

Helpful Hints to starting your Class Reunion

Start Early

Get organized at least twelve months before the event if possible. Send out your first mailing, even just a post card, 8 to 10 months early and pick the event date. This allows you time to get organized and allows classmates time to plan their travel and vacations. Be sure to update your records after the event.

Establish committees

You'll need to share the responsibilities with several classmates. Don't have one person try to do too many tasks. You'll need to address the following:

- **Class Secretary;** is responsible for maintenance of classmate roster and administrative correspondence and keeps records of committee meetings.
- **Treasurer;** is responsible for collecting and disbursing funds. You should set up separate checking account for your class; many banks will do this for free. You may want to use two-signature checks to help keep track of the money (Yes, there can be a security problem, don't take chances. Besides, this helps insure that someone else is aware of what has been paid for and the amounts involved.)
- **Promotion and Advertising:** You'll need someone that likes to work with the media, newspaper, radio, bulletin boards, etc. Establish a calendar of promotion activities. Use local newspaper, radio and TV. You may have to form a telephone committee to search for missing classmates. Have Reicher place a link on the web page and keep it updated
- **Facilities and Catering;** The best place to use is St. Joseph's Hall and the Deering Center on the Reicher Campus. The cost is minimal and will be a great opportunity to tour the school. However, you still may want to assign a person responsible for this to research costs and availabilities of local establishments including types and costs of meals. During the summer, Reicher facilities are very busy with special events and class reunions. Be sure to consider special access and diet requirements. You'll probably have to sign a contract and make a sizable cash deposit to reserve your event. Many places book events over one year in advance. Start early so you aren't disappointed.
- **Decorations:** The person responsible for decorations will have to create a theme for the event and accentuate this theme throughout the facilities. You can use balloons, posters, crepe paper, objects suspended from ceiling, table center pieces, chair coverings, banners (inside and outside the building) other table decorations, special effects. Collect yearbooks and photos from everyone. Maybe someone kept all the newspaper clippings of your senior year and can make a booklet for everyone.

- **Special Events:** Additional events are a nice way to stretch out the reunion. The most common complaint you will get about your reunion is "We didn't have enough time to visit with everyone I wanted to". Provide special events to enhance the experience. The local classmates and those arriving in town early might like a (simple) hospitality reception on Friday evening (assuming your big event is on Saturday evening). Some choose to have a picnic during the day on Saturday. Try to provide activities for the younger children. Saturday evening could begin with hospitality (cocktail hour) during an extended check-in time. Have an official greeter to help with introductions of guests get people into the spirit early. Provide nametags at all events. A golf outing is also a great way close the weekend.

- **Program Chairman:** The program chairman has a very large responsibility. You must plan the evening's events and then provide a printed program with the events and class roster. (The program should also include committee contact information. This provides classmates a chance to update your class roster if they should move to a new address or re-marry). The following events are typical:
 - Invocation

 - Introduction Offer a welcome to everyone and then praise for the committee(s) (lavish praise - they have worked hard and they burn out easily),

 - Special awards: (be careful not to offend anyone)
 - Married: longest/most often
 - Children: most/oldest/youngest
 - Traveled furthest

 - Music: The music chairman should choose type of music, such as: disc jockey, band and, vocalist, background piano or harp. Don't spend a lot of your money on music expecting everyone wants to dance. They came to visit. Background music can be very conducive to visiting and it can be a lot cheaper.

 - Memories: The memories chairman should provide a poster board for those "old" photos and other memorabilia such as ticket stubs, prom programs, newspaper clippings, yearbooks, and school newspapers. (contact the school librarian for scrapbooks and other memorabilia)

 - Scholarships and charity: The chairman of scholarships can help share your excess funds back to your high school for such items as:
 - Trophy Display Case
 - Athletic Program Support
 - Web Page Support
 - Trade School or College Scholarship

Location Reservation Reserve your location one year in advance, get a contract with estimate of food costs. Facilities are usually "free" when facilities catering are used. Check costs of bar tenders and cost of drinks.

Banquet Format Banquets with tables of "8" are traditional but time consuming. Consider an all-day event with constant supply of food. This allows more visiting.

Name badges are very important. Try to pre-print them so that they are legible.

- Use large print
- Include yearbook photo if possible (this is the person we remember from 25 or 50 years ago).

Invite Teachers and Staff Teachers love to come to these events, don't be discriminatory - try to invite all of your teachers, principals, guidance counselors, coaches, etc. If possible offer a reduced rate for banquet and free for other events (dance, picnic etc.)

Keep accurate records Eventually your class secretary/treasurer disappears (death, job changes, divorce, etc.) Keep track of costs, contacts for catering/music etc.

If you expect more than 100 classmates plus guests consider having an off-duty policeman or security guard. This usually is not very expensive. You never know what might happen, let someone else "keep the peace" so you can relax and have a good time.

Review Afterwards; conduct a review of the event within one week while things are still fresh. Make a list of things you could do differently next time. Add new members to your various committees. If possible select date for next reunion. Send mailing to all classmates that did not attend to tell them what they missed and when the next event is scheduled and whom to contact to volunteer to help. Give an updated list to the school and take a lot of pictures. Reicher will provide you a digital camera to take pictures at Reicher. They will also place them on the webpage so those classmates unable to attend can view the snapshots on the web.