Family Reunion

PLANNING GUIDE

Presented By:

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Family Reunion Planning Guide

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CELEBRATE YOUR FAMILY

Celebrate your heritage Whether you are of Irish, Italian, African, Hispanic, Polish, or Asian descent, this is an excellent time to share the history of your family with the family.
Use this time also to capture additional information from other family member There is no better way to catch up with your relatives and discover the many wonderful things that your family has achieved.
Just think of the stories about your forefathers journey, their trials, their victories... Your heritage.
Now think about all the wonderful things you and your relatives are doing now...thats your future history.

Organize A Planning Committee

1) Talk to family members or send out an email for volunteers who may have a passion to make this family reunion happen: .
Involving the rest of your family in the planning process can make it easier for you to make your reunion a success.
It may also be necessary to establish some subcommittees once you have some idea of how large and how long your reunion will run.
Some of the committees you may want to add are:

a) Finance committee
b) Food committee
c) Family history committee
d) Location selection committee
e) Fund raising committee
f) Tee shirt and gift committee
g) Program/activities committee
h) Communications committee
i) Cleanup committee

Other committee members should be added as needed.
If funds permit you may also consider a professional events planner to run your reunion.

Every Reunion Needs A Leader

Appoint a project manager/coordinator for the event.
(We don't recommend doing this alone. There may be times when the loving support of the team will be welcome. Besides, you don't really want to go crazy by yourself!)
Immediately appoint someone for the following duties:

a) secretary for mailings
b) a treasurer

TIP:
Delegate responsibility and stick to your decisions. Too many changes will begin to cause confusion.

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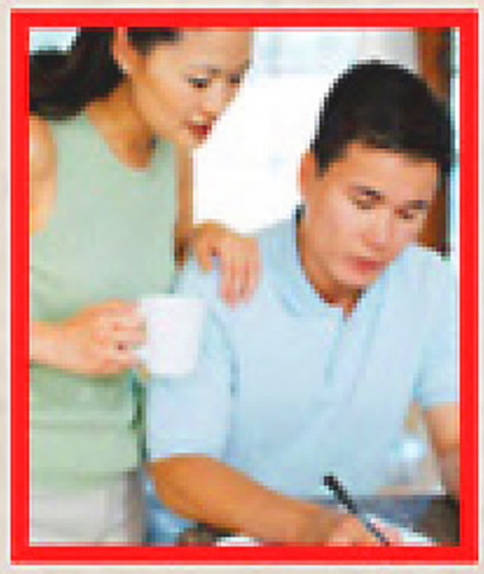
Make A List



Make a master list /contact your family. You may want to Google the internet to locate family reunion planner software. If not, create your own database and spreadsheet on your computer to help track and keep accurate records. Create a family file for now and for future use to include:
Names, addresses, telephone numbers, email, on and web address, occupations.
Note the standing in the family, for example, second cousin, great uncle, etc. Also, special interests, for example hobbies, spare time activities, and special recognition awards etc. Consult close family and distant relatives asking for names and addresses Make a list of family members, including spouses, partners and children. Notify the extended family that "we're all going to get together." Get contact information for all the people your list. Use older family members as precious sources of information. Look through family albums, old letters, etc. For addresses. Don't forget to get email addresses, this will help with your communications. Later send official invitations, with relevant information, directions and a map.

Plan And Organize Early

Beginning 18 to 24 months is best. 12 months is good. Less than 6 months is going to be very busy, but it can be done.
Use a personal ad in local papers telling of the reunion and to track down lost relatives. Place reunion listings on website's like www.reunionsmag.com, and www.familyreunion.com. Send an initial mailing to gauge interest and preferences and to ask for help with planning. Keep a reunion notebook.(to help you keep things straight)
If you keep good notes, this will greatly reduce misunderstandings and identify duties and responsibilities. Someone must maintain a written record of when and what was said and any updates.
Recruit a liaison for each branch of the family (by city or state) to:

I. Keep each branch up to date.
II. Coordinate the attendees and maybe even collect monies as a group.
III. Relay information from the main organizers to each of the branches. Now that you've done the who, it's time to determine the what, when, where, how, and how much.

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What Kind Of Reunion?

Start by talking to your family about what type of reunion you may want. How much preparation is involved? How large is your family? How many members will be invited?

a) Will it be a weekend event or day event?
b) Barbeque / picnic event
c) Banquet (formal or casual)
d) Will this be a "vacation destination"(Disney, Las Vegas, Cruise, etc.) or in town.
e) Decide how long you want the reunion to last and where you may have it. For a one day reunion, not as much planning Is required.

Many reunions, however, are held over a 2-3 day weekend. Depending on these factors, you can now decide on how much time you will need to plan your reunion.

TIP: Include close family in deciding the kind of reunion. They may have ideas that never crossed your busy mind.

When To Have It!

Choose a date when most people can attend. Summer months are often ideal, since children are usually on summer break. Three-day weekends give out-of-town relatives time to travel. Be aware that dates around major holidays fill up quickly, so don't delay too long. Remember to send any hotel info. Making part of your reunion a pot-luck dinner or picnic can help to keep the costs low. Avoid making costs prohibitively high.

FACT: Summer is the most popular time for family reunions with Memorial Day, the 4th of July and Labor Day being the most popular dates.

Where To Have It!

Visit reunion sites - such as hotels, halls and country clubs - and reserve one early (some of these have virtual sites on the web. This is fine for a preliminary viewing but it does not replace a live visit.) Don't forget about campgrounds , churches and halls. They may have space you can rent. Check with the local Convention and visitors bureau. They can be a great resource for planning your reunion.

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What Activities?

Like most family gatherings, your reunion will probably revolve around good food. That's the one thing that everyone will be looking forward to. But what about the rest of the time? Play games that get a lot of family members involved. Old standbys are: baseball, volleyball, touch football. Others might enjoy a card game tournament such as: bid wist, poker, ,spades, etc. or board game tournaments, like dominos, Jenga and others.

Bring awards or prizes for the winners. Plan trips to the zoo, museums or how about family team bowling. Make sure you have lots of music to set the mood and to let people dance. Give the adults a chance to chat while the children play in a designated area stocked with safe games and other things for them to do. Place a trust worthy adult in this area to help out. (Don't forget to relieve them from time to time.)

The Food

Determine the menu - perhaps one that celebrates your family's heritage or reflects the theme of your reunion. Make the food choices fun, remember they are all here to enjoy each other and the food should reflect that. Themes can be fun, they can enhance your reunion with costumes and party favors. Find a caterer or restaurant that can supply food for the event. Or have a potluck dinner/ BBQ or find the great cooks in the family to cook the food you choose. Check with your family about food allergies or aversions when you choose the food. Arrange special meals for anyone that needs it. Plan social activities for the reunion - icebreaker games, sports, contests and talent shows. Include activities that will appeal to all ages.) Buy prizes for your games or for distinctions such as oldest family member or longest distance traveled to attend. Start this prize buying early so that you can catch sales. You may be able to get promotional items from businesses and other organizations to give away.

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Other Important Stuff

Don't forget the ever popular tee shirt memento. This t-shirt provides a sense of family unity and is the one item that outwardly connects everyone. A reputable family reunion t-shirt printer will have a wide selection of designs to choose from that you can customize with your reunions' specific information. Plan to get a different t-shirt every year (no one wants to see you in the same shirt every year!)

Also consider other great tokens such as caps or visors, tote/carry bags, sport bottles and address/note books and ink pens. They look great and will bring back fond memories when you see them. Appoint a family historian to take photographs or videos during the event. These photos and videos can be sold after the event, so take orders. This is a great way to make money to defray unexpected costs or to become seed money for the next family reunion or event.

FACT: Creating a family reunion t-shirt creates a keepsake item that can be worn to remember a fantastic reunion. Because of this, 90% of all family reunions order commemorative t-shirts.

How Much

Develop a budget and decide how much money each family will need to contribute. Try to include everything in the cost per person including the t-shirt. You may want to set up a special checking account to keep track of your revenues and expenditures. Do exclude the lodging and travel as that will be arranged per family. As soon as you have a budget let the family know the cost. Ask for a check from each family for its part of the reunion expenses. Give them a deadline for their reunion cost. You should have three (3) deadlines. The first one is the deposit. (get this early because you have a lot to do.) The second is the pressure deadline, don't tell them that there is another deadline. (it should be 30 to 45 days before the reunion.) The third is the final deadline, this is for the slow family members. The numbers at this deadline tell you how many to plan for and what you can afford to do. This should be 10 to 15 days before the reunion.

TIP: Keep the reunion as affordable as possible to maximize the amount of attending relatives.

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Prepare For The Big Event

The day before, write a list of last minute details. Have the committee members arrive ahead of time. Make sure your committee members know where they should be and have everything they need. If you're using a restaurant, or hotel half an hour may be sufficient. However if you are using a park or supplying the food, you may need 1-2 hours to make sure food is there, equipment is setup, decorations and signs are in place etc. Once that is done, let them do their jobs. (they know what to do.)

Enjoy The Day

Congratulations the day is here. As the project manager your job is to lead and let the committee leaders lead their staff . You should oversee the reunion, greet the family, talk to people, keep the reunion moving, and enjoy the day.

Clean it up

Make sure that you bring all the things you need for a speedy clean up. Your check list should include brooms, buckets, plastic bags, rags and your favorite cleaner.
Don't forget water if your reunion is in a park. Make sure that your clean up committee returns all rented equipment.

Finale

a. Establish a tradition.
b. Start a family newsletter.(use those email addresses)
c. Plan the next reunion.(the dates happen very fast)
d. Do not let it stop here. (its your family, its your history)
e. Keep in touch with the relatives with whom you reconnect at the reunion.

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REUNION CHECKLIST

6–8 WEEKS BEFORE THE REUNION

- ☐ Set a budget.
- ☐ Choose the type of reunion (buffet, sit-down dinner, cocktail, and so on).
- ☐ Select a theme (formal, costume, and so on).
- ☐ Decide on the date, time, and place.
- ☐ Make reservations for facilities, caterers, photographers, and other service providers.
- ☐ Prepare a guest list with addresses and phone numbers.
- ☐ Make or purchase invitations.

3–4 WEEKS BEFORE THE REUNION

- ☐ Order t-shirts and other stuff.
- ☐ Address and mail invitations.
- ☐ Plan food and beverages to serve.
- ☐ Arrange for extra help, such as a bartender, cook, server, or babysitter.
- ☐ Think about supplies you'll need, such as extra chairs, dishes, and napkins.
- ☐ Order flowers.
- ☐ Think about what you'll wear to the reunion. Try the outfit on to ensure that it fits and is in good condition.

1–2 WEEKS BEFORE THE REUNION

- ☐ Call to confirm all orders and extra help (photographer, bartender, cook, server, baby-sitter).
- ☐ Create an attending guest list from the RSVPs you received.
- ☐ Add extra coat hangers to your closet for guests' coats.

THE DAY BEFORE THE REUNION

- ☐ Clean your home or yard.
- ☐ Set out supplies and dishes for the reunion.
- ☐ Check out your furniture arrangement and general decor. Move any items that are breakable or in the way.
- ☐ Create a time chart for the day of the reunion and list tasks with their estimated ☐ completion times. This is helpful for anyone who is helping with the final reunion setup and preparation.

REUNION TIMELINE

	# OF MONTHS IN ADVANCE							
	1 or less	3	4 - 5	6 - 8	9-11	12-14	18-24	Things to Consider or Ask
BEACH PARTY	X							JUNE-SEPT IN MOST CASES
POTLUCK/CATE	X							
RELIGIOUS	X							
MUSEUM	X		X					TRAVELING EXHIBIT
TASTE OF THE	X							
TV STUDIO	X							
T-SHIRTS	X							
GAME SHOW				X		X		
THEME PARKS	X		X					ASK ABOUT SPECIAL EVENTS/CONCERTS
ADULT GAME ROOMS	X							MAY HAVE AGE RESTRICTION/DRESS CODE
DANCE PARTY			X					DON'T FORGET THE DJ
BOAT TOUR	X							
BUS TOUR	X							
BOWLING	X							AVOID TOURNAMENT SEASONS
SKATING	X							CONSIDER ICE SKATING INDOOR/OUTDOOR
HUNTING		X						
FISHING		X						
CAMPING		X						
GUEST				X				
HALL				X				
HOTEL				X				AVOID HOLIDAYS OR ALLOW MORE NOTICE
CONCERT		X						
PLAY		X						
NBA GAME				X				SEASONAL?
BASEBALL								SEASONAL?
SOCCER GAME								SEASONAL?
NHL								SEASONAL?
OLYMPICS							X	
SKIING		X						
CRUISE						X		ALLOWS TIME TO MAKE PAYMENTS/AIRFARE
FUNDRAISERS				X		X		

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VISIT US ONLINE @ WWW.REUNIONTEES.COM

Easy Ordering Process

Over 100 Designs To Choose From

Visit www.ReunionTees.com for your family reunion t-shirts and other items like tote bags, sports bags, caps and just about anything else you need to show off your pride as you spend that special time with your family.

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