170 nurses on staff, about 120 work full-time.

From a story by Mary Ann D'Urso
in the *New Brunswick Home News Tribune*,
New Brunswick, New Jersey



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YMCA Trout Lodge

Branch of the YMCA of Greater St. Louis, Missouri, offers a Family Reunion Workshop for anyone contemplating this facility for their next reunion. Contact Jen Clink at 314-241-YMCA; www.troutlodge.org.

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Details at www.minneapolis.org/reunions

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970-887-2152, x4127

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YMCA of the Rockies, Estes Park Center
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970-586-3341, x1021.

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Send your reunion workshop information to reunions@execpc.com. Listings are free as a service to our readers.

Myevent.com adds new features

Websites are great for communicating vital details and collecting information. Myevent.com has added new features to use its website builder.

1. Message board

Any visitor to the website can post messages and upload photos. People can reacquaint themselves before and stay connected after a reunion. The planning committee can float ideas and ask for suggestions on many topics.

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Create your own forms (registration, reservation, surveys, contests). Visitors can respond on the website. Data is stored or can be downloaded.

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Upload files (such as doc, pdf, jpg, gif, bmp, ppt, xls, mp3, rm, avi, mpg) to link to or from any page on the website.

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Standard membership on www.Myevent.com is \$9.95 per month and premium membership is \$14.95 per month. There is a 7-day free trial with no credit card required.

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Peace Corps reunion

by Donald R. Goldberg

My Peace Corps training group recently held its first reunion since leaving Colombia in 1966. We met near the beautiful waterfalls and shadows of the mountains in Yosemite National Park. Why there and why now?

During the summer of 1964, about 70 of us gathered at the University of Missouri-Kansas City and three months later 52 flew to Colombia, spent a few days in Bogota and then took off for our site assignments.

In 2005, I reconnected in Washington, DC, with member, Arleen Stewart Cheston. Soon after, we hatched the idea of a reunion. Arleen, President of Friends of Colombia, supplied contact information for about 30 of our 52 RPCVs. We sent letters and emails and received enthusiastic responses – and additional contacts – from all over the country and from Chile. We decided to hold a reunion during the summer of 2006.



Reunion announcement captures the reunion site, Yosemite National Park, California.

One long, typed letter came from Virginia Tindall, a member of our group along with her husband Art, who, sadly had passed away. Virginia, now over 90, wanted to be part of the reunion, but was unable to travel. She and her granddaughter lived in a small California town close to Yosemite National Park. To honor Virginia, we made arrangements to hold our reunion at Yosemite – a perfect location, we all agreed at the end of the weekend.

Fifteen came, along with ten spouses/partners. The first night we met over *empanadas*, *aguardiente* and other Colombian goodies and reconnected. Many people brought DVDs, pictures, and other remembrances. Robert Arias, later a country director for the Peace Corps, brought t-shirts and bumper stickers made for our reunion and a DVD message from former Peace Corps Director, Gaddi H. Vasquez.



Days were spent enjoying the hiking in Yosemite National Park, California.



Virginia Tindall (center) surrounded by her Peace Corps training compadres.

We met in small groups to eat and then sightsee. We walked. We took our cars or tour buses to sites within the park. Our cameras were going all weekend, with the extraordinary scenery forming the backdrop of many group photos. Saturday night we held a formal group dinner at the world-famous Ahwanhee Hotel in the Park. Our honored guest, Virginia Tindall, came with two of her granddaughters who were able to see, for the first time, wonderful 40-year-old pictures of their grandparents joyfully dancing the *Cumbia* in costume.

This was the first time since the '60s we met as a group. We reminisced, caught up, met spouses and partners and, of course, downed a little *aguardiente*. We celebrated our shared experience, mourned those who had died, talked about the impact of our lives in Colombia and in the Peace Corps, and learned about how one another's lives had unfolded over the past 40 years. We did a lot of laughing and story-sharing.

Our training experiences and time in Colombia left us all with a lifetime of memories and changed our lives forever. The reunion allowed us to reflect and share our experiences.

So what did we learn from our time together in Yosemite? I think we learned that, nearly half a century later, our experiences together in training and in Colombia still resonated for us and united

us. The Peace Corps remained a profound experience in our lives that was joyful to recall and share. We learned we could begin where we left off and reestablish relationships and friendships from those days. We learned that for almost all of us, the Peace Corps was a catalyst for lives of public service both in the states and overseas. We learned that Colombia held a special place in our hearts – one that we wanted to continue to support through FOC's projects. And we learned that we wanted to continue these reunions, now that we had met at Yosemite.

I can't say strongly enough what this reunion has meant to me and to so many others. I hope your group will do it. Don't wait 40 years if you can help it.

About the author

Donald R. Goldberg, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, is managing attorney of the UAW Legal Services Program. After his Peace Corps training in 1964, he was assigned to work and live in a barrio in Bucarmanga, in northeast Colombia, then a city of about 250,000 (now maybe one million). After returning and finishing a Masters in Political Science, he worked in Washington, DC, with the Head Start Program in the old Office of Economic Opportunity, and moved with that program to Philadelphia, San Francisco, Anchorage, and back to Washington before returning to the midwest and finishing law school.

Memories shine at keepers' reunion

The Mukilteo lighthouse keeper's job was to maintain the property and make sure the lighthouse functioned properly. The lighthouse, now automated, no longer requires a keeper.

Dozens of people who were either keepers or are related to Mukilteo lighthouse's caretakers gathered for a reunion at Mukilteo Lighthouse Park, Mukilteo, Washington.

Nearly 80 people spent the morning touring and reminiscing at the 100-year-old site. The lighthouse and two houses used by keepers and their families are on the property.



Mukilteo Lighthouse Park, Mukilteo, Washington.

Robert Reed, Bellingham, Washington, was the lighthouse keeper from 1961 to 1964 where he lived with his wife, June, and their four children. The kids floated on inner tubes beneath the ferry dock and bobbed on the waves from incoming boats. They made good money helping fishermen unload their boats.

Many things about the city have changed. The lighthouse is not one of them.

From a story by Scott Pesznecker in *The Herald*, Everett, Washington.

REUNIONS

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Hobo reunion

The group of hobos, best known for their big hearts, adventurous spirits and love of all things railroad, celebrated the 106th National Hobo Convention in Britt, Iowa.

Dennis Ostrowski, better known in the hobo community as Baloney Kid, is a traveling musician who entertains schools and groups with hobo friends he catches up with on the road.

“Mama Jo, Half Track, Frog and I taught a lot of kids about hobos this year – including 700 kids in one grammar school, one class at a time,” Baloney says.

Many hobos make the rounds at area nursing homes, entertaining residents.

Half Track has spent the past year serving as the National Hobo Queen.

Hobo Days officially begins with the fire lighting ceremony in the Hobo jungle, where the future Hobo Museum will be built.

Each night in the jungle, hobos regale listeners with long ago tales of hobos who caught the westbound and stories of travels across the country.

From a story by Angie Johannsen in the *Britt News Tribune*, Britt, Iowa.

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“Family reunion” at an orphanage

“Orphans” from Lutheran Homes Orphanage in Muscatine, Iowa, reunited recently.

The term “orphanage” is somewhat misleading. While some children had lost parents, most had biological families that were dysfunctional or, for some reason, could no longer support their children.

Although Lutheran Homes now operates exclusively as a senior care center, it was founded as a home for orphan children in 1895 and ceased operation in the 1970s.

Those at the reunion reminisced about how the orphanage taught them basic skills, gave them the opportunity to be educated and helped develop their religious faith. Girls learned homemaking skills and boys worked the farm. All had regularly assigned chores and duties.

While most said they remembered

their time at the orphanage fondly, a few described it as a “hateful” experience.

Despite their feelings about the orphanage, all agreed it was a much better circumstance than the foster homes most children found themselves in. Children sometimes attempted to reconnect with their biological families, but it rarely worked out.

Muscatine resident Ray Stange, 80, who was the Lutheran Homes Orphanage farm manager, organizes annual reunions for employees and children. “Just the association with the children, getting to work with them and knowing you could help them out,” was how he explained why he still cared for his time at the orphanage so much. “It was a non-profit, so it sure wasn’t the pay.”

From a story Peter Rugg in the *Muscatine Journal*, Muscatine, Iowa.

Garden party dance and reunion

All dance aficionados are invited to the Quad Cities May 23-27, 2007, for dancing, fun, parties and more dancing. Known as the Garden Party Reunion, it has become a long-standing Memorial Day Weekend tradition.

The concept was formed during a 1985 cruise on the *Mississippi Queen*. When the steamboat arrived in Davenport, Iowa, passengers were bussed to Morgan Manor for an afternoon barbeque. Participants had so much fun they decided to make it

an annual event. Over 200 participants come from all over the world to enjoy the big band sound.

Garden Party events include a private dance party, dinner concert, luncheon and dance, tea dance, picnic on the river and two dinner dances. Reservations are required for these events. Dance hosts will be available for single women. Contact Janice Allen, 714-992-4880 or the Quad Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau at 800-747-7800; www.visitquadcities.com.



Chicken dancers at a Garden Party event.

Travel writers identify quirkiest attractions

The US Interstate system turns 50 this year. In honor of this golden anniversary, members of the Society of American Travel Writers (www.satw.org) have selected the Top 10 Quirkiest Attractions along the nation's interstates.

Cadillac Ranch, Amarillo, Texas, Interstate-40. Ten tail-finned Cadillacs are "planted" nose-down in the prairie. www.visitamarillotx.com

Cadillac Ranch, Amarillo, Texas.



Dinosaur World, Plant City, Florida, Interstate-4. These model dinos tower over the pathways of a 12-acre forest. The irony, of course, is that dinosaurs never roamed Florida, which was under water at the time. www.dinoworld.net

Jell-O® Museum and Gallery, LeRoy, New York, Interstate-90. Where America's favorite "fun" dessert was invented. www.jellomuseum.com

KFC Museum, Corbin, Kentucky, Interstate-75. The original motel and restaurant run by Colonel Sanders is now a KFC museum. www.corbinkentucky.us

KFC founder Colonel Sanders



Leila's Hair Museum, Independence, Missouri, Interstate-70. Home of the Victorian Hairwork Society, dedicated to the art of collecting, preserving and making hairwork. www.hairwork.com

Mystery Spot, St. Ignace, Michigan, Interstate-75. Where strange occurrences happen, gravity is defied and things just don't work the way the laws of physics say they should. www.mysteryspotstignace.com

Wall Drug, Wall, South Dakota, Interstate-90. A small drugstore started in the Great Depression and offering free ice water to travelers has turned into a massive emporium. www.walldrug.com

World's Largest Roadrunner Statue, Fort Stockton, Texas, Interstate-10. The Paisano Pete roadrunner statue on the way to Big Bend National Park is 20 feet long, 15 feet tall. www.traveltexas.com

World's Largest Truck Stop, Walcott, Iowa, Interstate-80. Includes a Trucking Hall of Fame, annual Truckers' Jamboree, Iowa 80 Kitchen restaurant, fast food court, warehouse store, service station, laundry facilities, barber shop, and dental office; 24 private showers and plenty of phones and, for truckers only, a second floor with Dolby Surround Sound movie theater. www.iowa80truckstop.com

World's Tallest Thermometer, Baker, California, Interstate-15. 134-foot tall symbol of the high temperatures in Death Valley on the major road between Los Angeles and Las Vegas.

National Hot Rod Reunion Days

The fourth annual Holley NHRA National Hot Rod Reunion, presented by DuPont Automotive Finishes, was held at Beech Bend Raceway Park in Bowling Green, Kentucky. The reunion featured nostalgia drag racing, displays of street rods and muscle cars, and a host of fun-filled events. The three-day festival of speed, hot rods and American automotive enthusiasm is produced by the Wally

Parks NHRA Motorsports Museum and presented by the Automobile Club of Southern California, Pomona, California. The reunion is part of the museum's "living history" philosophy, which works to bring to life the sights, sounds and people who made history in the early days of drag racing, land speed racing and the golden age of American car culture.

From an article in WomanMotorist.com.

Boy Scouts reminisce



Alabama Boy Scout leader John Price decided to have a reunion for Troop 28, but he never imagined the diversity of members' careers, let alone how difficult it would be to find them. Some were still in Alabama but others were in Texas, Florida and Georgia. They are doctors, dentists, lawyers and police officers.

Members and their families who attended the reunion at Camp Horne in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, saw more than 400 troop photos in a slide show.

A capsule in one of the troop's totem poles containing badges, pins, money and a list of members was opened.

Price said more than 100 young men came through Troop 28, which had great adult leadership from the fathers. "We had fathers who would go on every trip," he said. "We had the dads to do the job – that's what makes the scout group." Price said fun kept the boys interested.

From a story by Deneesha Edwards in the *Tuscaloosa News*, Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Classic Jeeps star at Willys reunion

About 70 vehicles were on display at the Willys reunion in Springfield, Illinois. Vehicles ranged from the classic Army Jeep to the Jeepster convertible. The featured vehicle was the 1966-73 Jeepster Commando, which is bigger than a traditional Jeep.

Production of the original Jeep began around 1941 by Bantam Company which was too small to keep up with the demand of World War II. Contracts were awarded to Ford and Willys, and Willys made most of the Jeeps. After the war, Willys began producing Jeeps for civilian use. The fun factor is one of the main reasons the Jeep is popular.

Dennis Caraway, spokesman for the reunion, said that the correct pronunciation of Willys is often debated. He pointed out that there is no apostrophe after the Y, so the correct pronunciation is "Willis." See www.midwestwillysreunion.org.

From a story by John Reynolds in the *Springfield State Journal Register*, Springfield, Illinois.

Historic Pennytown reunion

Pennytown is an historic African-American community located about eight miles south of Marshall, Missouri. Approximately 40 families inhabited the 64 acres. Today, the Pennytown Free Will Baptist Church is the only thing that remains of the once bustling town.

Buffalo Soldier James G. Madison, a Pennytown descendant and longtime president of the Greater Kansas City Buffalo Soldiers who served in the 10th Cavalry during World War II, has been coming to the reunions since he was a child.

After the war, people migrated to town, but they always come back for the reunion. People from all over the US attend. Guests enjoyed a carry-in dinner at picnic tables beneath the shade trees in front of the church. After the meal, a non-denominational service was held inside of the sweltering church. Men and women swayed back and forth in the pews, singing and fanning themselves.

The Pennytown theme song *Sweet Sweet Spirit* closed the program. People lingered in the churchyard after the service, chatting and slowly making their way to their cars to leave. But almost all of them stopped for a moment before going, to take one last long look at the church and think about what it stands for.

From a story by Zach Sims
The Marshall Democrat-News, Marshall, Missouri.

Snowbirds plan reunion in Arizona

Snowbirds hold an annual Gogebic and Iron County (Michigan's Upper Peninsula, UP) Reunion in Arizona, in Phoenix, Tucson, Tempe and Mesa over the years. The reunion, held for over 25 years, remains popular with each new generation of those retiring from the northwoods to the sunny southwest.

After the 2006 reunion, they decided there won't be music at the 2007 reunion. People want to talk, according to organizers.

Some years, the menu includes pasties (a popular food in Upper Michigan) shipped from the UP.

The loosely knit reunion organization has neither email nor website. For information, contact John Trojahn, 205 S. Higley, Mesa AZ 85206; 480-832-6362.

From a story by Diane Montz in the
Ironwood Daily Globe, Ironwood, Michigan.

Former Ice Capades performers reunite

From 1941 through 1981, the Ice Capades was a summertime fixture at the Atlantic City (New Jersey) Convention Hall. Performers host a reunion in Las Vegas, Nevada, every five years, but never before in Atlantic City, second home to many skaters. "The majority hadn't been back since they left the show," said Gloria Spoden, who organized the reunion.

Back in the day, the Ice Capades founders had a religious bent and expected performers to go to church each Sunday, said Spoden. Instead, many would slip out the side door of Convention Hall and go to Bart & Tony's Bar across the street.

From a story by William H. Sokolic
in the *Cherry Hill Courier Post*, Cherry Hill, New Jersey.



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16th National Family Reunion Conference

MARCH 15-18, 2007

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The Family Reunion Institute and the Pennsylvania Department of Tourism invite you to the 16th National Family Reunion Conference. The Family Reunion Conference is the national meeting ground for family leaders. Family reunions are a renewed focus for individuals who want to strengthen the bonds of their extended family.

This unique national conference is an excellent opportunity to start, strengthen or revive your reunion. This three day conference is filled with innovative ideas and practical how-to solutions specially designed to make your next reunion the best one yet.

YOU WILL:

- Renew and refresh your commitment to your family
- Discuss family reunion practices in depth
- Network with other families from across the country
- Exchange ideas with experienced reunioners
- Get special planning tips from convention bureau, hotel and travel experts.

Human Service agency workers and consumers are also encouraged to come to learn how to use the family reunion concept and experience family strengths.

***Note:** The schedule and workshops are subject to change.

THURSDAY, MARCH 15, 2007

1 - 2 PM

Early Registration (for workshop participants only)

Early Bird Workshop

2 - 5 PM

Preserving Memories: Scrapbooking

6 - 9 PM

Preserving Memories: Quilt Making

FRIDAY, MARCH 16, 2007

8 AM - 4 PM Registration

9 AM - 5 PM Marketplace Open

9:30 - 10 AM Welcome Remarks

10 - 11:30 AM

WORKSHOPS: FIRST SESSION

First Session Finding the Rest of Me

Telling the Story: Beyond Trees and Charts

Spirituality and the Family Reunion

12 - 12:45 PM Lunch

12:45 - 1:45 PM Welcome

Keynote Speaker: Kenneth Gamble: Co-founder of the "Philly Sound", co-founder of Universal Companies and the Universal Plan for Urban America.

2 - 3:30 PM

WORKSHOPS: SECOND SESSION

Does It Run in The Family? Promoting Health at Your Reunion: Preserving

Family Treasures

Family Online: com

From and Back to China How Grandmothers Stories

Keep Us Connected

Family Empowerment

3:45 - 5:15 PM

WORKSHOPS: THIRD SESSION

Raising "ISM" Proof Children

DNA and Your Roots

Measuring ROE: The Value of Your Family Reunion Event

Guess Who's Coming to the Reunion?

Philadelphia Historical and Cultural Resources

5:30 - 7 PM

Welcome Reception

6:30 PM

Leave for King Tut Exhibit; for persons who signed up.

7 - 9 PM

King Tutankhuman and the Golden Age of the Pharaohs Exhibition at The Franklin Institute

More than 3,000 years after his reign...the lost treasures of a boy king come to Philadelphia in a dazzling, once-in-a-lifetime exhibition. See more than 130 amazing treasures belonging to TUT and his royal relatives, many never before seen outside of Egypt.

SATURDAY, MARCH 17, 2007

8 - 9 AM Continental Breakfast and Speak Out

8 AM - 12 PM Registration

9 AM - 5 PM Marketplace Open

9 - 9:30 AM Meet the Sponsors

9:30 - 10:30 AM **Linda Goss**, Story teller

10:45 AM - 12:30 PM

WORKSHOPS: FIRST SESSION

Saving Stories: How to Make Your Family Reunion Last Lifetime

Latino Family Reunions: A Way to Keep Families Healthy and Strong

DNA and Your Roots

Organizing the Family Reunion

Electronic Scrapbooking

12:45 - 1:45 PM Lunch

1:45 - 2:30 PM

Keynote Speaker: Angel Ortiz Former Councilperson and community activist for the rights of all people.

2:45 - 4:15 PM

WORKSHOPS: SECOND SESSION

Saving Stories: How to Make Your Family Reunion Last a Lifetime

Measuring ROE: The Value of Your Family Reunion

Engaging Youth at the Family Reunion

Electronic Scrapbooking

Does It Run in the Family? Promoting Health at Your Reunion

4:30 - 5:15 PM Conference Drawing

6 PM On your own

SUNDAY, MARCH 18, 2007

9 - 11 AM Breakfast with Birmingham

16th National Family Reunion Conference Workshops*

THURSDAY PRECONFERENCE WORKSHOPS (3 hours each)

Our pre-conference workshops focus on Preserving Memories

Preserving Memories: Scrapbooking

How many times have you wished you had images of unique events and celebrations at family reunions? Family reunion scrapbooks are delightful projects for members to capture and create memorabilia of your reunions. This workshop will demonstrate creative ways to preserve special memories. Bring photos and other small memorabilia that you can use to learn innovative scrapbooking techniques.

Quilting: Stitching together your family's heritage

Have your reunions produced story quilts that are collections of symbols, images, and events that record the history and heritage of your family? This workshop will explore how to turn memorabilia into scraps of fabric and scraps of fabric into family heirlooms. Teresa Kemp, owner of the internationally famous Plantation Quilt Museum in Atlanta will provide the instruction.

FRIDAY WORKSHOPS

Finding the Rest of Me

There is an explosion of resources for exploring your family's roots. Your family history provides a legacy and tradition to be shared for generations. In this workshop genealogists present basic ideas to start researching your family history and are joined by representatives from the National Archives. Learn how to best utilize the wealth of records and resources they will share.

Spirituality and the Family Reunion

The Family Reunion Institute often describes the family reunion as very spiritual, well beyond the worship service. It is so much a part of the reunion that many families don't recognize it. What are the elements of your reunion's spirituality?

Does it Run in The Family? Promoting Health at the Reunion

Have you ever wondered why diseases appear in some families and not in others? What was the health problem one of your grandparents had that no one would talk about or name? Understanding family medical history is a major step toward living a healthy life. Use a tool kit that will empower your family to share health information several interesting ways. Then learn how to plan a health workshop for your next reunion.

Preserving Documents

We've made our quilts and scrapbooks, taken photos and collected family historical documents. We even have artifacts we've inherited. This workshop's focus is on how you can make

these items last a long time by preserving them with special materials and methods.

Family Online.com

Technology is forever evolving and changing the way we view, communicate and interact with the world. Use the internet to increase connections within your family. Computers allow you to research family history, create a family website, circulate information, send greetings and reminders of family events. Learn how in this workshop.

From and Back to China: How Grandmothers' Stories Keep us Connected. An Immigrant Experience

As brother and sister travel from Hong Kong to Guangzhou province, an informal family reunion happens through the grand-mother's stories. Questions that needed to be asked and answers to be discovered about family legacy and struggles unfold and keep the family close even though separated by two continents.

Raising "Ism" Proof Children

Are you prepared to deal with the negative messages, teasing, bullying and put-downs your children encounter? This workshop will demonstrate how you can use pictures, poems and music to create a sense of safety and protection from threats. The workshop will demonstrate how to use an "isms" workbook to build young people's coping skills that neutralize the "isms." Methods for developing "isms" workshops at your family reunion will be discussed.

DNA and Your Roots

DNA is one of the fastest-growing ways to link an individual's history to the past. Discover this fascinating genetic structure and use it as a scientific breakthrough to trace your family roots. Learn how you can use new DNA technology to pinpoint your ancestry. Hear what one family reunion will do after determining through DNA where they came from.

Measuring Return on Event (ROE):

What is the Value of Your Family Event?

In this workshop you will discover how to quantify the value of your family reunion by measuring the economic, social, cultural, political and ecological impact. Participants will learn how to measure direct spending, how to use the multiplier effect to qualify your reunion's economic value and how to use the triple bottom line strategy to strengthen your negotiating power.

It is like a retreat for the reunion planner. Every planner needs time to evaluate past reunions and re-charge reunion planning batteries with new ideas.

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continued

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

INFORMATION

For brochure and information call 215-204-8703; e-mail ivargus@temple.edu; or write The Family Reunion Institute, School of Social Administration, 1301 Cecil B. Moore Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19122.

Conference fees include

The conference includes twenty-two workshops to choose from; two breakfasts, two lunches and a welcome reception; vendors, exhibitors and a conference booklet; two keynote speakers; a renowned storyteller; a one year subscription to Reunions Magazine; and a Speak Out session where participants network, exchange and share information about individual experiences and issues not covered by workshops.

Conference Rates

Reduced conference rates are provided to families or non-profit groups registering four or more participants, as well as to seniors and students with valid identification.

Participants can register for the full conference, or for Friday or Saturday events only.

Full Conference – \$195

Includes admission to all events, Thursday pre-conference workshops, Friday, Saturday and Sunday activities. Welcome reception, two continental breakfasts, two lunches, keynote speakers and reception.

Special full conference rate – \$145 per person

For families or organizations registering four or more people; full time students and persons over 65

Friday only – \$125 per person

Includes admission to marketplace, workshops, lunch and speaker, and reception.

Saturday only – \$125 per person

Includes admission to marketplace, workshops, continental breakfast and Speak Out, storyteller, lunch and speaker, and conference drawing.

Registration

Registration for above prices must be received by February 28, 2007.

After February 28, 2007, add \$25.00 to each category.

Cancellation refunds of \$50.00 before February 28, 2007.

No refunds after February 28, 2007.

Register online at www.temple.edu/fri

Transportation

Amtrak offers a 10% discount off the lowest available fare to Philadelphia PA between March 12, 2007 and March 21, 2007.

To book a reservation, call Amtrak at 800-872-7245 or contact your travel agent. For discount, refer to Convention Fare Code X37M-905. Conventions cannot be booked online. Offer valid with Sleepers, Business Class or First Class seats with payment of the full applicable accommodation charges. Fare valid on Metroliner and Acela service for all departures seven days a week. Offer not valid on Auto Train.

The **Avis** Worldwide Discount (AWD) Number is J995448. Call Avis directly at 800-331-1600 and use this AWD number to receive the best car rental rates available.

Hotel Reservations

The 16th National Family Reunion Conference will be at the Marriott Philadelphia Airport Hotel. For reservations, call 800-228-9290 by February 22, 2007. \$109.00 per night plus tax. Refer to the Family Reunion Conference.

The Marriott Hotel is within walking distance of the Philadelphia International Airport, Terminal B. The regional rail to and from the Amtrak station at 30th Street and to downtown Philadelphia is also close by. Complimentary parking is offered at Garage C in a secure environment directly connected to the hotel.

16th National Family Reunion

Telling the Story (Beyond Trees and Charts)

This workshop describes fun and interesting ways families use to tell their history at the reunion. We will demonstrate how families have created their own family crests and logos. Apart from making quilts (earlier at the conference), we will demonstrate and explain how they also document family history.

Guess Who's Coming to the Reunion?

A look at many kinds of family diversity. What issues arise at the reunion? How do we behave toward adopted children or those who live different lifestyles? Does it matter? Are we supportive?

Family Empowerment

All our workshops have the underlying message of strengthening the extended family. This workshop takes a step further into family growth and development. How does a family go about making a business a collective venture? Should the family become a non-profit? If you think it's hard to invest collectively as a family, come hear how one family did it.

Philadelphia Cultural and Heritage Sites

Learn ways to incorporate Philadelphia's wealth of cultural and authentic sites to enrich and enliven your family reunion. A panel representing museums, historic sites, parks and tour providers will share their excitement about family programs they provide to make your reunion a unique experience.



SATURDAY WORKSHOPS

Saving Stories:

How to make your Family Reunion Last a Lifetime

In this informative, interactive, hands-on workshop, you will learn how to preserve family heritage and save life stories in a family reunion setting. Learn to tell stories using photographs, heirlooms, music, tastes and smells and effective interviewing techniques. Please bring a special family photo to the workshop.

Latino Family Reunions:

A Way to Keep Families Healthy and Strong

This workshop will provide an understanding of the trauma associated with immigration; the biological, psychological and social effects on the individual. Latino families value personalismo, respeto, and familismo, therefore, they tend to prefer support in problem solving through family and allies of the family. How can family reunions help preserve this critical family resource?

Conference Workshops* *continued*

Organizing the Family Reunion

This workshop will explain everything you need to know to move your reunion from a thought to an actual event. Included is information about making Convention and Visitors Bureaus part of your planning and how to negotiate with hotels.

Electronic Scrapbooking

Methods and tools for using personal computers to create and maintain a family scrapbook online, a cost-effective way to produce permanent family records and to distribute to family members via CDs and the internet.

Engaging Youth at the Family Reunion

A panel of teens tells how they are involved in their reunions, what kinds of things teens and young people like to do and an adult tells the secret of how her reunion keeps young people coming.

Repeated from Friday

Does It Run in the Family?

DNA and Your Roots

Measuring ROE:

What is the Value of Your Family Event?



SUNDAY MORNING

Breakfast with Birmingham

The conference isn't over. We're in for a very special treat hosted by the Greater Birmingham (Alabama) Convention and Visitor's Bureau. You probably won't have had a breakfast like this in recent years where the activity includes sharing memories of your extended family. The morning includes live music with a great trio!

*What a wonderful
place to get ideas
and to get motivated.*

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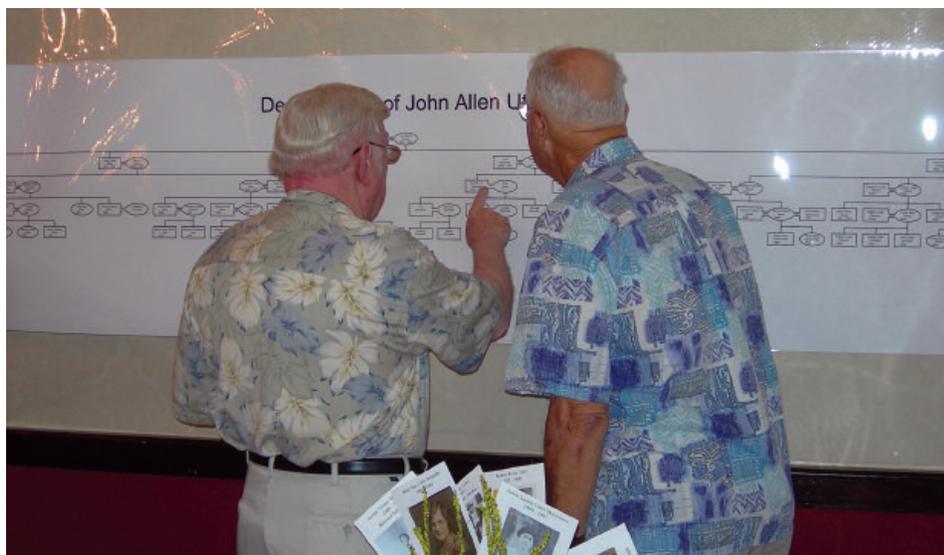
by Jackie Utley

The poem *Our Family Quilt* was the inspiration for the 2006 Utley Family Reunion in Jackson, Tennessee.



Families are like quilts/Lives pieced together/stitched with smiles and tears/colored with memories/and bound by love.

There were lots of hugs and many smiles and also lots of quilts! Family members loaned vintage and new quilts



A new feature for this reunion was a 60-foot long family tree, showing our founding couple, John Allen Utley and Lilla Maude Jacobs Utley, their eleven children, spouses and grandchildren, down through the fifth generation. It is fun to find yourself and see how you and your family fit into the whole family tree. The laminated family tree was on the wall behind the buffet, so everyone got a good chance to study it while waiting in line. Here (l to r) Glenn Rainey and Ben Usinger enjoy the new family tree.

to be used as coverings for display tables. People had fun going from table to table, looking at photos. At the end of the reunion, family members were urged to take photos they'd like to have.

Displays included photo albums, Utley memorabilia and our Time Capsule (to be opened in 2024). One table held framed

photos of deceased family members. The table of honor featured photographs of our founding couple, a group photo of their eleven children, and a composite photo showing the couple superimposed over the group photo of the eleven.

On the memorial table were photos of our three family members who died since the last reunion. The 8x10 color photos were framed identically and each flanked by a fat taper candle in a hurricane globe. During the program that followed the meal, a moment of silence was observed for the memorial service.

Our "crafty" relative, Sue Bates, designed and sewed table quilts for the round dining tables. Each mini-quilt had a 12-inch white square center and two colored bands to form an approximate 18-inch square. Sue also made a mini-9-patch quilt topper for the registration table using the same design. Centerpieces were silk flower arrangements provided by the hotel.

The reunion quilt logo was printed on the back of 4.5 x 5" card stock. On the front of each of these cards was printed a



Each centerpiece had pictures of loved ones, programs with the quilt theme, goodie bags and a quilt square for everyone to sign for a quilt next year.

family photo. Some photos were quite old, some more recent. These were easily made using greeting card software. Using the quarter-fold design, one quilt logo was printed on each page. Then the other side of the card stock was printed using the same quarter-fold with four different photos on each page. They were placed in the clear plastic picks used by florists to hold the cards in floral arrangements.

A printed reunion program was at each place setting. The cover featured the quilt logo with the date and location. The poem which inspired the theme



Sue Bates signing a square for the next Utley Family Reunion quilt. We used archival pens to sign names and the year on the white center squares of the table quilts. The squares will be stored and displayed at the next reunion, when we can add another year under their names, and new folks can sign and date the squares. We plan to make the squares into a wall hanging or large table quilt to be displayed for future generations at family reunions.

appeared under the schedule of events. One page was dedicated to thanking everyone who worked on the reunion. A four-page insert included a full page dedicated to each of our three recently deceased members, including their photos and condensed obituaries; the fourth page listed all our deceased members (with their birth and death years), organized into the family's eleven



(Left to right) Geraldine Rainey, Sue Utley, Dot Rainey Wilson, Earldine Utley, all cousins or spouses of cousins, enjoy a lively discussion about a picture.

branches. The back cover featured the logo and date for the 2007 reunion and theme, "Mardi Gras in Jackson."

Also at each place setting was a quilt design goody bag with candy, chewing gum, mini Post-It notes, pens and "squishy" pen grips (with which younger members made a game of pelting each other).

Family photos were taken before the lunch buffet. There was a small stage in one corner of the banquet room where we arranged chairs for the older relatives. We do a photo of the entire group, the Cousins (first cousins, grandchildren of our founding couple), the Fours (fourth generation), the Fives (fifth generation), and any branches which are represented. My husband, Lynn Williams, is a professional photographer so the photo-taking process went smoothly and quickly (or as quickly as it can go with a bunch of relatives who'd rather be talking than sitting in front of a camera).

Five branches of the Utley family were represented. One member from each branch gave an update of engagements, marriages, births, deaths, graduations and family news since the last reunion. Then all members of the branch were recognized with applause as they stood *en masse*.

Rebecca Williams designed and printed the Utley family calendar, beginning with August 2006 and running through August 2007. She illustrated it with old family reunion group photos from 1934 through 2005. Each month has a sidebar listing family birthdays and anniversaries. The suggested donation was \$20, with proceeds going to help pay reunion expenses.

Plans were made to compile and publish a family cookbook for the next reunion. Before the reunion ended, several family members already were promising to mail recipes as soon as they returned home.

We've already booked the hotel for next year's reunion. "Our Family Quilt" is now history and we're looking ahead to "Mardi Gras in Jackson." *Laissez les bon temps rouler!*

About the author

Jackie Utley is the family historian, family newsletter editor and family reunion planner for her Utley family. In her spare time, she teaches water aerobics and Arthritis Foundation aquatics to older adults. She and her husband, Lynn Williams, live in Jackson, Tennessee.

Crafting traditions – *pass them on*

Organization makes it easy.

by Gilda V. Bryant

It's time for a family reunion and you've been asked to be in charge of an activity that will be fun, interesting and guarantee all generations and genders will get to know each other. A little organization makes teaching crafts easy and fun for everyone.

To generate interest, send a self-addressed, stamped postcard for participants to return with a picture of the craft asking how many are interested in a craft activity. This helps determine how many craft kits are needed.

SUCCESSFUL CRAFTING IDEAS

- Basic quilting
- Embossed cards
- Scrapbooking
- Making lamps
- Stamping
- Simple jewelry
- Hand embroidery (sewing cards for little ones)
- Plastic mesh projects
- Models, especially of vintage aircraft and ships which generate lots of stories and involve the guys.
- T-shirt painting
- Purse and tote bags



The Scott family enjoys scrapbooking and storytelling session.

Assemble a craft kit with needed supplies in a gallon plastic bag. Prepared kits simplify starting the activity and are less overwhelming to non-crafting family members. Make extra kits for those who change their minds and decide to join in the fun. More people will participate if you keep the price of the kit between ten and fifteen dollars.

Camellia Elliott, Pilot, Virginia,

organized quilting projects for her family reunion. She says, "Everyone liked to see the scraps of color and how they turned out. Quilting reminded older women of their mothers' and grandmothers' quilts. Everyone enjoyed listening to stories this activity generated."

Before you begin, be sure you have enough tables, chairs, electrical outlets and extension cords. Have equipment



Kids take jewelry making very seriously.

like ironing boards, irons, glue pots or glue guns ready to go.

If possible, use a room where outside distractions are at a minimum. Speak clearly and loud enough for all to hear. Give personal attention to those having problems grasping a technique or concept.

Crafting often uses a specialized vocabulary. Be sure to define terms and share helpful tips. Come prepared with enough copies of special instructions, printed in a dark, easy-to-read font on white or light-colored paper. Have a finished sample for participants to see.

Teach your craft the same way you eat an elephant – one bite at a time. Instruct in a logical sequence, by breaking the



Camelia Elliott and her niece, Olivia Tedford, show off a quilt top that Olivia made during reunion weekend.

FIND CRAFT IDEAS

Craft stores like Michael's, Joanne's or Hobby Lobby have supplies and items to inspire creativity. Check out these publications for crafting ideas for your next reunion.

- **Crafts 'n Things,** www.craftsnthings.com
- **Create and Decorate,** www.createanddecorate.com
- **Jewelry Crafts,** www.jewelrycraftsmag.com
- **Memory Makers Magazine,** www.memorymakersmagazine.com
- **Cross Stitcher,** www.craftideas.com
- **Miniature Quilts,** www.quilttownusa.com
- **Paper Crafts,** www.papercraftsmag.com
- **Card Maker Magazine,** www.cardmakermagazine.com

project into examples of each process, focusing on simple steps for beginners.

Most people are visual learners, learning best when they can see a project come together one step at a time. Tactile learners will want to feel and arrange the craft pieces. Auditory learners will be ready to work after hearing the instructions once or twice, with a glance at the finished sample.

Barbara West, from Amarillo, Texas attends yearly reunions. She says, "Art projects bring the family closer because we do something fun and creative. Best of all, we have something to take home."

Crafting can become a family tradition with great benefits. It promotes sharing precious memories, strengthening family ties and providing relaxation during family reunions.

About the author

Gilda V. Bryant is a freelance writer, crafter and quilter. Her articles about quilts have appeared in *For The Love of Quilting*, *Quilter's World*, *Quilt World*, *Quilter's Almanac* and *Quilt*.

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Come See For Yourself!

ALMOST LIKE COMING HOME

by Patricia Helmberger

When my sister, Ardelle, learned she only had three months to live, she began planning a celebration. She had a transplant in 1986 but the disease that destroyed her first heart was now attacking her new one. She had her second chance at life but there would be no third. The transplant added five years to her life but at age 65, she faced her impending death with great courage.

Our family grew up in the small northwestern Minnesota town of Lengby, where our Norwegian, German and English ancestors settled in the late 1800s. Then it was a logging and farming community with a grand old hotel and a bustling railroad station, where pulp from vast forests was loaded and hauled to cities far away. Residents thrived on family farms and in small businesses.

But times changed, forests were depleted, businesses died and young people moved away to find work. My five siblings and I were no exceptions. We made new lives in the Twin Cities, South Dakota, Arizona and, in Ardelle's case, Alaska. We visited our parents when we could, and when they died we laid them to rest in the beautiful cemetery of our Lutheran church, surrounded by tall white pine.

When Ardelle learned that she was terminally ill, she wanted to return to Lengby. To make that wish come true, her daughter Julie moved from California to Minnesota to care for her mother as she became increasingly weak. Ill as she was, party plans were made. She and her daughter sent out invitations, scheduling a mid-July reunion. From around the country we gathered to pay our final tribute to our brave, dying sister at the stately old house Julie and her family rented.

Reunion day was beautiful with bright skies and warm temperatures. A feast of barbecued chicken, potato salad, corn on the cob and rich desserts greeted us. Ardelle, able to walk only a few steps, spent much of the afternoon sitting in the shade of an oak tree smiling and greeting relatives. She had wanted the day to be a happy one, surrounded by people who loved her.

Her son, Jon, from Seattle, brought a family tree sketch that intrigued all of us, especially his cousins – who included my three children. As they studied it, Jon said, "Let's go to the cemetery and find these relatives."

Anxious for exercise and adventure, thirteen cousins started out on the ten-minute walk to the cemetery. The adults continued visiting, with little thought to what that walk would mean. We had taken our little cemetery for granted for years. It was the place where our parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, cousins, uncles, aunts and a sibling were buried. But because we lived far away, we had not given our children the connection to their roots. It was an omission that we would regret when the cousins returned from walking among the graves of their ancestors.



"Mom, that's an amazing place! It goes back for generations!" one of my children exclaimed. "I can't believe we didn't know about it before!" I detected a note of anger in those words.

Ardelle's 12-year-old granddaughter sparkled with excitement. "It's like our very own private cemetery. They're all related to us!"

It was as if they'd found a great hidden treasure, which indeed they had. Taking the family tree sketch from Jon, I began to tell stories that lay buried in that beautiful place. As a young soldier, their great-great-great-grandfather carried the Union flag in the Civil War. My grandmother, twice divorced, was haunted by the ghost of her 15-year-old son, who was killed in a hunting accident. Now they lay side-by-side beneath moss-covered stone. There was my 14-year-old cousin who died in a car crash after stealing the car from a neighbor's yard. Another cousin, only two years old, had died of meningitis; I was just a young girl then, standing with my parents beside the grave, but I still remember her mother's screams as the tiny coffin was lowered into the earth.

I walked among those graves as a child and occasionally as an adult, but it was not until reunion day that I recognized their tremendous importance to the young people in our family. Our transient, busy world leaves little space and time for such journeys into the past. But the journey was one that brought generations together and gave our children a sense of place and an ancestral connection that my oldest son described as "almost like coming home."

We buried my sister Ardelle in this cemetery shortly after our reunion. Since then, we have also brought the ashes of my brother James from South Dakota to be placed beside our mother and father, as he requested. And it is where mine will eventually rest. That was a decision I made after our reunion, as I fully understood my children's longing for, and appreciation of, the ties that bind us all together.

I believe other families planning reunions would find a trip into the past would draw them closer too. Not everyone is so fortunate to have a "private" cemetery like ours. But the past can be captured by other means. Old photos, letters, diaries and interviews with elder family members are a few ways to do that. Military medals, awards, report cards, even old catalogs and newspapers give us a sense of the history and cultures in which our ancestors lived.

We learned that a family tree provides great incentive for storytelling and discovery. Looking into the past is not morbid. It is a life-affirming path on which we travel to meet the generations that shaped our lives.

About the author

Patricia Helmberger, Duluth, Minnesota, is a journalist with a degree from the University of Minnesota's School of Journalism, author of two books (one on organ transplants) and has many articles, editorials and poetry published.

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-Georgia Burnette, Amherst, NY

The conference infused in me the spirit of how serious it is to one's identity and historical continuity to reconnect through family reunions.

-Sherrie Hauser-Simmons, Fairburn, GA

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Maynards of Wayne County, West Virginia

More than 4,000 were expected at Cabwaylingo State Forest for one of the region's largest family reunions. The Maynards in West Virginia and Kentucky are descendants of James Maynard, a Revolutionary War soldier, and can be traced back to England during the time of William the Conqueror. When Maynards came to the Appalachian region, many had 12 to 14 children, which may be why it's one of the bigger families in Wayne County.

Sherman Maynard and his clan started meeting in 1937. For years, the gracious family has opened its reunion to anyone who wants to join the celebration at Cabwaylingo, the closest state forest to Huntington, West Virginia. This year was a free day of games (including horseshoes and marbles), a car show (90 cars were entered) and music, including national-act bluegrass and gospel groups.

Maynards arrange a free shuttle that runs up and down the road, taking people to the State Forest.

This reunion was dedicated to the memory of Hercie Maynard, who passed away earlier in the year. Hercie had organized the reunion since 2000 and had already paid the musicians before she died. She loved the forest and made sure there was no logging on more than 3,000 acres of her own property. The US Forest Service honored her with a tree planting at Cabwaylingo State Forest, a place she dearly loved.

Contact Sandy Maynard at 304-849-4404 or Buster Maynard at 304-385-4539.

From a story by Dave Lavender in the *Huntington Herald Dispatch*, Huntington, West Virginia.



Is this the longest annual reunion?

The Hubbard Family Association held its 150th annual reunion at the family homestead (circa 1701) on Hubbard Road in West Haven, Connecticut. Approximately 150 attended from throughout the US.

Our family is descended from the Honorable William Hubbard, who settled in Ipswich, Massachusetts, in 1635. The Hubbard Family Association is comprised of "cousins" who trace their ancestors to the Rev. John Hubbard of Meriden, Connecticut (1727-1785), with the majority tracing to his grandson John Hubbard, Jr., who settled in West Haven, Connecticut (1778-1861).

The first reunion, in 1856, was held at Isaac Ives Hubbard's farm in the Spruce Glen section of Meriden, Connecticut, so that Charles Hubbard from Ohio could meet his Connecticut relatives. It was such a great experience they decided to hold a reunion each year and it has been held every single year since – with newspaper articles, photos and genealogical records to prove it.

We believe this is the oldest continually held reunion in America. The 151st will be held on August 25, 2007, in Winchester, Connecticut.

Reported by Bryan Anderson, West Haven, Connecticut.

Williams 250-member family reunion

Jackie Ferguson, Marion, Indiana, hosted the 250-member Williams Family Reunion. Her father, Abel Williams, was one of five brothers and six sisters who grew up in Birmingham, Alabama, during the 1920s. Most headed north in the 1920s. Four brothers went to Pennsylvania and lost contact. Abel Williams and four of his six sisters moved to Southern Illinois.

Abel Williams settled in Colp and married Viola. They were parents to 17 children, three of whom died at birth.

Abel Williams died in 1971.

On Friday the family celebrated with a dinner party, Saturday, they had a picnic and Saturday night a skating party.

Marion, Illinois, Mayor Robert Butler spoke Friday evening, praising the family for all its many contributions

to the local area. He proclaimed Saturday, August 5, 2006 to be Viola and Abel Williams Sr. Family Day.

In 1991, the family held its first reunion in Kentucky. In 1993 they met in Birmingham, Alabama. Each reunion drew more people. There were two more reunions; Marion in 1995 and Houston, Texas, in 1997, but no reunion until 2006. The reason is that no one took charge. Ferguson was more determined.

As they learn about new branches of the family, they add them to the list. Ferguson sent out 125 invitations for the Marion reunion. She got a tremendous response. To coordinate the reunion, Ferguson picked one relative from each geographic area, and that family member was responsible for communicating with his or her nearby relatives.

Beatrice Fann, 83, Detroit, Michigan, the only family member still living from Abel Ferguson's generation, received a plaque for being the oldest family member at the reunion.

From a story by Tom Kane in the *Marion Daily Republican*, Marion, Illinois.




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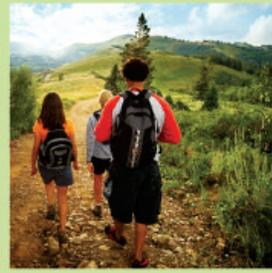
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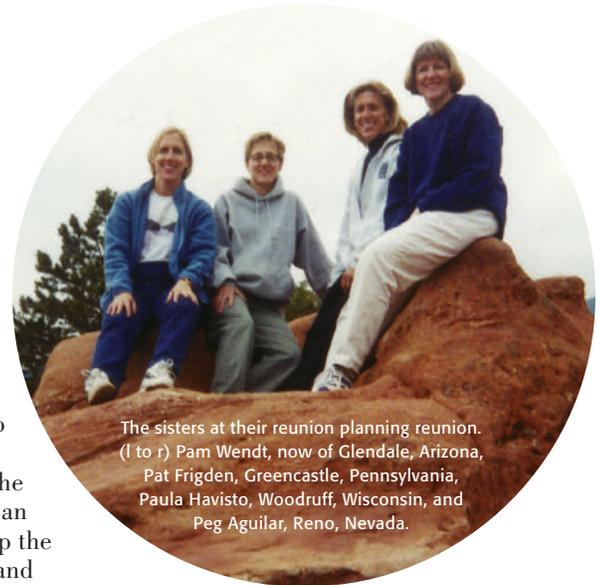
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Reunion TO PLAN A reunion

by Patricia Frigden



The sisters at their reunion planning reunion. (l to r) Pam Wendt, now of Glendale, Arizona, Pat Frigden, Greencastle, Pennsylvania, Paula Havisto, Woodruff, Wisconsin, and Peg Aguilar, Reno, Nevada.

It started with a simple email. I sent my three sisters a note, suggesting we arrange a getaway. We live in four states and seldom see each other. They took the idea and flew with it. Emails zipped back and forth.

“Yes, let’s do it.”

“Where? When?”

“Should we invite our husbands? Kids?”

“How about Mom?”

“Orlando would be fun. I want somewhere warm. Arizona. Maybe Hawaii.”

Hawaii? Wait a minute. This is getting out of hand. We finally settled down and reached a consensus. Colorado Springs in mid-May. The purpose of our sisters reunion would be to plan a family reunion to include husbands, children, parents and brother.

Then began the logistics of getting the sisters together. Somewhat by

default, I took over. Thank goodness for the web, which made it easy to find reasonable airfare, hotels, and car rental. We all also researched places to visit in Colorado Springs.

Pam, Paula and I arrived at the Colorado Springs airport within an hour of each other. We picked up the rental car, found our first hotel and began getting our bearings. Armed with maps, we discovered that Colorado Springs is laid out in an easy-to-navigate pattern. We proudly traversed the city to pick up Peg at the airport at 11 PM.

Several of us experienced altitude sickness of mild headaches for a few days. We didn’t let this slow us down. After all, we were on vacation.

We made the most of four full days of sightseeing. First we drove to Dillon to

visit our brother Todd. He failed to mention we’d be driving through mountains to reach him. The map looked flat to me! I should know better. After all, this is Colorado. Todd has become a true westerner and loves his adopted state.

The rest of our time was spent in Colorado Springs. We found the sights awe-inspiring and interesting, and the people very friendly. We enjoyed the outdoors despite some unseasonably cool weather.

We did eventually make time to talk about our family reunion. Colorado Springs would be a wonderful place to bring a family, but since we had already been there, we opted for somewhere new. The choices were endless – Branson, Orlando, Hawaii, Chicago, Wisconsin Dells, Mexico. The dates were restrictive. Jobs, kids’ activities, weather considerations and school schedules made it difficult to find one week that meshed for everyone.

Final tally? We will shoot for a Caribbean cruise sometime in March.

So we dispersed. Pam went back to Minnesota, Paula to Wisconsin, Peg to Nevada, and I returned to Pennsylvania. We are checking our calendars. Then the emails will begin again.

About the author

Patricia Frigden keeps in touch with her sisters as best she can. She is the author of *Cool Spring and The Mystery of Apartment 2A*. She also writes news and feature stories for her local newspaper.



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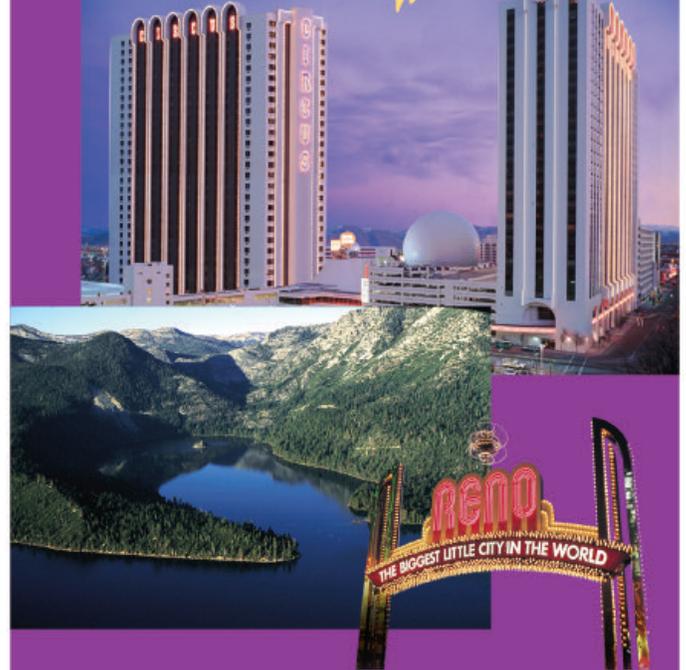
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Surprise reunion generates repairs

Seven of Gerrie (90) and Sid (91) Johnston's nine children came from as far as Russia for a family reunion and to make repairs on their parents' home. The Johnstons have been married for 64 years.

The kids reroofed and painted the house, cleaned drapes, fixed the sprinkler system, tinkered with the computer and repaired the sticking screen door.

The beehive of activity included more than 30 children, spouses and grandchildren – from St. Petersburg, Russia, Texas, Oregon, Tennessee, North Carolina, and Michigan.

Gerrie said, "Our mouths just fell open" when they learned their children were staging the reunion and home repairs. They were further surprised when their children and spouses came wearing Johnston reunion t-shirts proclaiming "1 of 9" or "Married to 1 of 9." Gerrie and Sid also got T-shirts: "Had 9," with the "1 of" crossed out.

From a story by Tom Haroldson in the *Kalamazoo Gazette*, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Family reunion pumps up town

When the Scoresby Family Reunion of over 400 arrives in Iona, Idaho, the town's population doubles. This year the family celebrated 100 years since William Scoresby and his wife left Australia for the land of opportunity. The couple had five sons and one daughter, whose descendants now total more than 600.

"Even though we're all spread out we can reunite ... and know that we all have a common heritage," said John Scoresby.

From KIFI, Idaho Falls, Idaho.

600 Reiss descendants attend reunion

Clemens Reiss, who immigrated to Sheboygan, Wisconsin, from Croev, Germany, in 1856, founded C. Reiss Coal Company in 1880. The company grew to fill the Reiss peninsula (now South Pier District) and expanded to other coal yards along Lake Michigan and also operated a steamship line until the company closed in 1986.

One hundred fifty years after Reiss first set foot in Sheboygan more than half of his 1,000 offspring returned to the city from as far as London, England.

"When someone passed us on the road and saw our Reiss shirts, they said, 'The Reiss family put Sheboygan on the map, and you must be really proud,'" said Vicki Griesser, Glenview, Illinois.

Attendees wore color-coded shirts to identify from which of Clemens Reiss's eight children they descended, and a numerical code indicating lineage in shorthand. Patrick McComis wore a "10-4-3" on his left sleeve, making him the third child of the fourth child of Clemens and Anna Reiss's 10th child. His son, William McComis, 5, is also known as 10-4-3-1a (the letter distinguishes him from his twin sister).

The Clemens Reiss family has remained close through the generations, four of which were present at the reunion. A recently developed website includes news and genealogy.

From a story by Eric Litke in the *Sheboygan Press*, Sheboygan, Wisconsin.

Family marks 200th reunion

The Miskimen family gathered in New Philadelphia, Ohio's Tuscora Park for their 200th family reunion. New Philadelphia Mayor Ron Brodzinski presented the family with a key to the city and read a proclamation recognizing the 16 original New Philadelphia Miskimen siblings and their accomplishments.

Originally, reunions were held every five years, but as the 16 siblings have grown older, reunions have been held annually. This year, more than 200 attended from as far as California and 17 other states.

To kick off the weekend, a cocktail reception was held in the home where the original siblings once lived, also the one-time residence of former Ohio governor Vic Donahey.

A memory wall presented pictures depicting the 200 years since the first Miskimen gathering in 1806. A group photo, and a photo of each of the eight remaining siblings with his or her descendants, were taken. There were also sack races and a scavenger hunt. T-shirts were color-coded to identify to which of the 16 siblings each person was related. Shirts bore an illustration of a family tree marking each sibling. Other items given to attendees included card decks with the tree image, stress relief squeeze balls, a cookbook, and handbags, marked with personalized luggage tags to put everything in.

From a story by Meryl Williams in the *New Philadelphia Times Reporter*, New Philadelphia, Ohio.

Reunion inspires search into family history

The marathon may be the main draw to the sixth annual Hatfield-McCoy Reunion Festival, but people spend hours before the main event trying to find their own connection to the infamous feuding families.

Two genealogy workshops at the Hatfield-McCoy Reunion Festival taught local librarians and genealogy buffs the best ways to research family histories. Jimmie Epling, regional consultant for the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives, stressed that researchers should always check US census information, which provides many clues to finding ancestors and county records (birth, death, marriage, property deeds, wills and military records) because the documents tell stories.

Ronnie Blackburn, Melbourne, Florida, Pike County native and grandson of Rev. Anderson Hatfield, answered genealogy

questions and shared the story of the Hatfields and McCoy's at the Tug Valley Chamber of Commerce.

"When I was a small boy, I used to go to my grandfather's (Hatfield) house and a lot of people would come in there and old timers would sit and talk and I would listen to them," Blackburn said, reminiscing back to the 1940s. Blackburn helped get the original home site listed on the National Register of Historic Places. He hopes the structure will help keep the history of the Hatfields and McCoy's alive.

Participants in this year's event were treated to a pasta dinner and entertainment. The reunion festival also includes gospel music, an ATV safety fair, airplane rides, a mini-marathon for kids, barbecue dinner, motorcycle ride and the Hatfield-McCoy picnic and feud.

From a report by Leigh Ann Wells, *Appalachian News-Express*, Pikeville, Kentucky.

Getting to know you

Rick Branch, Capital Heights, Maryland, is very enthusiastic about his Branch/Outlaw Family Reunion. He writes "One of the biggest excuses from folks who did not attend the 2005 family reunion was ... 'I do not know those people.' One of the purposes of having reunion is to get to know extended family."

So Branch is creating an opportunity for folks to get to know folks without financial and time commitments and other anxieties associated with meeting strangers, kin or not.

A recent reunion was in Pink Hill, Duplin County, North Carolina. All activities Friday were in his mother Carolyn Branch's backyard. Kids played a couple hours on five large inflatables while adults got to know each other. "We had two huge tents with a musical DJ in

each tent for evening entertainment."

Saturday they used Maxwell Mill Park in Pink Hill for swimming, paddle boat rides, horseback rides, nature trails in the woods, fishing, game room with video, pool tables and golf courses for those who wanted to play. Park staff provided worms for fishing and rides from the parking lots to our picnic area on their three- and four-wheelers.

On Sunday a morning church service was followed by a formal banquet. Branch coordinated with the Duplin County (NC) Tourism Department and the School Board to help make all facilities and areas possible.

The next reunion will be a four-day weekend celebration, so more folks can take part. They are raising money to fund the event with a raffle and softball tournament.



Enjoying a picnic at the Branch/Outlaw Family Reunion in Pink Hill, North Carolina.

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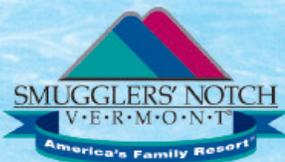
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Going home again

by Maureen Taylor

Reunions aren't just for families. Towns have them, too. If you've ever had the desire to "go home" to reconnect with your childhood, you're not alone. While there are no statistics to document how many people return to their roots, there is enough interest for a new magazine called *Town Square*

(www.townsquaremagazine.com). According to editor Mike Beno, "There are many sophisticated magazines that focus on big city life, but it's time that small towns receive their due." Beno's audience is "those who live in small towns or yearn to return." According to their website, town reunions are the driving force behind this new publication "devoted to the idea that hometowns are still the heartbeat of Americana."

These town reunions aren't a new phenomenon; they're at least a century old. At the turn of the twentieth century, Governor Frank West Rollins of New Hampshire coined the phrase "Old Home Week." He inaugurated town reunions, publicizing the event to potential attendees as "an opportunity to come back to their old homes and meet once more their old friends and schoolmates." Within a few years Maine, Massachusetts, Vermont and Rhode Island all followed suit. It was nostalgia-driven economic policy.

In the late nineteenth century, droves of people left New England seeking their fortune in other parts of the country. Their migration caused a crisis in small towns throughout the area. An editorial in the *New England Magazine* explained the importance of the event: "If only a small percentage of New England's absent natives can be induced to come back and settle down among us again, if merely in the capacity of summer visitors, something will have been accomplished toward counteracting the drain upon our resources that we are now feeling so seriously." Rollins' idea was an attempt to reverse the trend and bring people back home. It worked.

Former residents returned to New England. They came for "Old Home Week" celebrations and summer vacations, and re-visited family history. Those who returned remembered their past by

endowing public drinking fountains and libraries, or commemorated their history with tablets and monuments to their ancestors.

While a few towns still honor the event, most have forgotten it ever happened. If you're from a small town or a city neighborhood, don't wait until it's so changed that no one remembers its heyday. Take steps to preserve local history of an area by having a different kind of reunion – one focused on geography rather than kin. Call it what you will, just organize it.

Marysvale, Utah, holds a civic reunion every year over Memorial Day weekend. Their website advertises the dates (www.marysvale.org/its_time_to_come_home.htm) and encourages individuals to share photos and memories at the event. Mount Hope, West Virginia, residents began their annual Jubilee celebration in 1991 and each year offer new activities. For Sturgis, Mississippi, the web (www.sturgisms.homestead.com/) is the venue for a reunion not of people but of history and genealogy.

Here's what you can do to organize a reunion and save your hometown heritage.

ORGANIZE A REUNION

Contact representatives of local groups such as historical societies, fraternal organizations or schools and prominent citizens. Ask their opinion of a town reunion and ask for suggestions to attract volunteers. The more people you involve, the greater your chance of getting the word out. Then pick your spot and a date. For the occasion offer action-based events like a tug o'war. Also set up tables for collecting history.

• Share photographs

Set up a small station with a table, scanner and computer, and ask people to bring photos and historical documents of the area. Scan each at high resolution (at least 300 dpi/tiff) and catalog with contact information for the owner. Then print images on acid- and lignin-free paper using a photo printer. Ask donors to sign a statement allowing you to put the scan in a town archive. If you plan to publish a book about the town or on the web, get permission to include images from the

owner. Don't wait until later. Remember to have someone take photos of the reunion.

• Record those memories

Record oral history by interviewing attendees about their memories of living in the area. A national oral history project called StoryCorps (www.storycorps.net) encourages people to record their lives. Their website includes interview instructions and questions. You can rent a Storykit from StoryCorps (\$100 for seven days plus a security deposit). Each kit comes with a MiniDisc recorder, two MiniDiscs, a professional-quality microphone, studio-grade headphones and a StoryKit User's Guide. It's enough for two interviews but you can add more for an additional fee. If possible, sign people up ahead of time to ensure you have enough discs. Ask participants to sign a release agreeing to non-profit use of their interview, and obtain their contact information. After the event, have volunteers transcribe the recordings and place a copy at your public library.

• Create a website

Continue to gather material by using the web. Post photos you've collected and add new data about town history. Use other town websites as a guide. Raquel Thiebes, creator of a website for Sturgis, Mississippi, used the Internet to create a historical archive of material about one town. She asks for new information, lets users communicate through message boards and includes a calendar of Sturgis-related reunions.

Town reunions are special. They help you revisit long lost childhood memories, provide opportunities to hug old friends and blast into the past. While you're busy sharing memories, spend time collecting them, as well, so others can experience life in the town as you lived it. It's all about saving a piece of your local history.

About the author

Maureen Taylor is the Photo Detective. She writes about family history and photography on her blog at www.photodetective.com.



Brandon to host Leaf Rapids reunion



Leaf Rapids, Manitoba, parade to celebrate a reunion.

A 35th-anniversary reunion for Leaf Rapids, Manitoba, Canada, won't be in Leaf Rapids because the town has disappeared. In the 1970s, 3,700 people lived in Leaf Rapids, created specifically to serve the Ruttan copper and zinc mine. The population dropped drastically after the mine closed in 2002. Now there are fewer than 300 people, no hotel, one restaurant whose hours are not regular according to Barbara Boycey of Brandon. Former residents have gone as far away as Australian and Japan.

Boycey reports that there will be class reunions within the reunion, a golf

tournament, a mini-golf tournament for kids, a silent auction, an archives display, and a memory book is in the works. There will be three suppers and one pancake breakfast, three nights of dancing, a beer garden, fireworks, games, and they hope to offer hot air balloon rides.

The reunion is Aug 3-5, 2007, at Curran Park, Brandon, Manitoba, Canada. Anyone who would like to take part can contact Boycey at 204-727-5319 or by email at barbb@westman.wave.ca or visit www.hometech.com.ca/leafrapids.htm.

Partially from CBC News with lots of help from Barbara Boycey.



At a Leaf Rapids reunion, Canadian Royal Mounted Police from the Leaf Rapids Detachment at a ceremony/plaque dedication to honor of firefighters killed fighting the forest fires that threatened Leaf Rapids in 1995.

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Martha Stewart's town reunion

Two busloads of Martha Kostyra Stewart's neighbors went to Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia's New York studio for a taping of a Nutley, New Jersey, reunion. The whole town was invited. Stewart's next-door neighbors were there, as well as Nutley's mayor, Stewart's prom date and, of course, a slew of friends. In "This is Your Life" fashion, the show featured photographs of Stewart's childhood home, and even pictures of the high school gymnasium Stewart decorated for the senior prom with the theme, "Stairway to the Stars."

From a story by Doni Greenberg, *Record Searchlight*, Redding, California.

Davis County Old Soldiers and Settlers Reunion for all ages

Embrace youthfulness is the watchword at the Davis County Old Soldiers' and Settlers' Reunion in Drakesville, Iowa. Games at the reunion give children and local adults an opportunity to be silly.

They come up with different games each year. Last year included a display of balloon-shaving talent as well as an amateur contest for singers, dancers and comedians. Events also include a baby contest, pedal tractor pull, parade, tractor pull, frog jump, horse and mule show, and evening stage shows.

One tradition is the presentation of a rocking chair to the oldest settler and oldest soldier of Davis County, donated by Bruce's Furniture. While two people are guaranteed to win chairs, everyone can be a winner in drawings for more than 150 prizes each day.

From a story by Jeni Kimmet in the *Ottumwa Courier*, Ottumwa, Iowa.

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TOWN REUNIONS

Hayes Crossing/Haldeman Community Reunion

The Hayes Crossing/Haldeman (Kentucky) Community Reunion is a yearly event and serves as a fundraiser for the Fire Department's Ladies Auxiliary. Ladies sell food and drinks. The Annual Parade ends at the Fire Department. There is always a horseshoe tournament, games for children and contests. Some of

those recognized will be the oldest, youngest, longest married couple, who traveled farthest, teachers, principals, school board members, magistrates, firemen, explorers, ladies auxiliary members and other important people.

Contact Lloyd Dean, 6770 US 60 East, Morehead KY40351.

Reunion in Newfoundland

More than 80 former and present Newfoundlanders celebrated their Jewish heritage at a gala mid-August reunion in St. John's. The event, called "Kum Ahaym," celebrated more than 100 years of Jewish life in the province.

One highlight was a Shacharit service at Cape Spear (the nearest point in North America to Jerusalem), just after sunrise, when shofars were blown to herald the day.

The only fully kosher winery in Canada (Rodrigues Winery of Whitbourne, Nfld.) produced berry wines and offered a wine tasting. A dinner of Newfoundland cuisine drew 80 people and there was a walking tour of former Jewish business sites.

From an article by Joel Jacobson in the *Canadian Jewish News*, North York, Ontario, Canada.

Obscure towns

If you're searching without success for the location of a town mentioned in a family genealogy or book, go to www.epodunk.com. This free site has information about every US county and profiles of more than 27,000 cities, towns, villages and hamlets. The database also has about 12,000 common misspellings of American place names to

help locate them. Former place names and extinct towns are being added from hundreds of published sources to compile a list of prior post office names, old depots, plat names, informal place names and merged communities.

From a column by the late Regina Hines, CGRS, on SunHerald.com, Biloxi, Mississippi.

Ridgeview reunion resurrects memories

Ridgeview, Pennsylvania, is no longer on any map. But you'll find it in the hearts and minds of those who were raised in the small hillside community in Fairfield Township.

Ridgeview outlived the early 20th century coal mine that lent it its name and original purpose. The Ridgeview Mine operated from about 1917 to 1931. In the years since, names on mailboxes

have changed, but the collection of about 30 homes has remained intact. Company dwellings were made by Sears and Roebuck. They came on flatbed cars, with parts stacked in the right order for putting them together. Eventually, properties were sold to individuals for a few hundred dollars apiece.

The lean times of the 1930s made ties between neighbors stronger, creating an easy familiarity among families. Current and former residents renew ties at the annual Ridgeview Reunion in West Bolivar. They bring old photos of Ridgeview and a covered dish to share.

From a story by Jeff Himler in the *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Hometown reunions popular with South Floridians

South Florida residents originally from Chelsea, Massachusetts, have gathered for a reunion each February for over 20 years. About 600 people attended a dinner-dance last year. They celebrate their roots and reminisce about the place they once called home, where the schools were excellent and everyone was friendly. If you misbehaved and your mother wasn't around, someone else's mom would tell you to shape up.

Chelsea is a town of 1.8 square miles across the Mystic River from Boston.

Leona Grell, 83, Delray Beach, runs the Chelsea Club of Florida, and says the bond that people feel is from when everyone knew and looked out for one another.

Former and part-time residents of Pelham Parkway and Washington Heights, New York, and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and from other parts of the country also enjoy reunions in South Florida.

From a story by Mary Thurman Yuhas at Sun-Sentinel.com, Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Come home to Port aux Basques

Traditionally "come home year" reunions have been every 10 years (next 2015) in Port aux Basques, Newfoundland, Canada.

Memories of the town's 60th anniversary *come home year* reunion in 2005 made some want to repeat sooner rather than later, but there is a concern that if the reunion is every five years instead of 10, the frequency may diminish nostalgia. And hosting a *come home year* – when the town's population doubles for two full weeks with back-to-back activities

– requires many dedicated volunteers.

Deputy Mayor Kris Parsons, chair of the last planning committee, recommended another reunion event in 2010, for 10 days instead of 15. Mayor Brian Button suggested polling to get people's thoughts. He wanted to know what the length of the next event should be: 10 days over two weekends, or two full weeks.

From Mandy Ryan's report in the *Newfoundland Gulf News*, Port Aux Basques, Newfoundland, Canada

Highlandlake celebrates 83rd reunion

Highlandlake, Colorado, celebrated their 83rd reunion at the town's historic 108-year-old church. The reunion highlight was the rededication of the church, which nearly collapsed in March 2003 after a storm dumped four feet of snow on its brittle frame. Re-laying the church's cornerstone during the reunion cemented the community's commitment to its preservation.

To help offset construction costs, Historic Highlandlake, Inc., conducted a silent auction of historic memorabilia, including an authentically reproduced stained glass window used as a replacement for a church original.

When the cornerstone was first removed to start restoration, a time capsule from 1971 was discovered in the hollowed-out stone. The small tin contained letters from each of the town's three founders, the church's congregation list and a postcard from the Rev. Mary Bumstead, who was responsible for raising money to build the church in 1896. The

capsule was returned with the original letters, and copies of the deed to the church, a list of Historic Highlandlake's board members and the first issue of the Highlandlake newsletter.

From a story by John Houder in the *Longmont Daily Times-Call*, Longmont, Colorado.

Generous genealogist gives back

Because genealogical societies, libraries and genealogists are always short of funds. Megan Smolenyak, Haddonfield, New Jersey, offers small grants as a tiny step toward addressing the problem. Megan says "I have had so much fun with genealogy for three decades and have benefited from the help of countless other genealogists. Now it's my turn to give back to the genealogical community."

If you represent an organization which serves the genealogical community at large or you serve a smaller community (you produce a family newsletter, host a website, organize reunions) and find yourself shy of necessary funds, apply for a small grant.

Megan reviews all submissions and periodically selects one for a donation. She is drawn to innovative ideas that serve as a model to others. Submissions remain active for six months from the date of receipt.

Current grants are to genealogists and genealogy societies but she is open to special reunion projects as well. The application is at http://honorourancestors.com/apply_grant.html.

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Cruise myths

Cruisecompete.com dispels myths about cruising, which apply to reunions as much as to any group.

MYTH NO. 1: CRUISES ARE EXPENSIVE.

Reality: A cruise is actually one of the best travel values. Most include accommodations, meals, 24-hour cabin service, ports of call, most entertainment and children's programs.

MYTH NO. 2: PEOPLE TAKE CRUISES ONLY WHEN THE WEATHER TURNS COLD.

Reality: Cruise travel is year-round.

MYTH NO. 3: CRUISES ARE TOO LONG.

Reality: Cruise lengths vary. According to the Cruise Lines International Association, itineraries of one to five days accounted for 31 percent of the cruise market during 2004; itineraries of six to eight days made up 57 percent of the market; and nine- to 17-day sailings accounted for 11 percent.

MYTH NO. 4: THERE'S NOTHING FOR MEN TO DO ON A CRUISE.

Reality: Cruise ships are floating resorts, with plenty of fun for everyone. Activities include shore excursions, water sports, pool activities, fitness centers, live entertainment, casinos, bingo, dance lessons, talent contests, karaoke, wine tasting, rock wall climbing, spas, movies and much more. Most days are spent in exotic ports with plenty to see and do. Golfers can play challenging, top-ranked island courses (extra fees may apply). Gourmets love the dining. Explorers find adventure in every port.

MYTH NO. 5: KIDS ARE BORED ON A CRUISE.

Reality: All major cruise lines offer organized programs/camps for kids. They can participate all-day or in specific activities. This provides for fun family time and a chance for parents to relax on their own. Daycare and babysitting services are available.

MYTH NO. 6: THERE'S NO WAY TO HANDLE A MEDICAL EMERGENCY.

Reality: Virtually every cruise ship has a fully equipped medical facility and staff on board to handle almost any emergency. If someone must be evacuated to a hospital on land, trip insurance covers medical emergencies.

MYTH NO. 7: CRUISE SHIPS SPEND ALL THEIR TIME AT SEA.

Reality: Cruise vacationers spend quite a bit of time on land. Every cruise features multiple ports of call. Every port offers unique experiences. Excursions arranged by the ship's staff or local sightseeing companies are available at extra cost.

MYTH NO. 8: EVERYONE GAINS WEIGHT ON A CRUISE.

Reality: While cruises are known for having plenty of food, cruise lines are aware of healthy-eating lifestyles of a growing number of cruisers. Every meal offers healthy choices as part of their already extensive food selections prepared under the direction of some of the world's greatest chefs. Plus, there are plenty of activities onboard and off to help burn extra calories.

MYTH NO. 9: A CRUISE SHIP CABIN IS CLAUSTROPHOBIC.

Reality: An inside economy cabin can be small and usually lacks a window but you spend very little time there except to sleep. Outside ocean view cabins have a window or porthole, while a balcony (veranda) cabin has a glass door to a balcony (usually with a small table and chairs). Most ships feature larger suites for those who truly need more space.

MYTH NO. 10: SOME PEOPLE BECOME SEASICK ON CRUISES.

Reality: Even if you suffer from motion sickness during car rides or on airplanes, it is unlikely you will become seasick on a cruise ship. Their immense size and stabilizers minimize your perception of motion.

MYTH NO. 11: YOU LOSE TOUCH WITH THE WORLD ON A CRUISE.

Reality: Some people love getting away from it all, while others like to stay in touch. Newer ships have business centers with fax capabilities and Internet access. Cruise ships publish a daily newsletter with major news, sports scores and stock quotes. Most cabins have televisions and telephones that enable you to call someone on shore through the ship's radio operator while at sea. Calls can be made from most ports, too. (However, cell phones will not work at sea.)

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Cruisin' for family fusion

by Jacky Runice

For many of us, our impression of a cruise experience stemmed from a smarmy sitcom in the 1970s and '80s called *The Love Boat*, in which the likes of Charo, Donny Osmond and Lola Falana experienced relationship issues that Captain Stubing and Isaac, the ship's only bartender, would resolve. The reality is that there's only one dilemma to deal with in planning a real reunion cruise circa 2007: which cruise line? To insure a great time, consider going "all aboard" these extraordinary floating resorts that cater to reunion groups in a big way.

What comes to mind when you hear the words "Beautiful! Passionate! Italian?" Exactly: legendary Italian star, Sophia Loren, serves as godmother to MSC Cruises, a line that boasts Italian officers, Italian-inspired decor and hospitality, and the wonderful "*La cucina Italiana*," a blend of old world family recipes and modern cuisine. Whether you choose a transatlantic journey, an excursion on the Mediterranean Sea or a Caribbean itinerary, expect the best of everything. "An MSC Cruises ship provides a venue that brings groups closer as they share what amounts to travel and a cultural experience that is truly 'Beautiful. Passionate. Italian,'" explained Gail Nicolaus, Director, Marketing for MSC Cruises (USA), Inc. "High standard of onboard service and Italian cuisine, hospitality, design and sophisticated interiors are the cornerstone of the MSC Cruises philosophy – all aimed at giving guests personalized and impeccable



Cruise reunions offer many new experiences for all cruisers.

service. Guests can participate in onboard activities and exciting shore excursions during the day and then reunite each evening to share experiences over dinner before enjoying European-style nightly entertainment in the theater or one of many lounges," she added. MSC Cruises sails to the most gorgeous locales on the planet, and offers a variety of ship sizes, styles and personalities to match your groups' needs. "Once the ship and itinerary are chosen, everything falls into place," Nicolaus said. "Depending on your group size ... travel agents can arrange for private parties onboard and tour guides on shore. We are quite flexible

and work with each group to create a customized experience." Check www.msccruisesusa.com for special offers such as two-for-one stateroom deals, discounts on some itineraries, theme cruises that allow you to meet some of the greatest baseball players, special baby boomer and senior fares, holiday sailings when kids sail for free and more. Call 800-666-9333 for a free brochure and start dreaming.

South Florida is home to Discovery Cruise Line, the largest tour operator to Grand Bahama Island from Ft. Lauderdale, and an expert when it comes to reunions. If your group doesn't have much time, Discovery offers a unique Day Cruise to Grand Bahama, or choose a Cruise 'N' Stay Resort Getaway to the Bahamas, as did Faith Lewis for the Lowe/Rolle Reunion. In June 2006, about 100 members of the extended family shoved off from Florida for the five-hour cruise to Freeport. Some watched movies while other relatives hit the casino and took in Las Vegas-worthy entertainment. "Discovery Cruise Line helped us with everything," Lewis explained. "They helped get our hotel rooms at the Sheraton Our Lucaya and would have set up a place for our banquet but we have family on the island, who took care of that." The family, who meets every other year, opted to cruise instead of fly into Freeport simply for the fun of it. "Everyone wanted to take their time and relax," Lewis added, "and it was great."

The Discovery Day Cruise, featuring all the amenities of a longer cruise, is a nice option when time is of the essence. You enjoy award-winning meals, relaxing

on the sun deck or swimming in the pool, dancing in the disco, all kinds of contests and games, casino, showrooms and lilting island music as your soundtrack. Departing at 7:45 AM and returning at 10PM, the Day Cruise allows for time on the island to shop, beach comb or try your luck at the Isle of Capri casino. Readers of *Porthole Cruise Magazine* chose Discovery Cruise Line as the "2006 Best One-Day Cruise" for the sixth consecutive year.

Hosting an average of 150 reunions a year, Discovery Cruise Line offers meeting facilities, audio and visual equipment, reserved dining areas, special theme parties and menus, games and entertainment and even an open bar

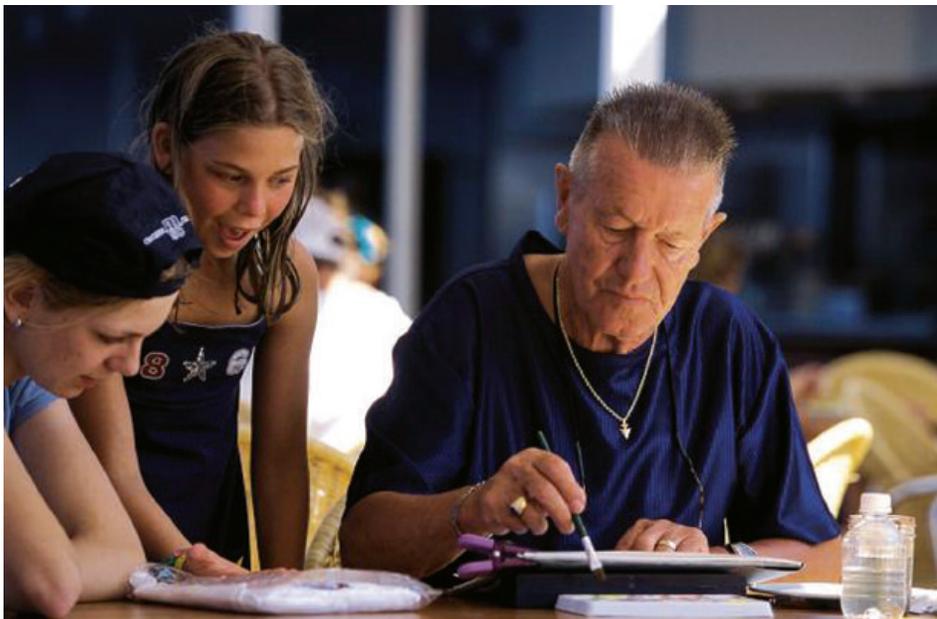
your reunion, call the Groups Department at 888-213-8216 or visit www.discoverycruise.com.

If a cruise reunion sounds great but you haven't the foggiest notion how to begin planning such an endeavor, Group Travel Consultants (GTC) may be your ticket to a fantastic get-together. The "Reunions at Sea" program focuses on the family reunion travel market, says John DeCrotie, GTC president and owner. "We work closely with clients to tailor the right cruise based on several factors including their budget, desired ports of call and cruise duration." GTC considers the age range of your group to help determine which cruise lines have perfect amenities, activities and features.

ship to ensure they receive first-rate service start to finish," DeCrotie explained. You needn't fuss with arranging meeting space or private parties or setting up seating at meal times. When available, the GTC representative will have special welcome baskets in the cabins or start each family member with an on-board credit. One group leader from New York sat down with DeCrotie before she got on the bus to go home and told him, "The-pay-one-price-and-get-it-all concept has just amazed my family. When you said that all the food, meeting space, trip planning and accommodations were included, we had our doubts. But here we are off the ship after seven days and you were right. Everything you said was true and now I don't need a vacation when I get home. Your company took all the stress out of moving over 90 people from New York around the Caribbean and back!" Give GTC your parameters, sit back and anticipate what could be the best reunion ever. Contact Group Travel Consultants at 800-829-8841 or www.GoGTC.com.

About the author

Journalist Jacky Runice pens the "Family Travel" column for Chicago's *Daily Herald*, as well as hotel/spa and restaurant reviews for AOL. She is a member of the Midwest Travel Writers Association and mother of three young adventurers who love travel as much as she does.



Multigenerational activities involve all family members.

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Celebrating 60 on the high seas

For Lolly Lovett, September 10th was *not* going to be just another birthday. Lolly was turning 60 and she wanted to celebrate the occasion surrounded by friends and family doing something they all loved: sailing. So she called the Maine Windjammer Association and reserved a ship – an entire ship – for a long weekend.

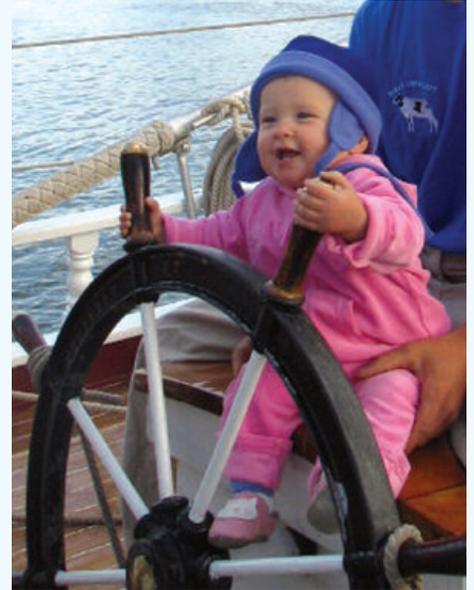
More and more, passengers are chartering entire vessels to celebrate family reunions. Away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life, people have a unique opportunity to become re-acquainted. They can relax and enjoy one another's company aboard historic ships sailing along Maine's rugged coast.

Lovett was concerned about meals for two vegetarians so, prior to departure, she spoke to the head chef, who reassured her they would be able to accommodate guests with a range of dietary concerns. And they do it all from the galley. "What I was impressed with is that everything was made aboard ship: ice cream for my birthday, cookies, cake, just the most incredible tasting food I'd ever had. There was a variety of breads – some had olives, others had herbs; it was just amazing."

The Lovetts set sail with 16 adults and three children. There are no age minimums when you charter a whole windjammer. The musically inclined Lovetts brought a keyboard and found camaraderie with a musical crew and captain who made evenings even more delightful. "The crew was awesome. They were so friendly and helpful. The captain was wonderful and everybody had a great sense of humor," said Lolly.

The Lovetts played an important role in choosing an itinerary. They were always consulted about potential ports of call, well aware that the final choice would depend on wind and weather.

For Lolly's birthday, the crew organized a lobster bake on an uninhabited island.



Sophie Tullar, 10 months old, is Lolly's grand-niece.



Lolly Lovett's birthday party!



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Lobsters were nestled in seaweed and steamed over a campfire on a beach with corn on the cob. "It was the most beautiful experience I've ever had," said Lolly. Once everyone had enjoyed two lobsters and their fill of freshly-made cake and ice cream, the crew cleaned everything up and got everybody back on the boat.

"My family likes to sail, they like to eat, they like to be with family – it was a great reunion. With the exception of hoisting sails, which we love to do, we

didn't have to lift a finger. Wonderful food, wonderful scenery, wonderful weather." Would she do it again for her 70th? "If I'm still mobile and here, yeah sure, why not!"

With passenger capacities ranging from six to 40 guests, the 14 vessels in the Maine Windjammer Association can accommodate most reunions. For a larger group, chartering a second boat is always an option. Contact Maine Windjammer Association, 800-807-WIND; www.sailmainecoast.com.

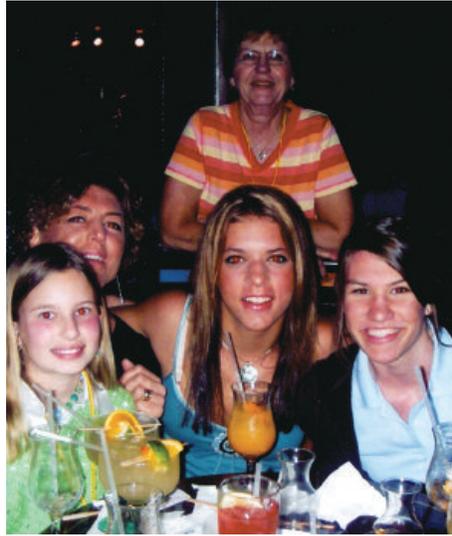
Girlfriends getaway trends

A study of more than 1,500 women nationwide by Royal Caribbean International found that girlfriend reunions are gaining ground. Nearly half (48 percent) have taken a girlfriends-only trip in the past three years.

Royal Caribbean offers all of the top elements women look for in a getaway: new destinations, spa treatments, beach and pool time, great shopping and dining nightlife.

According to the survey, girlfriends on the go are most interested in sharing a special spa retreat (66 percent), beach vacation (65 percent), shopping trip (57 percent), cruise (53 percent) or city visit (42 percent).

The biggest barriers to bringing girlfriends together, according to respondents, are finding a time that works for everyone (85 percent) and selecting a trip to suit all budgets (80 percent). Not in question, however, is how they would pack differently: more money, more makeup and more clothes. Old photos of friends on the trip and current photos of loved ones also are must-haves.



Royal Caribbean also has introduced Royal Reunions, which offers special amenities and activities, including festive stateroom door decorations, Royal Reunions logo gifts, a group photo and group challenges run by the cruise staff. Visit www.royalcaribbean.com or call 800-327-6700.

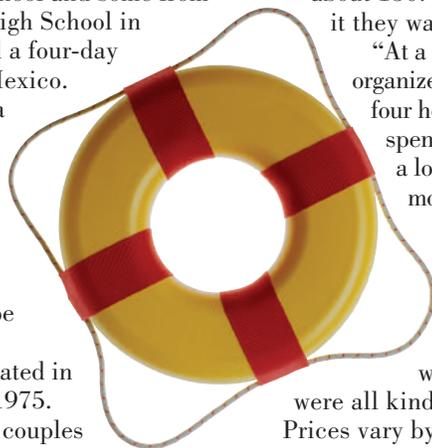
SOURCE Royal Caribbean International

Classmates enjoy sea reunion

About 200 people who graduated from Royal High School and some from rival Simi Valley High School in California attended a four-day cruise reunion to Mexico.

The cruise and a launch party at a restaurant in San Pedro were sponsored by Royal Classes of 1975 and 1976.

"It's a family-type thing," said Diana Prickett, who graduated in the Royal Class of 1975. "There are married couples and singles. "It's a great, great time. It's really a reunion of people who grew up in Simi Valley."



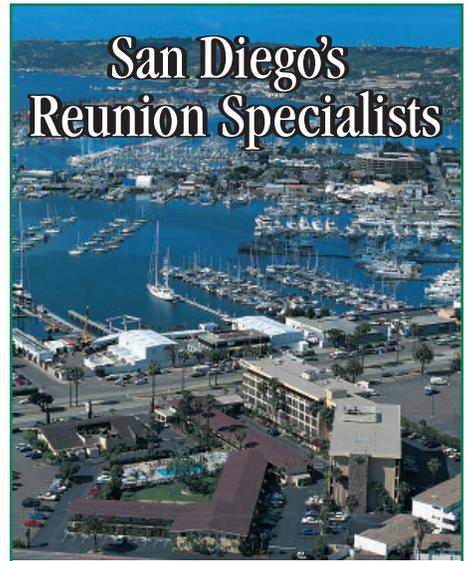
They did a cruise five years ago for about 150. When people heard about it they wanted to get on board.

"At a normal reunion," one of the organizers explained, "you only have four hours. On this you get to spend a lot more time finding out a lot more about people. It's more intimate and relaxing."

They have a private bon voyage party, dancing every night, Saturday in Ensenada, Sunday on the water, and a black-and-white Mardi Gras ball. There were all kinds of activities for kids. Prices vary by room size and location.

From a story by Eric Leach in the *Los Angeles Daily News*, Los Angeles, California.

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Just the facts on old Jax

by Jacky Runice

Whenever I'm traveling among strangers, I invariably end up hanging around with people who are older than I. The young adults are working it hard to charm others their age. And I know the people with the most interesting lives and best sense of humor are the ones who have lived enough to see the world and can still laugh at it all despite adversity and politics. Cities are like that, too, with the oldest metropolises offering character, history and delight. Meet Jacksonville, Florida, one of the oldest cities in the United States.

You really get it all when visiting the largest city in Florida: Skyscrapers, yet the charm and hospitality of the Old South; the largest urban park system in the country and a lively arts scene; NFL Jaguars and NCAA Gator Bowl plus miles of azalea gardens; riverside areas and the Atlantic Ocean. Settled on both sides of the St. John's River, Jacksonville is surprisingly the largest city in land area in the contiguous US. With the ocean 20 miles east of downtown, you can enjoy white sand beaches and bird watching one day and the Jacksonville Museum of Modern Art and cool bistros the next. More and more reunion planners are getting hip to the city "Where Florida Begins." Last year nearly 60 reunion groups reveled in the natural beauty as well as that famous Southern hospitality. What do they know that you don't?

According to Jennifer MacPhee of the Jacksonville & the Beaches Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB), if you're seeking a unique retreat offering many benefits of a premiere Florida destination, you'll find the ideal solution in Jacksonville. "An unmatched adventure in contrast, the sprawling northeast region of Florida delivers a flawless display of breathtaking natural beauty balanced by polished metropolitan flair," MacPhee offered. "Along this stretch of Atlantic coastline, visitors discover an intimate warmth, infinite possibility and the perfect reunion setting. An enormous range of



Family fun at Jacksonville Beach, Florida.

recreational options means there's an activity to satisfy every appetite. The sporting enthusiast can hike, bike, kayak or fish along 21 miles of pristine coastline or take a swing at one of 72 area golf courses. Museums, theatres, shopping and fine dining abound in the Downtown Riverfront district, a perfect locale for leisurely exploration," she added.

The CVB is more than a starting off point for brochures and ideas – it's your personal assistant. "Too often, reunion planners become overwhelmed by the minutiae in the earliest planning stages, contributing to mounting anxiety as the date of the event approaches," MacPhee explained. "The Jacksonville & the Beaches CVB can help by consolidating the details and providing planners with a dedicated representative to walk you through your many responsibilities. From collecting hotel room rates to booking event space and working with a caterer, the CVB relies on years of local experience to make this your best reunion ever. An online services site even allows you to log on and order visitors guides, destination merchandise, city information and photography to use in promoting your event and request a personalized letter of greeting from the Mayor of Jacksonville."

When it was Yvonne Jackson's turn to put together the Tumlin Family Reunion, the CVB rallied 'round her and her

Georgia family. The CVB helped secure rooms at the Embassy Suites Jacksonville for 50. The 150 who attended the Sylvester-Williams-Woods Family Reunion in July slept snugly at the Hilton Jacksonville Riverfront (now called the Crowne Plaza Riverfront Jacksonville) after the CVB helped the reunion coordinator secure the rooms. The family also received visitor packets including pencils, bags and visitors magazines, and CVB staff helped to get a welcome letter from the Mayor's Office.

Not only family reunions find Jacksonville irresistible; the New Stanton High School Class of 1954 saw 100 classmates arrive in October. The CVB helped to secure accommodations at the Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront and to find a location and catering for their luau party.

If some members of your clan want to set up a golf tourney, what better place than home to the PGA Tour headquarters and host of *The Players* Championship? Jacksonville boasts 72 golf courses as well as the World Golf Hall of Fame. You won't have a problem finding the perfect picnic area with 57,373 acres of public parks, including the 46,000 acre Timucuan Ecological & Historic Preserve. Reconnect, reflect and play on some of the 21 miles of stunning coastline.

Others may want to take a day trip to Amelia Island, Cumberland Island, the Kennedy Space Center, or to St. Augustine – the oldest city in the nation. MacPhee suggests some historical touring, too. "The most historically rich region in the state, Jacksonville's Ft. Caroline marks the site of the earliest French colonization attempt in Florida, Kingsley Plantation provides a glimpse of life on a cotton plantation and the Ritz Theatre and La Villa Museum chronicle African-American life in a neighborhood once known as the "Harlem of the South."

Your old friends at the Jacksonville & the Beaches CVB are waiting for your call at 800-733-2668; or see how the CVB's Leisure Group Services can get your reunion up and running at www.jaxcvb.com.



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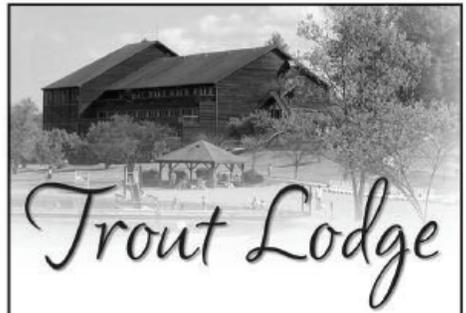
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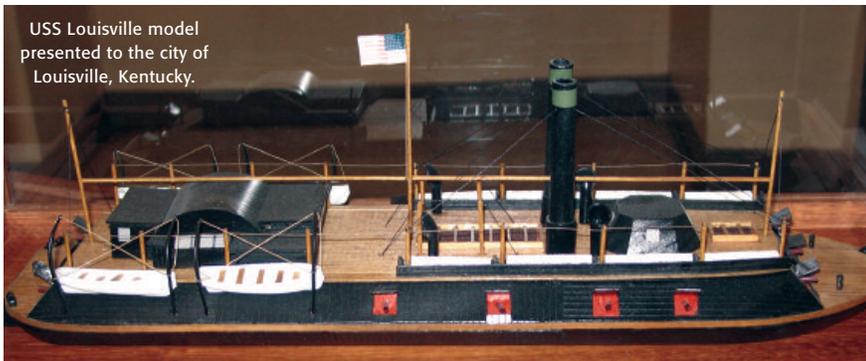
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USS *Louisville* donates Louisville model



USS *Louisville* was home for about 1,300 sailors for four years during World War II. A heavy cruiser launched in 1931, the ship won 13 battle stars for action in the Pacific through 1945, including reclaiming Guam. The *Louisville* survived two hits by Japanese kamikaze pilots; it was decommissioned in 1949 and sold for scrap.

“It was a beautiful ship,” said one of about 40 surviving crew members, most in their mid-80s, in Louisville for their biennial reunion.



A highlight of the reunion was presentation of a 44-inch balsa wood model of USS *Louisville* made by Bill Atteridge, Arcadia, Louisiana, to Louisville Mayor Jerry Abramson. The model is on display at City Hall.

The crew stays in touch through the reunions, a newsletter and phone calls.

From a story by Sheldon S. Shafer in the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Louisville, Kentucky.

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Louisville Mayor Jerry Abramson (center) meeting with USS *Louisville* shipmates.

Air Force memorial dedicated

Three towering spires of the new Air Force Memorial represent a long blue line of heroes who defended the nation from World War I through the global war on terror.

The memorial site in Arlington, Virginia, is on a cliff overlooking the Pentagon. Stainless steel spires, reaching as high as 270 feet, serve as the memorial's centerpiece.

Architect James Ingo Freed, who died last year before seeing his handiwork, designed the spires to emulate the bomb burst maneuver.

The dedication in October was a reunion for many current and former airmen and surviving members of some



Newly dedicated Air Force Memorial commemorates all who served.

of the service's most daring exploits, including Jimmy Doolittle's B-25 raid on Tokyo and the Berlin airlift, which saved thousands when the Soviets blockaded the city after World War II.

The memorial honors current service and predecessor organizations dating to 1907, when the aeronautical division of the US Army Signal Corps was formed. Renamed the Army Air Service in May 1918, it became the third branch of the military in 1947.

For more information, visit airforcememorial.org.

From a report by Dave Montgomery in the *Contra Costa Times*, Contra Costa, California.

60 years after the march

In 1942, 4,000 US forces surrendered the Bataan peninsula on the Philippine Islands to the Japanese. Nearly 60 years after their release from a brutal captivity, only 18 of the camp's prisoners of war survive. Each year, fewer and fewer make it to reunions and most know there won't be many more chances for get-togethers.

Priorities include sharing stories and remembering those who didn't survive the infamous Bataan Death March. Those who emerged were left with haunting memories of being used as slave labor.

Walter Swearingen, commander of American Legion Post 34 in Pasco, Washington, helped set up a recent reunion. He invited a Congressional representative and ordered limousines to pick up the men and their families for the reunion and organized a parade to cheer the survivors. The group also visited the Veterans Hospital in Walla Walla, Washington.

From a story by Andrew Sirocchi in the *Mid Columbia Tri City Herald*, Mid-Columbia, Washington.

Reunion renews bonds formed in war

Six veterans from the 251st Station Hospital met in Moline, Illinois, for an annual reunion. The group began holding reunions 29 years ago with 175 members. Today about 30 are left. The men formed a close bond while they were overseas. "They are closer than brothers," one declared.

They were stationed in New Guinea, New Britain, the Philippines and, finally, Japan from 1943 to January 1946. They were among the first into Japan in 1945, after the atom bomb was dropped.

Dennis Ghre's late father, Jack, from Oklahoma, helped organize the first reunion 29 years ago. Using addresses from 1945, he drove around the country in a van for two years tracking people down. It was important for Jack to get together and share stories.

Dennis learned that if he kept quiet, he could hear the stories his father wouldn't tell at home. They didn't talk much about what they saw, but the images still are fresh in their minds.

From a story by Amy Thon in the *Quad-Cities Online*, Rock Island, Illinois.

Press Release Assistance Guide

Military reunion planners can have a new tool in their efforts to publicize their upcoming events. The Northern Kentucky Convention & Visitors Bureau has developed the *Press Release Assistance Guide* for planners who handle publicity by themselves. The kit contains basic meeting details (who, what, when, where), noted speakers/celebrity attendees, seminar workshop topics to be addressed, news release formats and what makes good and bad releases, dos and don'ts and samples of news releases, photo opportunity releases and media pitch letters.

"Media relations consulting, planning and implementation are free services of the CVB no matter the size of the military reunion group," said Communications Director Pat Frew. "Public relations support is an important tool for planners since it is the most cost-effective way to promote such events."

For more information about the Northern Kentucky CVB *Public Relations Assistance Guide*, call Pat Frew, 859-655-4163; pfrew@nkycvb.com.

Sisters take WWII vets to 60th reunion

Sisters Beverly Borneman, Jefferson Hills, Pennsylvania, and Brenda Sobat, Cranberry Township, Pennsylvania, closed their business for four days to take a group of World War II veterans to their 60th reunion. Their father, William George Mattes, 83, a veteran of the 83rd Infantry, said many of his fellow Army veterans couldn't go to the reunion in Nashville,

Indiana, because they were unable to drive and bus fares were too expensive.

Seven veterans, three wives and the two sisters made the eight-hour trip with frequent breaks and stops. Sobat's husband, Steven, took the luggage in his car.

From a story by Stacy Lee in the *McKeesport Daily News*, McKeesport, Pennsylvania.

Welcome to Reunion Resources!

How to use REUNION RESOURCES

Reunion resources is divided into sections. Reunion friendly places include destinations (convention, visitor and tourism bureaus) and locations (hotels, resorts, ranches, condominiums, bed & breakfasts, inns, dormitories, camps). They are listed alphabetically by state and city. The sections which follow list books and publishing, cruises, fundraising and mementos, invitations, photography, preserving reunions, postcards, and other products and services.

Many resources include e-mail and web page addresses. Start on our web page www.reunionsmag.com and in just one click, go directly to other resource pages – a wonderful way to visit, get more details and in some cases even place orders.

We encourage you to tell the listings you contact that you learned about them from REUNIONS MAGAZINE. And if at any time you find any info that is inaccurate or e-mail or web links do not work, notify us immediately at reunions@execpc.com; PO Box 11727, Milwaukee WI 53211-0727. And by all means, feel free to comment and/or suggest changes and additions you'd like to see in this section.

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SHERATON DOVER HOTEL 1570 North Dupont Hwy, Dover DE 19901. An extensive renovation in 2006 provides a grand setting for your memorable gatherings. Enlarged rooms and extraordinary meeting facilities, enhanced by remodeled lobby and atrium areas, make the Sheraton Dover Hotel the perfect location for every event, from small family get togethers to large military reunions. Call us at 302-678-8500, ext 4293. www.sheratondover.com. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

HYATT REGENCY WASHINGTON ON CAPITOL HILL Located in the heart of Capitol Hill, within walking distance of the U.S. Capitol, Smithsonian Museums, the National Mall and Amtrak's Union Station. Featuring 834 spacious modern guest rooms, including 32 suites, a full-service restaurant, lounge, coffee bar, 41,000 square feet of meeting space, 24-hour Business Center, and Health Club with indoor pool. 400 New Jersey Avenue, NW, Washington DC 20001. 202-737-1234; fax 202-719-8419; saleswasrw@hyatt.com; www.hyattregencywashington.com. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

FLORIDA VACATION HOMES

VACATION POOL HOMES & RESORT CONDOS NEAR DISNEY The largest selection of vacation rentals in the Orlando area. 2 to 6 bedrooms fully furnished and equipped for less than the cost of a hotel room. Let Advantage Vacation Homes assist with your next Orlando family reunion with all the comfort, privacy, and more open spaces for new memories to cherish for a life time. call 1-866-216-5094 or visit www.AdvantageVacationHomes.com. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

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FLORIDA CRUISE

DISCOVERY CRUISE LINE If you're looking for the ultimate in fun for your reunion, you should consider Discovery Cruise Line sailing daily from Ft. Lauderdale to Grand Bahama Island and offering same day roundtrip cruises and Cruise and Stay vacation packages. The price of the cruise includes three lavish buffet meals, entertainment, a Las Vegas-style casino, and more. There's special pricing for kids and teens. Call 1-888-213-1454. www.discoverycruiseline.com. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

FLORIDA

BEST WESTERN OCEAN BEACH HOTEL & SUITES As the closest oceanfront hotel to Port Canaveral's casino cruises, restaurants and clubs, Best Western Ocean Beach Hotel & Suites offers a great location for your reunion. Our staff will make local activity arrangements for you, so you can relax. Call (888) 799-

1631 Linda Ray, Group Sales Manager or visit www.BestWesternCocoaBeach.com to book your reunion now! 5500 Ocean Beach Blvd., Cocoa Beach, Florida 32931 SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

COUNTRY INN & SUITES OF CAPE CANAVERAL 9009 Astronaut Blvd. Cape Canaveral FL 32920 "Closest Hotel to the Port!" 2000 sq. ft. of meeting space. 151 Spacious Guest Rooms, including garden tubs, Children suites & Jacuzzi Suites. Free local calls, free high speed internet, Arcade, Fitness Center, 48,000 gallon salt water/mineral pool, Jacuzzi w/waterfall & Children's pool with large waterfall. FREE Upscale Continental Breakfast! Park & Cruise Package with FREE parking & FREE SHUTTLE!! Come see the difference of staying at the Country Inn & Suites of Cape Canaveral. 321-784-8500; fax 321-784-8500; cx_caf1@countryinns.com; www.Countryinns.com/capecanaveralfl. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

RADISSON RESORT AT THE PORT 8701 Astronaut Blvd., Cape Canaveral FL 32920. The Radisson is located just one mile South of Port Canaveral with free parking and Shuttle to the Port. Choose from a variety of accommodations: Sleep number beds, two-room whirl pool suites and standard rooms available. Enjoy Flamingo's Restaurant and Starbucks Coffee. Also, just minutes to the Port, Kennedy Space Center, Orlando airport, and Orlando attractions. 321-784-0000; 800-333-3333; www.radisson.com/capecanaveralfl. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

RESIDENCE INN CAPE CANAVERAL COCOA BEACH 8959 Astronaut Blvd. Cape Canaveral FL 32920. Enjoy our warm and friendly home-like atmosphere in spacious suites, with fully equipped kitchens and appliances. Open April 2006 this impressive Key West style hotel offers; Heated Pool, Spa, Lounge, Complimentary Full American Breakfast Buffet, Complimentary Weekday Social Hour (Mon-Thu)., Complimentary High Speed Internet Access. www.marriott.com/mlbri; 321-323-1100. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

BEST WESTERN COCOA BEACH 5600 N. Atlantic Avenue, Cocoa Beach FL 32931. Anything you want for your ocean retreat: from Standard Courtyard rooms to private balconies. Enjoy the Durango Steakhouse & Lounge, Poolside Veranda Bar, and just a short walk to Cocoa Beach Pier entertainment. 800-962-0028; 321-783-7621; www.bestwesterncocoabeach.com. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

COMFORT INN & SUITES RESORT & CONFERENCE CENTER 3901 N. Atlantic Avenue, Cocoa Beach FL 32931. Our five acre tropical beachside resort in the heart of Cocoa Beach is just 300 feet to the beach, near Ron Jon's & restaurants. Choose from Ocean & Courtyard view suites, standard rooms and efficiency rooms. Lush courtyard surrounds heated pool, whirlpool, snack bar, outdoor grills & Lagoon Lounge. 321-783-2221; 800-247-2221; www.comfortinncocoabeach.com. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT COCOA BEACH 3435 N. Atlantic Avenue, Cocoa Beach FL 32931. Make this your most memorable stay ever! Sun, Sand, Surf, and Cruise, plus free high speed Internet access, restaurant, lounge, Whirlpool rooms, two-room suites, private balconies, refrigerators, fitness center, heated pool, laundry facilities, and more... 321-784-4800; www.courtyardcocoabeach.com. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

DOUBLETREE OCEANFRONT HOTEL 2080 North Atlantic Avenue, Cocoa Beach FL 32931. This newly renovated oceanfront hotel is located in beautiful Cocoa Beach. All rooms have private balconies, free high speed Internet, refrigerators and microwaves. The Double Tree is also equipped with over 10,000 sq. ft. of meeting space. 321-783-9222; 800-55-Beach; www.cocoabeachdoubletree.com. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

HILTON COCOA BEACH OCEANFRONT 1550 N Atlantic Avenue, Cocoa Beach FL 32931. Take pleasure in the area's largest ocean front pool deck; direct ocean front location on 300 feet of sandy beach. Enjoy the heated pool, Tiki bar, two restaurants, and lounge. This full service hotel has a new large exercise room, high speed Internet, and many more amenities. 800-526-2609; www.hiltoncocoabeach.com. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

HOLIDAY INN COCOA BEACH HOTEL & RESORT OCEANFRONT 1300 N Atlantic Avenue, Cocoa Beach FL 32931. An oceanfront, full service resort, our hotel has a wide selection of accommodations. From standard guest rooms to suites; or upgrade to two-level lofts and villas, you're sure to enjoy your stay with us. Olympic size heated pool, tennis, volleyball courts, and more...1-800-20-Oasis; www.hicentralflorida.com. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

HAMPTON INN COCOA BEACH 3425 N. Atlantic Avenue, Cocoa Beach FL 32931. Guests enjoy direct beach access, breathtaking ocean views, sandy beaches, cruises, historic villages, out of this world space experiences, the World Famous Surf Shop and free high speed Internet. Rooms also include continental breakfast, private balconies, refrigerators, and microwaves; 877-49-Beach; www.hamptoninncocoabeach.com. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

EL CARIBE RESORT & CONFERENCE CENTER 2125 S. Atlantic Ave, Daytona Beach FL 32118. Oceanfront rooms, efficiencies and suites overlooking Daytona Beach. Two outdoor pools (one heated) large kiddie pool and plenty of activities for everyone. Facilities include: reception and banquet rooms with on-site catering. Favorite retreat for groups. Reservations 800-445-9889 or web site: www.elcaribe.com.

LA PLAYA RESORT & SUITES 2500 North Atlantic Ave. Daytona Beach FL 32118. The La Playa Resort provides delightful Daytona accommodations at an affordable price. Upon arrival, you'll be swept away to a tropically decorated room – complete with a microwave, refrigerator, and private balcony. Soft ocean breezes will draw you outside to the large oceanfront pool deck with whirlpools, tiki bar, and shuffleboard. 800-874-6996; fax 386-677-0982; bsmith@oceansresorts.com; www.staydaytona.com.

PERRY'S OCEAN EDGE RESORT 2209 S. Atlantic Avenue, Daytona Beach FL 32118. Located on the quiet side of Daytona Beach, offers spacious ocean front units with two queen beds, sleeper sofa, full kitchens and views of the Atlantic Ocean from your private balcony. Two outdoor pools, indoor heated pool and spa in our atrium. Family oriented activities program. Reservations 800-447-0002 or web site: www.perrysoceanedge.com.

The completely rebuilt **HILTON MELBOURNE BEACH OCEANFRONT** features all oceanfront rooms with private balconies! Complimentary Hi-Speed Internet, Beautiful Banquet Rooms, Oceanfront Restaurant, Lounge, Tiki Bar, Heated Pool, Jacuzzi & Deck. See us at www.melbournebeach.hilton.com, call toll free at 877-843-8786 or e-mail jim_dexheimer@hilton.com. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

THE DOUBLETREE GUEST SUITES hotel features direct oceanfront suites that boast magnificent views from private balconies. Swim in the surf, or admire the ocean from the sundeck surrounding our heated outdoor swimming pool and whirlpool. Quaint shopping and fine restaurants are just minutes away. Very affordable for groups 10-100. Call 800-876-4222 or visit melbournebeachdoubletree.com. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

TUCKAWAY SHORES RESORT "Suites on the Beach." Looking for relaxation and convenience, you are sure to enjoy our Oceanfront boutique hotel. Recipient of prestigious "White Glove Award" by Superior Small Lodgings. Please visit us at www.tuckawayshores.com or call 1-800-820-1441 for more info. See for yourself why we are a Space Coast favorite. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

JACKSONVILLE & THE BEACHES CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU In addition to some of the finest golf and beaches in the country, there are countless recreational activities to enjoy like kayaking, fishing, hiking, or visiting historic forts and museums. The temperature is ideal year-round and you'll find nightlife, great shopping, fine dining and more. There is something to please everyone. For assistance in planning your next reunion, call the Jacksonville & the Beaches Convention and Visitors Bureau at 1-800-340-4444, or log on to visitjacksonville.com. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

KISSIMMEE CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU 1925 East Irlow Bronson Highway, Kissimmee FL 34744. In Kissimmee reunions are our specialty. We offer planning assistance to reunions of all sizes and budgets. Let us help you make planning your next reunion easy. Call for information regarding Kissimmee's meeting venues and services. 407-944-2484; fax 407-847-4114; meet@floridakiss.com; www.floridakiss.com. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

GROSVENOR RESORT 1850 Hotel Plaza Blvd., Lake Buena Vista FL 32830; www.grosvenorresort.com; The Grosvenor Resort is the gateway to your authentic Disney® reunion! As an official Walt Disney Resort®, we are located just steps away from Downtown Disney®, Pleasure Island®, Disney's premier nighttime complex, Planet Hollywood and Disney's West Side. We look forward to pampering you with all of the wonderful things the Grosvenor Resort has to offer you and your reunion! For information call 800-522-3272.

SUPER 8 – Lake City I-75 location just 40 miles from Florida/Georgia border and 2 hours from Orlando. Scenic locale in the freshwater capital of the world. Outstanding scuba and rafting

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nearby. Outdoor Pool with tropical courtyard and picnic area. Featuring Free Breakfast and Free Ice Cream. On-Site Restaurant. Free Wi-Fi. Pet Friendly. Contact Jenette Peek, 386-752-6450, gmsuper8lc@yahoo.com; www.AmericanMotelOnline.com. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

SEMINOLE COUNTY CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU 1230 Douglas Avenue, Suite 116, Longwood, FL 32779. Just a stone's throw away from all the major attractions of Central Florida, and within a 15-minute drive from its more expensive neighbor Orlando, Seminole County is the perfect destination for reunions. With flexible accommodations, dining, shopping, golf and recreation options, Seminole County's charming villages and natural beauty will make your reunion one to remember. Call 800-800-7832 or visit www.visitseminole.com. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

CROWNE PLAZA MELBOURNE OCEANFRONT WELCOME From the moment you arrive at Brevard's premier oceanfront hotel, you will be amazed. The hotel has 272 brand new rooms including 17 Oceanfront and 28 Full Kitchenette Suites. Coming in spring of 2007 the hotel will offer a kid's program with a full array of children's and adult scheduled activities. The Crowne Plaza Melbourne Oceanfront is truly Brevard's premier family reunion destination. For more information call 321-777-4100 or visit www.crowneplaza.com. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

EMBASSY SUITES/MIAMI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT 3974 NW South River Drive, Miami, FL 33142. 305-634-5000; fax 305-635-9499; barbara_raza@hilton.com; www.miamiairport.embassysuites.com.

VALU-LODGE – New Port Richey US 19 location in the city of New Port Richey. Convenient to all local attractions including beaches, charter fishing, casino and fun cruises. 118 rooms with 17 kitchenettes. Outdoor pool with BBQ grills. Pet Friendly. Contact Michele Tanner 727-849-8868, Valulodge0118@aol.com; www.AmericanMotelOnline.com. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

PANAMA CITY BEACH FLORIDA 1000 condos and hotel rooms, 40,000+ square feet of indoor conference space and the areas best collection of outdoor beachfront and bay front pavilions. All units include FREE daily maid service. Book your next reunion with Getaway to the Gulf. 800-224-GULF, www.getawaytothegulf.com.

VALU-LODGE – Panama City 1 mile east of Hathaway Bridge on Highway 98. World's most beautiful beaches just 5 miles away. 110 rooms with 36 two-room apartments and 14 mini-suites. Huge Game Room. Pet Friendly. Contact Gail Brown 850-754-6000, Valul05@comcast.net; www.AmericanMotelOnline.com. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

PENSACOLA CONVENTION & VISITOR BUREAU 1401 East Gregory Street, Pensacola FL 32502. Pensacola, Florida is the perfect location for your group's next reunion. Whether it's a family reunion, a military reunion, or a get-together with friends, Pensacola's mild climate, stunning beaches, and divine coastal cuisine provide the perfect setting for an exciting and memorable reunion. 800-474-1234; fax 850-432-8211; lorvis@visitpensa.com; www.visitpensa.com. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

COMFORT SUITES – WORLD GOLF VILLAGE 475 COMMERCE LAKE DR, ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA 32092; 877-940-9501; Adjacent to World Golf Village, visitors have convenient access to area courses, the IMAX Theater, and the World Golf Hall of Fame. All 162 luxurious suites come equipped with desks, microwaves, refrigerators, coffee-makers, two telephones, and high-speed Internet access. A heated indoor pool, exercise facility, outdoor pool, whirlpool, and sundeck round out the hotel's recreational facilities. Enjoy an upscale continental break-fast and drinks at the popular Mulligan Pub in the evening. Group discounts available. www.cswgv.com or comfortsuites@bellsouth.net.

TAMPA MARRIOTT WESTSHORE 310 well-appointed rooms. Health club, whirlpool, game room and Tampa's largest indoor/outdoor pool. Westshore Grill and Champions Sports Bar. Newly renovated meeting space. Pool deck is ideal for tropical cocktail parties. Convenient location, deluxe accommodations, versatile function space and first-class service. 1001 N. Westshore Blvd., Tampa, FL 33607; 813.287.2555; fax 813.287.0561; www.marriott.com/TPAW.

FLORIDA'S SPACE COAST Orlando's Closest Beaches, 72 miles of Atlantic Beaches. The Ultimate Florida Vacation! Attractions, including Kennedy Space Center, shopping, dining, accommodations and recreation on land or sea. All very affordable for groups from 30 to 300. Reunite on the Space Coast and create a memorable experience you'll cherish for a lifetime. Call 877-57-BEACH or visit www.space-coast.com. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

GEORGIA

ALPHARETTA CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU 3060 Royal Boulevard South, Alpharetta GA 30022; 678-297-2811; fax 678-297-9197; anna@awesomealpharetta.com; www.awesomealpharetta.com. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

HILTON ATLANTA AIRPORT 1031 Virginia Avenue, Atlanta GA 30354. Hilton Atlanta Airport is a AAA Four-Diamond property with all of the amenities necessary to make your reunion a success. Complimentary airport shuttle, 504 upscale guestrooms, indoor & outdoor pools with whirlpool, basketball court, three on-site restaurants, Starbucks® and Krispy Kreme® lobby pavilion with easy access to Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport and downtown. For more information contact Travell Williams at 404-559-6831; travell_williams@hilton.com; www.atlantaairport.hilton.com.

ATLANTA ATTRACTION

GEORGIA AQUARIUM 255 Baker Street, Atlanta Georgia 30313. The Georgia Aquarium is the world's largest with more than 8 million gallons of water and more than 100,000 animals including whale sharks, the world's largest fish species. Host your reunion event in the Ocean's Ballroom, the city's newest and most unique environment for special events with catering provided by Wolfgang Puck Catering. Group ticketing is available for groups of 25 people or more. For more information contact Paul Selby at 404-581-4451 or log on to georgiaaquarium.org. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

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CALLAWAY GARDENS RESORT offers exciting activities and seasonal events for all ages, plus exceptional accommodations and cuisine. Golf, tennis, butterfly center, biking, fishing and much more! Ask about our remarkable reunion packages when you call. U.S. Highway 27, Pine Mountain, GA 31822; 800-543-7121; sales@callawaygardens.com; www.callawaygardens.com.

IDAHO

Great family fun! Boise offers the culture and entertainment of a large urban area in a place that feels a little like everyone's hometown. Festivals, whitewater rafting, golf, riverfront bike trails, downhill and cross country skiing, unique and historic attractions, a vibrant downtown, shopping, fine dining and performing arts will ensure a reunion jam-packed with memorable experiences. **BOISE CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU** PO Box 2106, Boise ID 83701; Lisa Edens; 800-635-5240; 208-344-7777; fax 208-344-6236; BOISE...Feel It!

ILLINOIS

CHICAGO MARRIOTT SUITES DEERFIELD Two Parkway North, Deerfield, IL 60015. 248 all-suite hotel off of Tri-State Tollway. High-speed Internet access. Indoor & Outdoor pool, healthclub, whirlpool and sauna. Complimentary parking. Basil's Kitchen & Bar on site for Mediterranean cuisine. Convenient to downtown Chicago, Six Flags, golf, shopping, Botanic Gardens and other area attractions. (847) 405-9666; www.marriottsuitesdeerfield.com. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

RECONNECT IN LAKE COUNTY Lake County's natural spaces and fun places are the perfect place for your next reunion. Our world-class attractions and more than 50 lodging properties will make your next reunion a resounding success. For free Reunion Planning Assistance call 1-800-Lake-Now or email us with your reunion planning questions to tourism@lakecounty.org; www.lakecounty.org. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

IOWA

GREATER DES MOINES CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU 400 Locust Street, Ste 265, Des Moines IA 50309; 800-451-2625; fax 515-244-9757; kboisen@desmoinescvb.com; www.DesMoines.com.

KENTUCKY

ELIZABETHTOWN/FT. KNOX From military reunions to family reunions, Elizabethtown is the place to share memories & make new memories, too! Freeman Lake Park; the Patton Museum; antique & boutique shopping; the Coca-Cola Museum; historic sites. Intersection of I-65 and the Bluegrass Parkway. Elizabethtown Tourism & Convention Bureau, 800-437-0092; www.TourEtown.com. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

SHEPHERDSVILLE/BULLITT COUNTY TOURIST & CONVENTION COMMISSION 395 Parquet Springs Drive, PO Box 520, Shepherdsville KY 40165-0520. In a region of knobs, hollows and beautiful limestone springs, folks in this area share stories of pioneering ingenuity. Visit true beauty and experience all we have to offer in Bullitt County. Bernheim Arboretum & Research Forest, Sycamore Ridge, Slow Poke Farm and Jim Beam's American Outpost. 800-526-2068; www.travelbullitt.org.

MAINE

SAMOSET RESORT 220 Warrenton Street, Rockport ME 04856; 877-237-3610; fax 207-594-0048; info@samoset.com; www.samosetresort.com.

MASSACHUSETTS

FALMOUTH INN CAPE COD 824 Main Street, Falmouth MA 02540; 800-255-4157; fax 508-540-9256; falinn@cape.com; www.falmouthinn.com.

MICHIGAN

KALAMAZOO COUNTY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU 346 W. Michigan Avenue, Kalamazoo MI 49007. Discover Hospitality. With a diverse and rich community culture, Kalamazoo is an ideal destination for reunions, offering more than 2,600 affordable hotel rooms, and one of a kind attractions. As well as recreation, dining and shopping for every preference and budget. A short drive or 30 minute plane ride from either Chicago or Detroit, we invite you to Discover Kalamazoo. Easy to get to. Hard to leave. 800-530-9192; fax 269-343-0430; smonroe@kalamazoochamber.com; www.discoverkalamazoo.com.

BAY POINTE INN & RESTAURANT 11456 Marsh Road, Shelbyville MI 49344. Rated one of MI's Top Resorts, Bay Pointe features elegant accommodations, exceptional service & extraordinary dining on Gun Lake. The Inn offers 38 beautiful guestrooms, indoor pool, whirlpool, fitness area, nightly movies w/popcorn & a private conference room. Located conveniently in the heart of Southwest MI where local attractions include: Yankee Springs State Park, Gilmore Car Museum, golf & shopping. 269-672-8111; fax 269-672-5970; info@baypointe.com; www.baypointeinn.com.

MINNESOTA

THE GREATER MINNEAPOLIS CONVENTION & VISITORS ASSOCIATION can help plan your reunion in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area. We'll take a one-stop-shop approach to your family, class or military reunion. Let us secure bids for hotel accommodations, suggest banquet facilities, provide info on city tours and transportation and help secure special discounts at area attractions. Best of all – it's all free! 800-445-7412 ext. 8114; patic@minneapolis.org; www.minneapolis.org/reunions. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

RADISSON HOTEL AND CONFERENCE CENTER 3131 Campus Drive, Plymouth MN 55441. 763-559-6600; (fax) 763-559-7516; sales@rhccmeetings.com; www.rhccmeetings.com.

MISSISSIPPI

HISTORIC DAYS INN – Natchez A special place to rest and relax in an area world-renowned for antebellum homes, historical treasures and antiques. Landscaped Patio, Special Movie Star Rooms. Outdoor Pool, Meeting space. Specializing in Group Tours. Contact Tammy Gossett 601-445-8291, Tammydays@aol.com; www.AmericanMotelOnline.com. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

TUPELO CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU P.O. Drawer 47, Tupelo MS 38802; 800-533-0611; fax 662-841-6558; kpenny@tupelo.net; www.tupelo.net. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

MISSOURI

THE BRANSON/LAKES AREA CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU Located in America's heartland, Branson, Missouri is the perfect destination for your next reunion because we offer so many choices of entertainment, lodging, attractions, dining and more. Remember, in Branson, our value is unrivaled, our scenery breathtaking and our time-honored Ozarks hospitality inviting. Call us toll free at 800-636-8573 or visit our website at explorebranson.com and request a 2007 Reunion Planner Sales kit. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

TROUT LODGE is located in Potosi, Missouri, just 90 minutes south of St. Louis, and offers guest rooms, loft suites & cabins, with activities including archery, arts & crafts, kids club, pontoon tours, Cowboy Campfires, climbing towers, hayrides, 18-hole golf course, caving and much more! Rates include lodging, meals & most activities. 573-438-2154; www.troutlodge.org. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

CATALOG OF REUNION RESOURCES

DAYS INN 2781 Veterans Memorial Parkway, St. Charles MO 63303, 636-949-8700, Fax 636-946-8996, www.daysinnscharles.com. The St. Charles Days Inn offers 114 spacious guest rooms full of amenities complemented by friendly service and a relaxed atmosphere. Within walking distance to shopping & restaurants, 2 miles to Historic District, Ameristar Casino & The St. Charles Convention Center. Onsite bus parking. Enjoy 2 large meeting rooms totaling 1200+ square feet. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

SUPER 8 MOTEL 3040 W. Clay, St. Charles MO 63301, 636-946-9992, Fax 636-724-9992, www.super8.com. 52 comfortable, clean rooms. Indoor pool. Free Continental Breakfast. Cable TV/HBO. 3 miles to Bass Pro Shop, 8 miles to St. Louis International Airport. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

ADAM'S MARK HOTELS 11330 Olive Blvd. St. Louis MO 63141; 314-567-9000; 314-567-5485; tmonroe@adamsmark.com; www.adamsmark.com. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

MILLENNIUM HOTEL ST. LOUIS 200 South 4th Street, St. Louis MO 63102. Affordable elegance located in the heart of downtown St. Louis overlooking the Gateway Arch. Highlights include a rooftop revolving restaurant, a three-story glass wall in the lobby overlooking the Arch and riverfront and banquet space for up to 2,000 attendees. Military reunion packages from \$79 including parking and free hospitality suite. 314-516-8113; fax 314-516-9310; www.millenniumhotels.com/stlouis.

ST. LOUIS CONVENTION & VISITORS COMMISSION One Metropolitan Square, Suite 1100, St. Louis MO 63102; 800-916-9314. Explore St. Louis with your reunion group and discover hundreds of great family, sports and cultural attractions, a thousand one-of-a-kind restaurants and an exciting nightlife and music scene. The Gateway City also boasts a central location, a range of plentiful accommodations and numerous free world-class attractions. Call today for a free Reunion Planner Kit and see why St. Louis is the best reunion destination in the Midwest. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD! www.explorestlouis.com.

MONTANA

MONTANA'S FLATHEAD VALLEY is the gateway to Glacier National Park and home to Flathead Lake and Big Mountain Ski Resort with an abundance of recreation and cultural treasures. Discover picturesque towns, championship golf, museums, galleries, shopping, fine cuisine and true western hospitality. Flathead CVB, 15 Depot Park, Kalispell, MT 59901; 800-543-3105; fax 406-257-2500; fcvb@fcvb.org; www.montanasflatheadvalley.com SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

NEVADA

HORIZON CASINO RESORT Lake Tahoe is located on the beautiful South Shore of Lake Tahoe. Enjoy golf, skiing, or the beach, each located just minutes away. 539 deluxe rooms including luxury suites offer spectacular views of Lake Tahoe and the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Three restaurants allow you to choose from buffet to gourmet. Enjoy 24 hour gaming, cabaret shows, free live music & dancing, arcade, and an 8-plex movie theater. Horizon Casino Resort Lake Tahoe, 50 Highway 50, PO Box C, Lake Tahoe NV 89449; Ruby Turner, Director of Sales, 866.478.8463 or 775.588.6211; fax: 775.588.7761; sales@horizoncasino.com; www.horizoncasino.com.

HAWTHORN SUITES AT DESERT ROSE RESORT 5051 Duke Ellington Way, Las Vegas NV, 89119; Phone 800-811-2450, Fax 702-597-3345; Spacious one and two bedroom suites; Each room is beautifully decorated; Property features a hot breakfast each morning and Managers Cocktail Reception Mon.-Thurs.; location is just minutes from the famous Las Vegas Strip, McCarran Airport, and just off I-15; Resort consists of 276 suites in addition to newly refurbished pool and Jacuzzi with BBQ facilities and shaded seating; This property makes for a perfect reunion of any kind. Email: sales@desertroseresort.com; www.desertroseresort.com

IMPERIAL PALACE HOTEL & CASINO 3535 Las Vegas Blvd South, Las Vegas NV 89109; 702-794-3286; fax 702-794-3368. Center "Strip" location and moderate prices make staying at the Imperial Palace Las Vegas memorable! Everything for a reunion-vacation is here, free, covered parking, value-priced menus, "Legends in Concert", The Auto Collections, on-site medical clinic, beauty salon and "The Spa", friendly staff and more. Imperial Players receive free rooms, comps and merchandise. ip@imperialpalace.com; www.imperialpalace.com. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

CIRCUS CIRCUS HOTEL & CASINO - RENO 500 N. Sierra Street, Reno NV 89503; 800-894-3588; www.circusreno.com. SEE OUR DISPLAY AD!

NEW HAMPSHIRE

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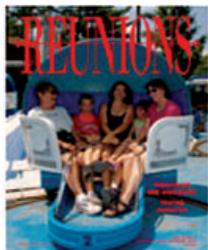
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