



Vahsholtz Cousins

November, 2010

<http://www.vahsholtz-cousins.org/>



2010 Branson Reunion

By Geri Tate

This year's Vahsholtz Cousins Reunion was again held in Branson, Missouri on the weekend of June 25-27, 2010 at the Savannah House Hotel.

A delicious complimentary hot breakfast was served every morning and enjoyed by all. Throughout the day, we had a beautiful room for taking family pictures, visiting and getting acquainted with other family members. Every evening we enjoyed cobbler, ice cream and freshly baked cookies, compliments of the hotel.

Friday evening was check in time and the rest of the evening spent visiting—and eating!

After our Saturday breakfast, we had a short business meeting in a conference room, led by Les Vahsholtz. He showed slides describing the Vahsholtz-Cousin website activities, Facebook connections and contacts in Germany.

Bob and Marge Vahsholtz gave a presentation they are working on from a 200-page journal handwritten in 1937 by Hulda Vahsholtz Friedrich telling of her childhood life in Nemaha County, Kansas. (See the video on the website) They also passed out Update Number Four for the *Road from Zwillipp*.

A letter from Joanne (Peterson) Vahsholtz was read, telling of the donation of Christian Vahsholtz' Family Bible to Concordia University in Portland, Oregon.

Two "new" family branches were introduced this year. The Bertha (Vahsholtz) Hartman branch (Zwillipp Book, Page 42), was represented by Gerald Hartman's spouse, Wanda Hartman and her family.

Also present were descendants of Karl August Julius "Charles" Vahsholtz (Zwillipp Book, Page 141-142). Those attending included Mary Dillon, Mary Lou Dillon, Ruth Klement, Tom Kle-

ment, and Marilyn (Harris) Coley.

Three locations are under consideration for the 2012 reunion; Wisconsin, Colorado or somewhere in the Northwest.

After the meeting, thirty-five of us traveled to the Branson Belle Showboat for a lunch and show. A group picture was taken (see next page). The meal and entertainment were excellent. Ten of us went to see "Back stage tour of the Sight and Sound Theatre" featuring complex sets and live animals for the *Noah* production. In the evening, many of us went to see the Sight and Sound Theatre production *Noah*, enjoyed by all.

Then back to Savannah House for more cobbler, more cookies, ice cream and family fellowship.

On Sunday there was more visiting, with some people taking in more shows

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(Continued from page 1)

or shopping.

A total of 45 cousins were in attendance. Families that traveled long distances included:

Lloyd and Sharon Powless, Green Bay, Wisconsin and grandson, **Alex**

Mary Dillon, Mary Lou Dillon and son **Brandon, Ruth Ann Klement**, Colorado Springs, Colorado

Tom and Judy Klement, Eriksdale, Manitoba, Canada

Jennifer and Harold Bonazew and **Avery**, Flin Flon, Manitoba, Canada

Bob and Marge Vahsholtz, Arroyo Grande, California

Others attending were:

Robert and Peggy Scott, Crystal City, Missouri, and children, **Laura, Robbie** and **Daniel**

Allan and Martha Brockmeier, Festus, Missouri

Stacy Brockmeier, St. Louis, Missouri

Geri and Jim Tate, Topeka, Kansas

Tim and Sophie Vahsholtz, Little Rock, Arkansas

Jennifer Reynolds, children **Taylor, Michael, Katie**, and **Ben**, Topeka, Kansas and friend, **Dan Werner**

Les and Carole Vahsholtz, Lenexa, Kansas

Marilyn and Moe Coley, Gladstone, Missouri

Wanda Hartman, Burchard, Nebraska

Deitra and Jamie Claas, children

Gwyn and Calli, Seneca, Kansas

Jerald and Tammy Hartman, children **Ashlynn** and **Kailey**, Pawnee City, Nebraska



25 inches tall, 22 inches long, 12 7/8 inches wide

Wanda Hartman brought this photo to the reunion. This table came down the Hartman line, and Wanda rescued it because she suspected it had a story. As you can see, it looks like a hand-made item. Lou and Melvina Hitzeman once saw the table Christian Vahsholtz hand-made at Mae Hartman's house (see page 15 of the Zwilipp book). Maybe this is it! Can anybody shed more light?



Special thanks to retiring Editor Peggy Scott (above left, Laura, Peggy, Daniel, Robbie & Rob Scott) for her work on these newsletters in recent years.

New Editors Marge & Bob Vahsholtz are in the middle above.

Webmaster and man of all work is Les Vahsholtz with Carole, above.

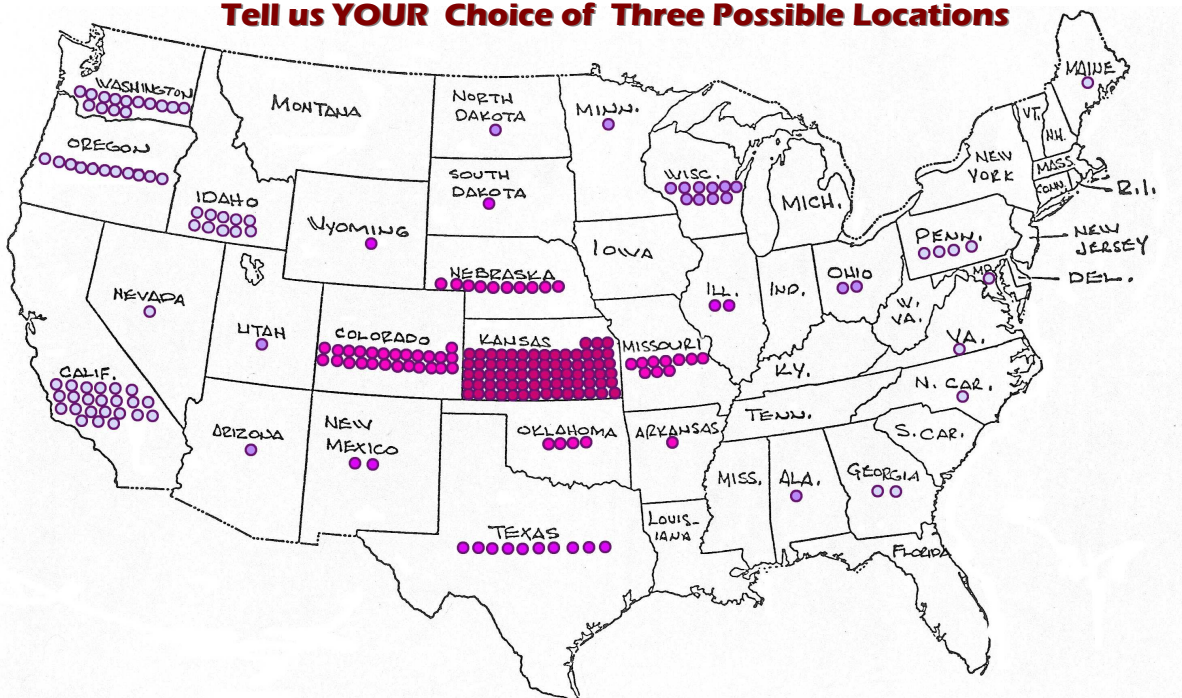
Most of the tribe is pictured at left, assembled on the deck of the Branson Belle (which is also pictured on the cover).



Lots more reunion photos at the Vahsholtz website—www.vahsholtz-cousins.org

Where to Next?

Tell us YOUR Choice of Three Possible Locations



As the map above shows, we're a Kansas tribe. About a third of us reside there. But that map also shows that we're scattering to the winds—nine families outside the 48 states are not even included (each dot represents a known family).

Some Thoughts on Location ... and why we might want to venture out of the Vahsholtz nest

The two successful Branson reunions suggest there are opportunities for including more distant family members by choosing a "destination" site where people coming a long way can make a vacation of the trip. At the most recent reunion (see article on page 1 & 2), it was suggested that we explore the idea of going further, focusing on areas known to have clusters of Vahsholtz relatives. Based on that thought, plus "volunteers" willing to be drafted for some research, three areas were chosen; Wisconsin, Colorado, and the Northwest.

Heading the teams are Lloyd Powless from Wisconsin, Ruth Klement from Colorado and Ruth Richter from Idaho. Their first reports are below. Let us know what you think about these choices. Send the survey (page 6) or email to your editor or the webmaster.

Some Thoughts on Wisconsin ... as a possibility for the next Reunion

Wisconsin Dells is a small town in south-central Wisconsin taking its name from glacial gorges of the Wisconsin River plus nearby Lake Delton. Known as the Waterpark Capital of the World, the area attracts about five million annual visitors.

There are many indoor and outdoor waterparks in the Dells area, along with attractions such as Noah's Ark; Wilderness Territory; the Hotel Rome at Mt. Olympus Water & Theme Park and so forth. There are also Dells Boat Tours, many golf courses, mini golf, go-kart tracks, water sports, horseback riding, Tommy Bartlett's Thrill Show, Exploratory, Ripley's Believe It or Not Museum, Timber Falls Amusement and the Ho-Chunk Casino and many others. Most are located on the Wisconsin Dells Parkway. Accommodations include surprisingly economical motels,

RV parks, chain hotels and themed resorts. There's something for everyone.

Best of all, The Dells are in the same general area as many of the Wisconsin Vahsholtz cousins.

Wisconsin would be a good choice for the next reunion for all those reasons. We'd probably want to agree upon a host motel and a few family-oriented activities suitable for our group. Maybe a cruise through the Dells and a visit to an attraction or two that we'd all enjoy. Those coming from a distance might want to plan to stay for a while and make a vacation of it. It would be easy to spend a week or two in the Dells alone, and Wisconsin has much more to offer as well!

Some Thoughts on Colorado ... as a possibility for the next Reunion

I believe Colorado to be the best spot because of the weather—not humid

and what we say in Colorado, if you don't like the weather, wait a few minutes and it may change. In Spring time, often we get an afternoon rain, and when the sun sets it cools off. We have beautiful sunsets.

If interested in hiking, we have many 14,000 foot mountains, one being Pikes Peak. If you haven't been to the top, it is breath taking. You don't have to hike. It can be reached by car or Cog Rail. What an outstanding view! One can see as far as Kansas.

While in the state, you may want to check out Denver, it has a wonderful Aquarium. I took my Grandson this summer and I got as big a kick out of it as he. So peaceful and relaxing. While in Denver, there are tours of historical homes available to view. We have a strong history of mining. There is a mine in Cripple Creek called Mollie Kathleen Mine. You can tour this mine and get a briefing on the area's mining history.

Right now the Aspens are beautiful, the reds and golds mixed with the pine trees are amazing. Needless to say I love my state and think you will too.

Attractions here in our fine city of Colorado Springs include:

Garden of the Gods, tram ride to the top of Pikes Peak, trip to the highest Zoo, (Cheyenne Mountain Zoo), visit the Air Force Academy, stroll through Old Colorado City Historical District, Historical Manitou Springs, Glen Eryie Castle, Pro Rodeo Hall of Fame, Will Rogers Shrine of the Sun, Ghost Town Museum, Western Museum of Mining Industry, Cave of the Winds, and The North Pole for the children's enjoyment.

We have done some research on hotels. If we have a block of 10 rooms or more, Best Western seems to have the best deal at \$89 to \$99, including full breakfast. Comfort Inn is about the same price. *Ruth Klement*

Some Thoughts on the Northwest ...as a possibility for the next Vahsholtz Reunion

There are family members scat-

tered through the West; a surprising number of people, many of whom have found traveling to the Midwest a serious undertaking.

The Northwest offers an endless variety of things to see and do. Significant mountain ranges, rugged ocean beaches, great swimming opportunities, lush forests and gardens, multiple state and national parks, lovely cities, deep sea fishing, mountain hiking, kayaking, and the list goes on and on.

Maybe we could gather at Concordia University in Portland, Oregon, where the Vahsholtz Bible is preserved. We might stay in inexpensive dormitories, perhaps with the meals arranged on the campus, and motels for those who prefer. There are Vahsholtz relatives nearby to help plan and host the event. (An alternative might be to meet at one of the Lutheran camps, most of which have nice accommodations, at low cost.)

If the Concordia campus were selected, activities might include a Columbia River cruise, ocean fishing, wine tour, concerts, walking tour of the historic district, or theater.

Concordia, Portland might be thrilled to do a presentation to potential students and supporters more familiar with Concordia's in the Midwest!

Portland has a major airport; an inexpensive flying destination. Driving from most any location in the U.S. allows for a unique and interesting vacation. There's Yellowstone Park and the Grand Tetons, desert and mountain ranges, multiple parks throughout Utah, Montana and Idaho with fantastic lakes, winding mountain roads to challenge, high desert, the beautiful Columbia River, and the list goes on.

In the Northwest we rarely experience extreme summer heat and the nights are mostly cool and comfortable. The Northwest offers everyone the opportunity to plan their summer vacation around the Vahsholtz reunion, giving many a reason to explore a new area. *Ruth Richter*

The Long Arm of Estate Law

By Bob Vahsholtz

If you will now open your Zwilipp books to page 77, you'll find a little story contributed by Velma Freidrich Peterson. The story (middle of the left column) concerns my father, Fred Vahsholtz.

Old timers among us will remember Fred as quite the story-teller. And while he endeavored to give credit where credit was due, it seems credit tended to be due to Fred, the storyteller-in-chief, himself. Fred, though generous, was also well known as an astute businessman who understood the value of a quarter.

My sister Ruth (Vahsholtz) Richter accompanied Marge and me on a recent visit to Velma at Three Rivers, California. While having our usual lunch at the Gateway Restaurant overlooking one of those rivers, Velma told Ruth the story of the quarter bet, noting that the debt remained outstanding.

It was no accident that Ruth was executor of our parents' estate. She inherited her father's excellent business sense and pragmatic honesty. From our mother, she inherited the instruction to see that the estate was managed without discord. Brother Dick and I marveled at how well she handled both assignments.

But this matter of the quarter bet!

What to do? Did the estate owe interest on the debt? If so, us heirs would have to dig in our jeans, because the estate is now fully settled. Or so we thought.

After careful research it was determined that the quarter debt was indeed owed. The facts are clear. Father was remiss in his obligations. He worked those excuses right up to the end of his life. An estate matter remained to be resolved.

Careful perusal indicated however, that no provision for interest was ever made! Ruth, ever generous in spirit and purse, supplied the quarter herself and we crafted a legal document carefully designed to put to rest any further claims.

Happily, Velma signed off and at last count, is still chuckling,

General Release by Velma Friedrich Peterson

For valuable consideration in the amount of \$0.25, the receipt and sufficiency of which are hereby acknowledged, the undersigned Velma Friedrich Peterson ("Releasor"), does hereby remise, release, and forever discharge The Estate of Fred Richard Vahsholtz ("Releasee"), of Abilene, Kansas, Releasee's heirs, executors, administrators and personal representatives, of and from all, and all manner of, actions, causes of action, suits, proceedings, debts, dues, contracts, judgments, damages, claims, and demands whatsoever in law or equity, which Releasor ever had, now has, or which Releasor's heirs, executors, administrators or personal representatives hereafter can, shall, or may have for or by reason of any matter, cause, or thing whatsoever, from the beginning of the world to the date of these presents; and specifically including the facts and circumstances related to the traversalment of eight (8) miles between the Friedrich and Vahsholtz properties at or near the town of Clay Center, Kansas, in or around the year 1923, which traversalment referred to above was accomplished by the Releasor, of the town of Clay Center, and Hilda Betty Vahsholtz of rural Clay County, in defiance of the releasee, then of rural Clay County, who in a legally witnessed action, did wager that the traversalment could not be accomplished, and lost, *big time*. That the traversalment was accomplished was never in doubt nor did the releasee, his heirs, executors, administrators and personal representatives, endeavor to make such representation at any time. Indeed the Releasee promised to pay his legally obliged debt "soon." Notwithstanding the passage of some 85 years, the Releasor, in recognition of the valuable consideration enumerated above and the fact that no terms of interest on the obligation were ever discussed, hereby waives all claims, and all manner of actions, causes of action, suits, proceedings, debts, dues, contracts, judgments, damages, interest and demands whatsoever in law or equity, which Releasor ever had, now has, or which Releasor's heirs, executors, administrators or personal representatives hereinafter can, shall, or may have for or by reason of any matter, cause, or thing whatsoever, inure to interest on the debt named above, from the beginning of the world to the date of these presents.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have executed this Release this day of:

Ruth M. Richter
Ruth Richter, Executor

Date

July 8, 09

Accepted By:

Velma

Velma Friedrich Peterson

Prepared by:

Vahsholtz, Vahsholtz and Vahsholtz, Attorneys at Law



OK

we've had our fun. Now for some serious thinking. You've read about the three possible locations for the 2010 reunion? What do you think? *A separate email survey will go to those getting PDF newsletters.*

**Simple survey
on next page!
Do it now!**

If you have been to any of the many Vahsholtz Cousin Reunions over the past few decades, you know they're a lot of fun. And they're one of the few opportunities most of us have to get acquainted with our Vahsholtz relatives, now scattered across the world.

You can help with planning by answering a few questions on the next page. Just write in your answers, cut on the dotted line and mail to:

Bob & Marge Vahsholtz, 866 Pine View Drive, Arroyo Grande, CA 93420

Christian's Bible

On page 15 of *The Road from Zwilipp* you'll see this picture of Christian's 1840 Bible and the full story on it.

In brief, Mae Hartman gave Christian's beloved Bible to Lloyd Vahsholtz of Washougal, Washington. Lloyd passed it on to his nephew, Duane Vahsholtz. After Duane's death in December, 2007, his wife Joanne selected Concordia University in Portland, Oregon as a permanent resting place for the Bible, because a number of family members attended or worked there over the years.

It has been placed in the archives of the new library and Joanne was assured that the Bible would remain there at all times and be carefully preserved. It can be examined but not taken from the premises.

The location is, Concordia University, 2811 N.E. Holman Street, Portland, Oregon 97211.



Your Financial Support is Appreciated ... and Needed

This newsletter and the Vahsholtz website (www.vahsholtz-cousins.org) are created by volunteers (we have openings, if you'd like to help!). Both are labors of love, but there are costs involved. We've enlarged the newsletter but cut costs by sending a black and white edition to those getting snailmail.

Our only source of funds is your donations. Quite a few of you have been generous and your contributions have gotten us this far. But the costs go on and the treasury account is low. We're ineligible for federal bailout funds. In fact, we're not even established as a non-profit (we could certainly qualify, but the attorney fees would eat up more than all the donations to date), so your donation is not even tax deductible. We're doing this the old fashioned way. We just count on you to help! How about sending our treasurer a small check payable to Allan Brockmeier, 11764 Kingston Dr., Festus, MO 63028 ? Or send it to your editors along with the survey below. We'll see that Allan gets your contribution.

Another way you can help is by sending us your email address, and getting this newsletter as a PDF email attachment. That saves us more than a dollar for each issue, and you get your newsletter quicker and in full color! Send your email address, or change of address to editors Bob & Marge Vahsholtz, 866 Pine View Drive, Arroyo Grande, California 93420, mvahsholtz@gmail.com.

And a final word ... us Vahsholtz's are *storytellers*. How many families do you know who have a whole book of family stories, plus a website? Did all of our stories find their way into *The Road from Zwilipp*? Nah. There have been four updates to that book plus all these newsletters and we've hardly scratched the surface. We used to get together on Sunday afternoons and spin our yarns. Now we have these marvelous new methods. Send us *your* stories!

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1. About how many Vahsholtz Cousin Reunions have you attended? _____
 2. What locations? _____
 3. Do you prefer sticking to Kansas or venturing out to other locations? _____
 4. Rank the three proposed locations , first, second & third. Wisconsin _____ Colorado _____ Northwest _____
 5. Why? _____
 6. Do you use the Vahsholtz website? _____
 7. What can we do to improve it? _____
 8. What can we do to improve this newsletter? _____
 9. Should we start charging dues to pay operating costs? _____
 10. Or continue to do the best we can with donations? _____