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**Summary:**

**Resolutions for new years and for new reunions to guide your reunion planning.**

**Hi. I'm Edith Wagner. I'm editor of *Reunions magazine* and this podcast will list resolutions you should make whenever you plan a reunion.**

**Resolutions are typically made at the new year but starting a reunion is a new endeavor which deserves resolutions any time.**

**If you're organizing your first reunion and you've never done any party or activity of this scale, you have much to discover and learn. Making it all work takes careful, thoughtful planning and an ability to stick to it over the long haul. If this is not your first reunion, you probably know whereof I speak and can teach me much. But these are resolution ideas for you to consider.**

**Resolve that you will give yourself time to get your reunion organized.**

**If it's your very first reunion, allow yourself enough time to ensure everything is done and in place. If you have lots of members around the country and some you still need to find, two years may not be too long. Once you decide to go ahead, let nothing stay your**

**course. Be sure you have a schedule with (flexible and reasonable) deadlines everyone is very aware of and that you re-state over and over again.**

**Resolve that you will not organize the reunion alone.**

**Often a reunion is started by the family or group firebrand who can and will do all the work him or herself to make sure the reunion is wonderful.**

**However, when this is the case, you lose broad-base ownership of the reunion. Others need to feel they've contributed and have a significant investment in this family event.**

**Start with a committee of family members whom you can count on to do what they agree to do. Delegate as much detail as you possibly can. Do an inventory of what wonderful skills and talents run throughout your group. Who can manage your mailing list(s) with their own database? Who can write your newsletter? Who can lay it out and get it printed? Who can explore and choose places to stay? to have your banquet? to have your golf tournament? or to take the kids? What will the family historian or genealogist bring to your program?**

**Resolve that you'll establish a budget and stick to it.**

**Money will always be one of your reunion's biggest challenges. How much will you need? What do you want and how much will it cost? Who will pay for it?**

**Who will get estimates and make decisions? All these questions (and many more) should be important agenda items for a committee meeting. Consider what everyone can afford to pay, even though it will probably vary greatly among family members.**

**Many reunions include fundraising activities to cover some costs, reduce overall expense for everyone and sometimes to provide scholarships. If fundraising will be one of your activities, make the decision long before the reunion and inform everyone. If you will be doing an auction, raffle or white elephant sale for which members are expected to contribute, they must know in advance. If you're publishing a memory book, directory, cookbook or making a quilt, you'll want to start early ... at least one year before you'll need it. Be sure everyone knows what projects cost and how proceeds will be used.**

**Resolve that you will plan enough activities to keep everyone happy.**

**Adults are often more than satisfied to sit and catch up all day and maybe all night. However, kids are soon bored if there are no plans specifically for them. Places with swimming pools go a long way to keep kids happy, but additional activities are essential.**

**The Beckley Family Reunion hired four buses for Saturday activities; three for adults and one for**

children with enough adults to chaperone. In the morning the kids' bus went to the zoo, then spent the afternoon at a skating rink before meeting their parents back at the hotel for an evening banquet and program. The other three buses were dispatched to a discount mall, a casino and a golf course.

Games, contests, and tournaments can engage kids for days. Or, this may be the perfect time for cousins to take lessons in activities or sports that are important to family members; golf, rafting, tennis, fishing (a good time for grandpas to teach grandkids to fish) or sailing. Also, don't overlook those summertime and Fourth of July games that are such fun. Sack, three-legged and wheelbarrow races, water balloon and egg tosses, sprints, jumps, and relays. They're still fun for kids of all ages.

**Resolve that you'll get all the additional organizing help you possibly can.**

It is much easier today to find help organizing reunions than it was even as little as five years ago. First of all, there are *Reunions magazine* and *Reunions Workbook* along with an array of books (including *The Family Reunion Sourcebook* by Edith Wagner) and websites available to give you inspiration and countless ideas. Many are available in real and virtual bookstores online. Many, however,

**continue to be self-published and available only from their authors.**

**One of your first steps at the very beginning of your reunion planning should be to attend a reunion organizing class, workshop or conference. My vote for the very best conference is the National Family Reunion Conference founded by Dr. Ione Vargus at the Family Reunion Institute at Temple University. There is not one planned again until 2009. For details about all of these check out workshops and conferences at [reunionsmag.com](http://reunionsmag.com).**

**Conferences and workshops are great places to meet like-minded reunion organizers and share wonderful reunion ideas.**

**Also look for workshops and classes offered by genealogical societies or church and community groups. They are usually presented by experienced reunion organizers. I also often speak at meetings and would love to see you there.**

**Some convention and visitors bureaus offer workshops or familiarization tours (FAMs) for reunion organizers; regulars are offered by CVBs Atlanta, Georgia, and it's surrounding counties of DeKalb, Alpharetta and Gwinnett. Flint and Detroit, Michigan, and Minneapolis, Minnesota, also come to mind. An exciting new family reunion familiarization**

**(FAM) tour will be a three day event in Lake County, Illinois, just north of Chicago, in spring 2008. These reunion locations offer special events to help you learn about their area and services as well as helpful reunion organizing techniques. They will fill your time with so much to do and see, mountains of information, and answers to every question you could possibly ask.**

**Current details are always available and updated regularly at [reunionsmag.com](http://reunionsmag.com). Click on conferences and workshops for news of what is coming up.**

**There is much to learn as you organize your family reunion and now many more ways for you to get help along the way.**

**Happy New Year to you and your reunions!**

***At Reunions magazine, we are always looking for new reunion ideas. If you have an idea that was really a winner for everyone, share it with us. Feel free to email suggestions to [reunions@execpc.com](mailto:reunions@execpc.com) or send them to *Reunions magazine*, PO Box 11727, Milwaukee WI 53211 or post them at our forum at <http://forums.reunionsmag.com>.***

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**Thank you for downloading and listening to this**

**podcast.**

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