



Vahsholtz Cousins

November 2017

www.vahsholtz.com

Greetings from Wisconsin!

DON'T MISS THE MILWAUKEE COUSINS REUNION IN WISCONSIN JULY 12-15, 2018. We are still working on choosing among the great things to do when you are here. There will be a Welcome and General Family Meeting Friday morning, July 13 in a Conference Room. There is a boat that offers a meal and a trip down part of the Milwaukee River and out into Lake Michigan. We've heard great things about this experience. Or perhaps a trip to Sprecher's Brewery. They not only brew beer, but also some really great sodas. One thing we particularly want to do is visit the old Heinrich "August" Vahsholz stone house located in Cedarburg. Hopefully, we'll be able to have a look inside as well. On Sunday morning there will be a Family Church Service and final gathering before check out at noon. We hope that service will be led by Lloyd Powless, who has done such a fine job at prior reunions. He is recovering from a ruptured aneurism and let's pray he'll be his usual self by then.

There are too many things to do! If there is something you would particularly like to do while you are here, please consider extending your visit! We expect to have plans firmed up soon and will provide more details in the Spring issue. If you have questions or suggestions, contact Barbara Patterson bpbkg@comcast.net or Gayle Walters at gwmedicalstaffing@hotmail.com

The *Road from Zwilipp* (p 33) tells of Heinrich "August" Vahsholz who served in the Kaiser's cavalry in 1866. He married Augusta Krueger in 1868 and they immigrated to New York to join his parents and younger brother who'd come earlier.

In August, 1869, August and Augusta moved to Cedarburg, Wisconsin. He was a stone mason and built "The Homestead" (right). When Augusta died in 1918, Heinrich moved in with his son, Johannes Carl, who lived next door. The original home had 50 acres of land behind the house.

We'll be meeting at the Radisson Hotel, 2303 North Mayfair Road in Wauwatosa. They've set aside 20 rooms for us. Make your reservations before June 12, 2018 either by calling the hotel directly or book at their web site:

www.radisson.com/milwaukee_west

1. Select the dates for the event and then number of people
2. Under "More search options" select "rate type"
3. Select "Promotional Code" and enter "VFRB"
4. Select "Search" taking you to the V page, and "Book Now"

In making phone reservations, call Radisson Hotel directly at 414-257-3400 or their Worldwide reservation line 1-800-333-3333 and ask for the Group Name, *Vahsholtz Family Reunion* to get the special rate and ask for the total cost, including taxes, etc. *Book now!*

The group room rate is \$105 per night, plus 15.1% taxes (seems high but is reasonable in Wisconsin for the month of July). Breakfast is not included but is available at the hotel restaurant or across the street at Denny's. There are other dining options at the nearby Mayfair Mall. ■



A Letter with Follow-up

Great newsletter! Really enjoyed the stories! Human interest story on the Koi ponds. Wanda is a great writer. I could picture what it looked like during the process and creation of the ponds as she redid them over and over again.

And of course Ruth always tells a good story too! I want the “rest of the story” (did they go back to get the man more food, how; what has become of him?).

Another good person for a human interest story would be about the farm Jaci Hughes and Martha Harris maintain in Georgia. I see Facebook posts frequently about her animals and their antics. It might make for an interesting story ...

Carole Vahsholtz



The house in April with most of the snow gone.

Here's Ruth Richter's response, last April:

Until just a couple weeks ago when I knew his driveway was being plowed out and his old truck was mobile again, I kept in touch with him each week. I asked men from the Community Church to go re-stack his woodpile since he was pulling wood out of the bottom of it and in danger of it caving in on top of him with every new load he pulled out.

One of the members of my Garden Valley Senior Center Board, having a big heart and a generous pocketbook, picked him up several times and took him to the market, the bank, and the post office. At the market she walked him through each and every aisle urging him to buy this and pick up that ... and then she paid for it all at the checkout.

He was well taken care of and I've heard that he's been coming to the market on his own and buying what he needs for himself ... so I think we got him through the winter.

How the place withstood the massive snow loads we had this winter and is still standing is the real miracle. But as someone told me, it's a historic ranch and buildings. They were originally built well, but with no repairs for about 100 years, they're in very sad shape now.

So, there's the rest of the story for you. ■

Greetings from Middle Georgia, Mockingbird Hill Farm Jaci Hughes and Martha Harris!

WE MET SOME OF YOU at the 2016 Idaho Reunion and hope to see you again! Here's what we've been up to.

Farm news centers around 10 goats, a donkey, two Holstein cows, 25 chickens and two quail families. We also have four dogs that will hunt and kill almost anything; a problem. I get caught in the endless battle of nature, wanting to suppress their instincts.

The farm promotes agritourism, while the largest acreage is pasture and woodlands. Hunters lease the hunting rights. My Airbnb guests and I tiptoe at the edge of the hunting fields during hunting season but there's nature and solitude for all. Our recycled 2015 barn serves as a meeting place for guests and farmers get together. We're all over 60 so we eat, have a couple of beers, discuss what's on our minds (except politics) and go home by 8:30. What more could you ask?

We added two “new structures” for guests this past year. One was previously used as a roof for a cob oven, so it is a 14x14 building with new tin roof, old tin siding and interior walls; 150 floor boards from a share-cropper home we took down last year. It's called the “Hammock House” because it sports two hammocks inside, plus two cots and two hammocks outside.

Also readied for occupancy was the school bus. I spent a good portion of last January and February peeling 25 year old gum from the floor and sides of a de-commissioned school bus, painting, washing floors and building two desk dividers, trying not to lose the original interior feel of the bus. The seats had been removed several years prior and moved a couple of times around the property, the door broken off, etc. But it was just waiting for me to decide what to do with it, creatively. The bus sits on a ridge (what we call high places in the south) so it sort of overlooks the goat field and has great wide open sunset viewing. The bus does look a bit horrific on the outside, but the interior is simple and cozy with lots of windows.

Last November I accepted a batch of quail from a nearby farm; 300 day-old chicks shared with a fellow farmer. I raised them to about eight months in a captive indoor/outdoor run area with 14 hours of daylight. They finally produced eggs like crazy. After two king snakes came in and ate two of them, I decided to let them go. Ten pairs lived around the farm area and were quite tame; too tame for comfort around my farm dogs. Last week I was amazed to see one of the females with eight little chicks, so now a “Quail Crossing” sign goes



up on the main entry road. “Nature as it is intended to be.”

This spring produced six baby billy goats, so because I never keep young male goats, we had a baby goat “round up”. We tried to lasso them or tackle them and load them into crates of the waiting buyer. Thank goodness two of us were under 40 and willing and able to “grab and hold” them. It was fun trying anyway!

Spring plantings of potatoes, onions, tomatoes, basil, cukes and kale were about all I tackled this year, plus gourds and several beds of flowers for cutting. 25% of my 28 raised beds just laid there, resting, which is a good thing. One person can do only so much.

No woofers (World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms) help since last November, which at that time I had a Harvard Art Graduate and an art student from Seattle. Hard working young people, a joy to be around. They stayed for almost a month, doing odd jobs, building up soil, new signage, building furniture, just whatever needed done.

This August I had as woofers, two young French engineering school graduates who spent a month and six weeks. Only 24 years old, with no real practical knowledge of how to nail, use a screw gun or run a weedeater. Still they managed to put in a French drain that has yet to be tested, a roof system that failed, a hammock stand and hammock patio, build tool boxes and a multitude of other skill building activities. Great young people, engaged in their own cultures and wanting to learn about American culture, we introduced them to moonshine, barbecue, Indie Rock festivals, every beer label on the shelf, lake swimming, southern folklore and on and on.

Jaci has moved to Canton, Georgia, outside of Atlanta and is still practicing in Public Health, mental health related. She just completed their annual fundraising event the same weekend as we put on our “Dogtoberfest 2017” so she was not able to help me here. That was extremely painful. She helped earlier in the year by collecting many raffle items that helped us have the best fundraising event ever! We offer spay/neuter and emergency transportation to a no-kill shelter for dogs and cats found neglected, and set monitored traps around the city and county to catch strays. Education is our focus, trying to break down a culture of neglect toward four legged friends.

Winter construction plans depend on my one paid helper and woofers. A sharecropper home footprint needs a replacement building and billy goat field fencing needs completion. Many large and small organizational tasks need implementing to help control the traffic of different helpers in and out. As soon as a system goes into place, projects and project completion seem to replace it. In other words, “clean up my various work and maintenance area that have been destroyed by neglect.” I choose the winter while it is cool for such tasks.

So, I hope everyone has a great winter, reflecting on the past year and planning ahead. I hope to be hiking out of hunting season and reclining in one of three new hammocks. The problem is that I can’t do watercolors and recline in my hammock at the same time. Hope one of you can figure that one out! Best wishes! ■

See <https://www.airbnb.com/rooms/13090938>

ON THE INTERNATIONAL FRONT, here's another tale of Ginger Richter's recent exploits. She's currently serving with the South Korean embassy and sent this story last spring, after the Spring Edition had gone to press.

LAST SPRING I WENT to PyeongChang where the winter Olympics will be held to watch the Paralympic Day Opening Event and World Wheelchair Curling Championships, as well as the Women's 2017 World cup Super-G competition.

As a guest of our Olympics Coordinator, I got free transportation and hotel at the resort. The weather cooperated and it wasn't miserably cold which was fortunate. The Chargé [a diplomatic official who temporarily takes the place of an ambassador] (who I work for now) was on the same trip and so we got a lot of VIP treatment riding on his coat tails.

PyeongChang is about a three-hour drive from Seoul, depending on the driver and traffic. We had a total *gangpae* of a driver who made even me squeamish sitting in the back of a fully armored Suburban, so much so that we had a collision on the return trip, with us ramming the back of the Chargé's follow car, which we hit so hard (and we were going too fast) that it forced the follow car to rear-end the Chargé's limo. Luckily no one was hurt and the cars were driveable, so we just kept going, but I was pretty mad since I knew during the entire trip our driver was driving too fast and following too closely behind the limo and follow car. I haven't seen that driver in a while ... hmmm.

Here are some highlights and photos of the trip:



I love the Olympic mascots. We have cut outs of them at the Embassy too and they make me smile.

The Olympic Gold Korean figure skater Yuna Kim was there to participate in the opening ceremony and got to demonstrate (and try out) wheelchair curling. She also sat close to where our group was.

Below those pictures (right column) is the U.S. and Korean team during the opening ceremony procession.

Curling: *Most. Mind. Numbing. Sport. In. The. World.* (and for sure the *wheelchair* version). It has got to be the slowest sport around, but admittedly isn't too difficult to figure the ins and outs once you watch it for about two min-



utes. The lane nearest to us ended up being the U.S. vs. Korea lane, so that meant we had clear views of the entire match.



Above, part of the U.S. team is conferring. We got to meet them afterwards and they were really nice and personable athletes. They raved about the venue and said they were having a fantastic trip.

We also got to visit the virtual reality center which was the second coolest part of the trip (after stopping by the beach). I got to try out the 360 virtual reality headset which felt like I was skiing off the high jump and it took me through the entire jump—from getting on the chair to coming to a full stop at the bottom—and let me tell you, it really is straight down! And we saw a short film in a specially made 4-D theater where the seats moved to make you feel



like you were actually in the bobsled racing through the track/chute, which was really fun. And then there was this photo op above. Believe me, holding that pose isn't easy, at least without the benefit of having momentum like the guy next to me (ha)!

The next day was the women's Super-G skiing with some 40+ competitors and it took about 2 ½ hrs for the entire event (below). There were 4-5 Americans there, including Lindsey Vonn, who took 2nd place in the event, and Breezy



Johnson (from Victor, Idaho). I had a front row standing perch to watch the whole thing and it was pretty neat since I've never seen live competitive skiing before. Bottom of previous column, photos of the finish line and Lindsey semi-up close and personal.



And lastly, a couple of snow bunnies. At right in the above photo with me is my friend Maggie, the Olympics Coordinator from the Embassy. ■

We Mourn the Passing of:

Betty Jean Fahsholtz, died March 19, 2017 in Washington. She & daughter, Diana, came to the Idaho Reunion.

Lorna Doone (Friedrich) Lungren died March 29, 2017 in Kansas. She came to the 2002 Reunion in Herington, Kansas.

George Vahsholtz' wife, Teresa died July 29, 2017 in Colorado.

Want to include marriages and births? Send us the information. We can only publish what we know. ■

OUR "STRANGE INHERITANCE"

By Geri Vahsholtz Tate

MY PARENTS, Martin & Eleanora Vahsholtz lived in the Council Grove, Kansas, area for many years. They both passed away 1985-87. While living on farms in the area, they belonged to the Rural Electric Corporate Assoc. (RECA)

In December 2016, I received a phone call from my friend, Bonnie Thomas, who knew my parents from Calvary Lutheran Church in Council Grove. She said she saw my parents' name in the RECA paper, looking for heirs so they could pay unclaimed credits. She gave me a number to call. I called and they sent a letter with Request for Payment for Unclaimed Credits, giving me responsibility to distribute payment to other heirs. I filled out the form sent it back. Shortly I received a check for \$78.10.

Now my only brother, Les Vahsholtz, passed away

in December, 2012. How would I divide payment to my niece and nephew? It happened this January they, Jenny Werner and Tim Vahsholtz, were in Topeka together. I invited them, along with sister-in-law Carole and my daughter, Janet, to Applebees for lunch. Then I explained about the “strange inheritance” we received, jokingly saying “Grandpa and Grandma Vahsholtz paid for our lunch today.”

We never know when a “small inheritance” could be waiting for us. ■



Left to Right: Geri, Tim, Jenny, Carole and Janet

An Editorial

FOR SEVEN YEARS we've edited this newsletter and it's been fun. Now Marge and I are in our 80s and getting tired. We've found turning 80 is *different*. The spark is fading.

We hope you've enjoyed these newsletters, and we hope to see them continue for generations to come. At the Idaho Reunion, we floated the idea of publishing just one issue per year, but nobody saluted! We're willing to help, but ... it's time to turn this job over to others.

It has been a challenging task. Marge and I do it together, but believe it best to broaden the sharing. The editor should take the stories submitted and edit them, working with the writer. Crop, tidy up and insert photos as appropriate. Edit it all to fit the available space. Proofread the drafts. Edit it all into suitable files for the printer and email distribution.

That's the editor's job, but lots more work is required. Tasks that could be delegated, including:

- **Hustling up the Stories**
We seek out about half the stories you see in the newsletter, and most people we contact, even if willing, don't contribute. We need more reporters and/or writers.
- **Coordinating the Reunions**
A major purpose of the newsletter is to publicize coming and past reunions. Finding hosts and helping them plan the events should be done by others. Les used to do that, and did it very well. He had a passion for the family that's sorely missed. He was also great at finding stories.
- **Distributing Newsletters**
When the newsletter has been edited, it goes out in color via email to all known email addresses. The rest are printed black and white, stuffed in envelopes, addressed, stamped and mailed. We also maintain the address files.

We've had little success finding volunteers to do these tasks. Because of years of experience, it's been easier to just do most things ourselves, and hey, it's only twice per year. As we age though, it gets harder to maintain this pace. It's time to turn the challenge over to others.

Send your thoughts to us for discussion in the spring edition of this newsletter. When we're together in Wisconsin, let's agree on a plan to move forward. ■

Bob & Marge Vahsholtz

Vahsholtz Cousins is published twice yearly, spring and fall. Copies go out to some 255 Vahsholtz families. It is supported entirely by donations. Those who supply email addresses get full color copies attached to an email as a PDF file, which they can read on screen or print as they wish. Those having no email address get a black and white edition mailed to their last known address. “Snail mail” is the biggest cost item of the whole Vahsholtz publication enterprise, due to costs of printing and stamps. Your donations are appreciated. **What will help most is any additions or corrections you can make to our email list. Each mailing we send out, we get some email bounces or returned mail from those who have moved, passed on, or changed their address. Please let Marge know! mvahsholtz@gmail.com**

If you'd like to make a donation, contact Treasurer Tony Vahsholtz avahsholtz@gmail.com or mail to: 12419 S. Down-
ing Way, Nampa, Idaho 83686.

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE: February 15, 2018 ■