



# Vahsholtz Cousins

March, 2015

vahsholtz.com

## Why the Heck Would Anyone Want to Go to IDAHO for the **VAHSHOLTZ FAMILY REUNION?**

*By Ruth (Vahsholtz) Richter*



**There's probably a good chance** that many of the Vahsholtz Family have never been to Idaho? Or, if so, maybe you traveled through on Interstate 84 headed for Oregon or Washington. That would give you a very poor impression of Idaho! I'd suggest looking at the reunion here as a Once in a Lifetime Trip, even if you have been here before. Then plan to include a visit to Yellowstone National Park, which could be right on your way to get to Lutheran Camp Per-

kins. Or add on some days and go to Glacier National Park in Montana. Or through Yellowstone coming out and returning by way of Utah, which has many, many National Parks. Arches, Zion, Bryce Canyon, and Mesa Verde to name a few.

Another option for a really perfect vacation while at the July 2016 reunion is to just stay in the Sawtooth Mountain Range area and take in all the sights, rafting opportunities, ghost towns, shop-

ping at high-end Sun Valley. The area also offers a whole range of really great thrift stores. Or travel around in Idaho's whole long list of great state parks and national monuments. There's Craters of the Moon National Monument (unlike anything else in the continental U.S.), Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area, Redfish Lake just down the road from Camp Perkins with great fishing, boating, hiking, or just lolling about, or the Frank Church River

*(Continued on page 2)*



of No Return Wilderness where you'll have to hike, raft, or horseback in since no motorized vehicles are allowed in that vast area.

By now you get the picture that this really could be the vacation of a lifetime. Camp Perkins is situated in the Sawtooth National Recreation Area, which was recently listed on the 100 Best Places to Visit in the whole world!

You can go to any of the following websites for more information: [www.idaho.org](http://www.idaho.org), [www.idaho.org/freepublications](http://www.idaho.org/freepublications), or [www.idaho.com/attractions](http://www.idaho.com/attractions). Better yet you can just Google Idaho Tourism and pick your own website.

One thing you need to be aware of is that many of the tourist areas fill up quickly, especially things like whitewater rafting. Day trips are more easily arranged but longer trips such as Raft-

ing the Salmon River for multiple days get booked very early and are also quite expensive.

Meanwhile, if you have specific questions in regard to anything to do with the reunion, feel free to email me at: [ruthrichter2@gmail.com](mailto:ruthrichter2@gmail.com) or call me at **208-462-3442**.

The Camp Perkins address is"  
Lake Alturas Road  
Stanley, Idaho 83278

Note that a limited number of "motel-type rooms" are available. Most accommodations are in cabins with path. If you want an "upscale" room,

contact Ruth soon. It's too early to actually make reservations, but Ruth will make a list of those wanting the "inside" rooms, first come, first served.

The cabins are nice and can accommodate a good sized family. No bedding provided, so bring sleeping bags, blankets or the like.

The map shows the Camp's location in the heart of the Sawtooth Mountains. The tourist town of Stanley is nearby with gift shops, restaurants and motels. There's good road access. ■

*The world is a book  
and those who do not  
travel read only a page.*

Saint Augustine

Roxanna Vahsholz is the daughter of Conny Vahsholz (see the V newsletter dated Spring, 2008). She recently returned from an exchange student visit to Cuba and wrote the article beginning on the next page.



# FOLLOW THE Yellow Footprints

By Roxana Vahsholz



The flight took fourteen sleepless hours. Arriving at the airport I followed the yellow footprints into the Cuban sun. Every sleepless second was worth it to see the impressions on the way to Havana. The palms, the colorful nature on the side of the road, the people, drawn to their stories and the daily burning sun. 38 °C (100° F) welcomed me to the heart of Cuba and the new colors gave me so much energy. Energy that you need in Havana because it's loud in every way. People are yelling, laughing, singing often at the same time, music is playing in every corner, mostly Regaeton, Salsa or Cha-Cha and the smoke of the American sixties cars brings tears to your eyes.



**A**fter three years of studying in Wismar at the Baltic Sea I decided to leave Germany for a couple of months to study abroad. But the question was where do I want to go and get more experience and different influences for my Illustrations? So I got some orientation at the international office and heard about the German-Cuban- Exchange program which has existed for five years at my university. My love for the Spanish language and Latin American art gave me no choice. I had to apply. I think one of the reasons why this program exists and is so successful is the common political background of our countries. The socialism, as well as the common political and economical history between the GDR and Cuba. After a couple of weeks and some bureaucracy I was allowed to go to Cuba as a Cuban Student at ISDI Instituto Superior de Diseño.

In some way tears of joy because it's so different from everything that you have ever experienced and the beauty of this country is unspeakably rich. The architecture shows you the charm of the twenties, ART DECO, the nature is for me like paradise, and the wind tastes like salt.



Havana shows all his beauty at once with music, art, dancing and the real sense of living, as you might know from commercials or documentaries; nevertheless after a while you see a different side.

You find the poverty behind the corners of the main streets where the tourists don't see it; old people searching in the trash for food in the middle of the night because they don't get enough salary and have no family; animals treated cruel by little children because they have no relationship with them; people who steal, cheat and prostitute themselves day and night because it's the easiest way to earn enough money to leave the country.

I wanted to stay; to see, understand and learn how Cubans manage to live under circumstances like that. Poverty, bad accidents, corruption, lack of food and supplies in some seasons, but they are always finding creative solutions to FIX things and produce something beautiful. In some way I guess it proves the phrase, "Necessity is the mother of invention." Or can anybody else say, "I repaired my computer with glue and kitchen foil?"! Every month in Havana showed me something different about the people I met; their generosity, pride, diligence, their insatiable passion to learn about everything, their daring aim to see the world. A Cuban friend told me once: Cubans have three ways to leave the country that they really love, but which makes it so hard to stay.

1. Marry
2. Pay the state to leave
3. Or flee and die

It broke my heart and I wanted to help, but I realized it's not possible. The things that I saw were the reflections of political decisions from over 30 years ago.

And they are believers, true believers, in socialism, the right of better education for everyone and the future of a liberated Cuba. They are dealing with the daily problems; no water for days, police control whenever and wherever they want and no money to travel around their own country. A lot of Cubans never saw more of their state than one or two cities, plus their hometown, in their whole life. As an international Cuban student I had the privileges of seeing both sides; I could go wherever the natives could go and I saw the real Cuba, as well as travel like a tourist over the island with more money than their 18 CUC (\$18) salary.

I took my friend with me and saw among others the beauty of Trinidad, Vinales, Santiago de Cuba and the most breathtaking island I have ever seen; Cayo de St. Maria, where the brightest stars touch the ocean and you are standing on a stone bank in the middle of the Pacific. I felt, saw and experienced pure loveliness in Cuba as well as sadness, anger and resignation.

It taught me the basic need of things, the knowledge to decide between them, the gratitude of family, friends and to feel happiness in the smallest moments. I hope everyone can enjoy a similar experience in their life.



Text and Pictures are property of Roxana Vahsholz



# A Vahsholtz—Vasholz Story

*Meet Your Cousin, by Ruth (Vahsholtz) Richter (To learn more about this branch, see Chapter 11 of The Road from Zwillipp)*

**My two brothers and I** grew up listening to our Dad, Fred Vahsholtz, tell stories. The three of us were sure we'd heard all the stories too many times, but some of them remained quite exciting. He would describe the escapades of his brothers and sisters and himself, making you think they must have been the original juvenile delinquents. And we three were quite sure we dared not try any of the things he cheerfully related to anyone and everyone!

So, when this *Vahsholtz Cousin Newsletter* reporter assignment was given to me, I assumed there'd be another interesting story to tell. There always is. I was in for quite a shock as I corresponded with Dr. Robert Vasholz (same name as my brother, Bob, different spelling and lots different story!) and learned some details. I've hardly been able to scratch the surface!

Start with the fact that Dr. Bob got some of his education at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis and went on to teach Hebrew at St. Louis Seminary U. (Jesuit) Concordia where Catholic, Lutheran and any other ordinands could attend. Next to the Presbyterian Seminary in St. Louis where for almost 40 years he taught Hebrew, Aramaic, and a Canaanite dialect close to the Old Testament. He's now "retired," but a former student urged him to consider going to a parish in Georgia to be their minister. He's been there for a few years, and he still teaches some online language courses ... at age 78! No wonder he and my brother, Bob, get along so well. Neither knows what retirement means!

Dr. Bob's branch of the Vasholz Family is from Fremont, Nebraska, where his father Frank Joseph and two brothers started a butcher shop, mostly run by brother Paul. As the last male



Vasholz in his line, Bob was expected to take over that meat butchering business. He notes that God had other plans. Brother Louis took over until such time as the business could be sold. Dr. Bob wound up with the "Vasholz" stained glass sign that was always at the front of the shop and quite a different career.

The three Vasholz brothers were descendants of Robert Richard Heinrich Vasholz from Pomerania, who immigrated in 1890-91 to the Stanton, Nebraska area. After Frank lost his Swedish first wife, he moved to Kansas City where he met Dr. Bob's mother, Mollie Goldstein. She was about 27 years younger than Bob's dad, and making Frank about 50 years old when Bob and his twin sister were born.

Mollie was an Orthodox Jewish lady, and Dr. Bob believes he and his siblings are likely among the very few of the Vasholz family raised in a synagogue. Bob made his Bar Mitzvah in October of 1949. Frank was a Lutheran but never went to church as Bob was growing up, and had no problem with his children being raised Jewish! As Dr. Bob notes, in Judaism, identity flows through the mother's line.

Bob has mentioned that when he was age 19 he had a marvelous conver-

sion experience which led him to the Presbyterian Seminary. He's a busy man and I think he's saving that story for another day! He left me wanting to learn more—such as how he earned his doctorate from the University of Stellenbosch in South Africa. Something to do with his dissertation project involving Aramaic documents from the Dead Sea Scrolls. When he's been in Israel with friends he's enjoyed pointing out the cave where the Dead Sea documents he worked on were discovered.

Early on, Bob took some courses at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. (When my husband Ron and I were attending St. John's Academy in Winfield, Kansas, we'd heard about one of my relatives who was at the Seminary but never learned any more details).

Dr. Bob went on to say that his daughter's husband is the Head Attache at the U.S. Embassy in Costa Rica, and Bob and his wife Julia had visited them this past Christmas. And they've also visited their granddaughter in the military who lives in Germany where the photo was taken. Bob's written some 40 articles and five books. The most used is a Book of Benedictions for pastors. Now he's working on what he calls his "last book," *When the Trinity Shook Hands*, an endeavor to broaden the understanding of Covenant Theology.

Bob sounds like a worldwide traveler with lots more story to tell than I've been able to gather so far. Let's hope he and Julia, who is from Baton Rouge, Louisiana, will come to the family reunion at Camp Perkins, Idaho, and regale us with more stories of their fascinating life together. ■

# Seeking Robbings

by Marge Vahsholtz



From left; Dorothy Willis, Clyde and Mary Callam, Martie Richard, Ray Willis



Clyde and Mary Callam, Bob Vahsholtz and Laura Bock Binder. Laura is Bob's third cousin.

**After the 2014 Cousins Reunion** last summer Bob and I went to DuBois, Nebraska to meet email cousin contacts.

Having inquired about Clyde Callam's Hartman connection, we'd found his wife Mary was also related. She to the Robbings via Franz Leonard's marriage to Sophie Robbing. It was when we edited Hulda Vahsholtz Friedrich's (Franz Leonard's daughter) journal that we learned that the Robbing great-great grandparents had come to this country, including some of Sophie's siblings. But we couldn't find any living Robbing's for many years

One day about a year ago we had an email from Mary Callam (Mrs. Clyde) chatting about the upcoming Vahsholtz Reunion, saying they couldn't attend due to a schedule conflict but enjoyed reading about the family.

Mary mentioned her grandmother's diary she had edited into a book. We ordered a copy, which I read aloud as Bob drove all summer. When I learned she had grown up in the Southern Nebraska/Northern Kansas area where the Vahsholtz family had lived, I asked if she by chance knew any

descendants of the Robbing family.

Surprise! Surprise! She was one herself!

Her great-great grandmother was Wilhelmina "Minna" Robbing, Sophie Robbing Vahsholtz', older sister! To me, this was like striking gold!

This is why genealogy is so interesting. You never know when a new door is going to open and you find, meet and

enjoy a new friendship.

We had a delightful breakfast with Mary and Clyde and two of Mary's sisters and their husbands in a little Nebraska town. Then we set out to visit their old family farm they still use for family gatherings. Then we went to several cemeteries looking for the Senior Robbing graves which, to this day, remain a mystery. But, we now have more eyes looking for information and one day I just know the answer will pop into focus.

While we didn't learn as much about the Robbing's as we'd hoped, we learned one interesting fact. The name is pronounced "Robing" as in dis-robing, not "Robbing" as in what one does in a bank. ■



*Speaking of family projects. Mary's Bock family has saved their family's farm house and keep it up with family furnishings, etc. It is like walking into your Grandmother's home and she's just out in the garden getting some fresh veggies for your lunch, coming back momentarily. The farm house is lovingly maintained for family gatherings. Everyone shares in the upkeep. What an inspiration for keeping a family heritage ongoing!*





**Remember ...**

...last issue's Thanksgiving poem by Kim (Vahsholtz) Wallace, where the lights went out during the holiday, making the best Thanksgiving ever? Marge and I were folding the copies of that newsletter to be mailed ... and the lights went out. So we folded by candlelight.

**Remember ...**

... how many times we've reminded you about addresses? Every newsletter we send via snail mail costs the treasury at least a buck, and if it goes to a wrong address, another to put it right. So be sure we have your correct address, and please please please, an email address where we can send your copy in glowing color and free!

**Remember ...**

... your family's history and heritage. We welcome you to relate stories in this newsletter for the benefit of the family at large, and we print nearly all the stuff we get.

**Remember ...**

... even more importantly, to save what you have. Those photos of you, the kids, your parents and aunt Betty are family treasures that will become more valuable as the years go by—but not if your descendants have no idea who's who. Take time with your family to gather 'round the fire with the albums. Tell the kids the stories behind each photograph, and while you're at it, write who the people are on the back of each. Why is this important? Remember those old family photos you tossed, because no one knew who they were?

**Remember ...**

... the need for safe keeping. Our branch set up an antique "family trunk" and filled it with photos and memorabilia. It's in the care of Tony Vahsholtz, his generation's senior blood son in our branch. Tony moves a lot, packing that trunk along—and now it's grown to two trunks! ■

**Remember ... Lloyd and Ella Vahsholtz**

*This photograph of Lloyd, Ella and yours truly Editor Bob was taken two decades ago in Washougal, Washington, in front of the house that Lloyd built with his own hands, starting about 1950. It's where he and Ella raised their family. Now both Lloyd and Ella are gone and memories are all we have of this couple who did so much to keep the Vahsholtz family together. Their daughter, Joyce Hesla, found Lloyd's story among his collection of family memories. You'll see it on these pages, next issue.*

*We all have our time machines. Some take us back, they're called memories. Some take us forward, they're called dreams.*

Jeremy Irons

# Korean Ice fishing

By Ginger Richter

**Another adventure** ... I went on an Embassy-organized trip with 31 others to Yeongpyong, about 1:40 hrs outside of Seoul. Things started off interestingly enough when a car backed into our bus just as we were arriving at the location.

After some rock jumping across a pretty and wide stream (there was a road but that would've been boring), we "caught" a tractor and trailer ride that would haul us up into the mountains to the "pond" for our ice fishing day. I was decked out in leggings, lined yoga pants, a running turtleneck, sweatshirt, winter boots, two pairs of gloves, and my ski jacket and pants, plus a ski head band. I was snug as a bug.

It seemed pretty warm at first, which was a good thing since I had to feed my maggots (bait) onto my teensy tiny fish hooks (6 or 7) that ran down the fishing wire, with a weight on the end. The "fishing pole" resembles more of a fly swatter, with a neon bob on it. We got little to no instruction on the fine art of ice fishing and then headed down to the pond. With a \$2 rental of a stool to sit on, you'd get a bag of potato chips or instant ramyon (ramen) when you returned it. I opted for the ramyon, which you'll note under my arm in the bottom photo with my catch of the day.

Because I wasn't moving around I quickly found my feet and hands were getting cold despite all my layers. I also wasn't getting any bites. So I moved my setup to a deeper part of the pond and got away from the shoreline. I had the



area to myself, with most everyone hanging out in the center of the pond. The ice holes were about 4x4", and I wasn't expecting them to be so small. They were really too small for two or more people to fish out of them, which is why I abandoned my group and went off on my own. Also makes it more cerebral and therapeutic.

After an hour I'd decided I'd had enough; didn't think I'd had a bite, and the sledding hill was calling. So I

hauled up my line and lo and behold there was a fishy on it! I had no idea because the darned thing was miniscule and didn't weigh anything. So I unhooked him, threw him in my bucket for a photo op later, then dropped my line again, encouraged that I might get another. After 30 minutes though, I gave up and decided that between the one live catch I'd gotten, and the dead one who floated up into my ice hole, I'd call it good. I think only one other person in our group caught anything and he got two fishies (Smelt).

I had my photo op, then bought my sledding ticket and headed for the sled hill. It was great, lots of bumps and a really good one at the bottom that had me airborne every time (which meant landing on my tailbone 10 times which I paid for later). I managed to get in 10 sled trips (and was sweating under all my layers) before it was time to go back and meet the group to head for the bus. I can't even think of the last time I'd been sledding, but it's definitely been decades.

The area is very small, but in the second picture you'll see some nice chalets (five in total) that would be lovely to stay in during spring/summer/fall with a nice deck overlooking the pond and they look really nice. There's also a much larger chalet either for families, or it's a group of condo-like places in a building. It also looked very nice. I'll have to look into going back and it's an easy enough drive to make.

The return trip took quite awhile longer because we hit bad traffic on the expressway, but I was still home by 3:30 p.m. and it was a good (and fun!) day. ■

**Vahsholtz Cousins** is published twice yearly, spring and fall. Copies go out to some 250 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 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 half-dozen email bounces or returned mail from those who have moved, passed on, or changed their address. Please let Marge know! [mvahsholtz@gmail.com](mailto:mvahsholtz@gmail.com)**

And if you want to make a donation, contact Treasurer Tony Vahsholtz [avahsholtz@gmail.com](mailto:avahsholtz@gmail.com) or his new address: 12419 S. Downing Way, Nampa, Idaho 83686. ■