



Vahsholtz Cousins

August, 2018

www.vahsholtz.com

Extra! Extra! Extra!

VAHSHOLTZ

COUSINS

Newsletter is

TOAST!



ALAS 'TIS TRUE! This is your Last Issue!

Sometimes, decisions simply must be made and this is one of those times.

At the Wisconsin Reunion, your editors (Bob & Marge—pictured right) announced their retirement from editing. A move to a retirement community in Washington State is being planned.

“We’re simply getting too old and too tired to continue,” the couple announced. Replacements for the tasks of gathering stories, writing, editing, printing, distributing and keeping track were sought. Also on the wish list; a Reunion Coordinator, along with other tasks required to keep the family news and national reunions going.

Neither Editor nor Coordinator was found. Yet the need remains.

Master of Ceremonies Greg Vahsholtz suggested



A couple of kids from Kansas. Your retiring editors, Bob and Marge Vahsholtz, with help from Grant Wood

options for going forward, leading to vigorous discussion among those present.

Conclusions were reached.

First, with attendance dropping, costs rising and

hosts hard to find, it was decided to revert to the time-honored plan of local or regional reunions.

As you’ll see on page 6, these reunions started in Kansas with relatives gathering in homes, church basements, parks and the like. Our Wisconsin relatives had similar get-togethers. As relatives came from afar, Les Vahsholtz led the way to *national* reunions, held at various locations.

But those failed to attract the young crowd as hoped, hosting was more difficult and coordinating it all became a huge task.

So it was agreed we will start with three regional reunions; *Central* focused on Kansas and led by Jenny Werner, *Northwest*, focused on Idaho and led by Greg Vahsholtz, and *Northeast*, focused on Wisconsin and led by Barbara Patterson.

Jenny Werner will handle the address files.

Marge will continue as Family Genealogist. Tony Vahsholtz will stay on as treasurer.



Welcome

to TODAY'S WORLD of COMMUNICATION

Les Vahsholtz created the Vahsholtz website, still active today under the guidance of his son, webmaster Tim Vahsholtz.

Les also championed the use of Facebook, email, texting and many other newer means of communication, not to mention the traditional telephone and snail mail.

Over the years, this newsletter has become a compromise; mostly an electronic production—in newsletter format—a direct descendant of traditional hard copy publications. It was decided in Wisconsin that newer methods of keeping in touch must—and *should*—replace this newsletter.

Jenny Werner, Les' daughter, will maintain and expand the 250-family Vahsholtz contact list, working with Tim and Les' niece, Geri Tate's daughter, Janet Powell. Geri Tate, Les' sister and Carole Vahsholtz, Les' wife, will also be deeply involved. A team effort built on Les' legacy.

Send Family news such as regional reunions to Jenny for media posting. jrreynolds04@gmail.com The list of family members will grow via Facebook and similar media contacts. Send news such as births, deaths and new-found relatives to Marge Vahsholtz mvahsholtz@gmail.com

About 50 of us are still anchored to old media—snail mail, Sunday dinner and telephone. Let's work together to keep those important folks in touch with our changing world. Funds are available for mailing invitations, etc. ■

As noted above and on page 5, Janet and I have agreed to host the 2020 reunion in Kansas, and boy, do we have some *great ideas* and exciting plans! (We'll bring you more about this in the months to come.) We have also officially volunteered to be the center hub for the family going forward, taking on as much as Bob & Marge would like to pass on, including a digital newsletter and the family information database. We'll also be the central navigators of the family for news and notices of regional reunions—the keepers (and passers-on) of news-worthy events and stories as provided to us to post, publish and share with the family at large.

During this transitional time, please be patient with us. While we do not have the luxury of being retired and available to devote lots of our time and attention to this effort, we do believe we can help continue the great tradition of family community and connection through the newsletters of olde, while working towards the digital age which we all now find ourselves a part of. The ultimate goal? Helping usher in the younger generations through maximization of our connections and activity on social media, and most specifically, Facebook.

We're excited about this new chapter for the Vahsholtz cousins and are looking forward to what lies ahead in the months and years to come!

Jenny & Janet



Janet Powell & Jenny Werner



Metropolitan Milwaukee, the “big city of little neighborhoods,” has a population of some 1.5 million and is growing. It has gone past its beer and rustbelt heritage to become a thriving Midwestern metropolis, adding 2,500 motel rooms in the past five years. The above photo (courtesy The Economist magazine) shows the skyline as we saw it from Lake Michigan.

MILWAUKEE

and the 2018 Vahsholtz Reunion

By Barbara Patterson

We were headquartered at the Radisson Hotel in Brookfield, on the outskirts of Milwaukee, Wisconsin on July 12th through July 15th. The weather was hot and humid ... very hot and humid. Thursday late afternoon and evening were spent settling in, meeting and greeting people.

Friday morning after breakfast, Zach Domach presented a short history of the Wisconsin Branch, descendants of Heinrich August and Augusta Friederike Vahsholtz and their 11 children. Marge had a wall display of the Kansas and Wisconsin branches showing how we all blend together. We all introduced ourselves and stated where we had travelled from. The states were: Arizona, California, Illinois, Kansas, Missouri, New York and Oklahoma, as well as Wisconsin.

Then Greg conducted the Business Meeting. There was a lot to discuss regarding where the 2020 Reunion will be held. Janet and Jenny volunteered to be hosts in Kansas. Discussion was held about the newsletter, future reunions and use of various media sources for communication. We discussed what the Committee had planned for events and traveling to events. It was a lively discussion of business, and fun, too.

Friday afternoon the group took a 90-minute boat tour on the Milwaukee River and out into Lake Michigan. A



Not all 29 attendees are shown in front of the Bavarian Bierhouse. How many can you identify?

Descendants of Franz Leonard Vahsholtz

Greg Vahsholtz-Arizona/Idaho
 Geri (Vahsholtz Anschutz) Tate-Kansas
 Janet (Anschutz) Powell-Kansas
 Allan & Martha Brockmeier-Missouri
 Carole (Armentrout-Taylor) Vahsholtz (Mrs. Les)-Kansas
 Jennifer "Jenny" (Vahsholtz-Reynolds) Werner-Kansas
 Royce & Kathy Caldron-Oklahoma
 Bob & Marge Vahsholtz-California

Descendants of Heinrich "August" Vahsholtz – 1841-1924

Lloyd & Sharon (Walters) Powless-Wisconsin
 Alex Powless-Wisconsin
 Mark & Gayle (Walters) Longley-Wisconsin
 Barbara (Walters-Hoxie) Patterson-Illinois
 Kenneth Hoxie & Lisa Stauff & her sons Jack, Riley & Grady White-Illinois
 Kelly Hoxie-Illinois
 Jeff & Jane (Mathews) Domach, Emily Domach-Wisconsin
 Zachary "Zach" Domach-New York
 David & Lynne (Wordell) Kramer-Wisconsin

very knowledgeable guide pointed out the various sights along the way. We had reservations at the Lakefront Brewery for dinner. While they had a large menu, the cousins were introduced to a long Wisconsin tradition of ... if it's Friday Night ... it's Fish Fry night. The brewery kept our energy up by providing polka music with our meal.

We regrouped back at the hotel and some went to the Historic Third Ward to Caroline's Jazz Club. It was an excellent performance.

Saturday, after breakfast we headed north to the Vahsholz Homestead in Cedarburg, Wisconsin, a quaint, charming little town about 20 miles north of Milwaukee. Heinrich Vahsholz was a stonemason when he came from Prussia and was a pioneer in the Cedarburg area. He built the house in 1876 and it is in wonderful condition 142 years later. He also helped with the building of Immanuel Lutheran Church on Washington Avenue, the main street in Cedarburg. When she heard about our reunion, the current owner graciously offered us the opportunity to tour the house. The group had lunch wherever they chose and most walked through Cedarburg.

That evening we had dinner at the Bavarian Bierhaus in Glendale, a suburb of Milwaukee. It's another Milwaukee treasure, a city known for its German food and culture. We were once again serenaded with polka music. I have to say, when a band plays the Chicken Dance, everybody knows how to do that form, East Coast to West Coast. It must be in our genes. After again regrouping back at the hotel, many of the group went to Bastille Days. That's a Milwaukee event that happened to be scheduled the same time we were there. Food, music, etc. was all part of the festivities.

Some of us stayed at the hotel and just spent the time visiting and getting to know each other better, catching up on family news.

Sunday morning, we met for our Worship Service led by Lloyd Powless. Lloyd talks from the heart. He stressed how important family is. We all joined in singing "Jesus Loves Me".

I thought the Reunion was a lot of fun and look forward to more regional reunions. Jenny and Janet were so warm and easy to get to know, so I know they'll make us all feel welcome in 2020. ■



Having fun on the boat, Bob wearing Geri's hat, hugged by Carole, with Milwaukee in the background



Cousins at the Heinrich Vahsholz house in Cedarburg. Back; Jenny Werner, Carole Vahsholtz, Emily Domach, Greg Vahsholtz, Jane & Jeff Domach, Martha (partly hidden) & Allan Brockmeier, Kelly Hoxie, Zach Domach; Front; Royce & Kathy Caldron, Bob & Marge Vahsholtz, Geri Tate, Janet Powell, Barb Patterson and Sharon Powless



Catching up on family news



The Wisconsin Business Meeting

By Carole Vahsholtz

The 2018 Vahsholtz Cousins Reunion began with our hostess Barb Patterson thanking everyone for joining their Wisconsin family in Milwaukee. Barb shared the two-day itinerary and then turned over the meeting to our Master of Ceremonies, Greg Vahsholtz.

The twenty in attendance at the morning meeting introduced themselves with their lineage. Geri Tate, substitute secretary, shared the minutes from the 2016 Idaho Reunion. A treasurer's report was given of \$779.25. It was decided the amount would stay in the bank with Tony Vahsholtz controlling the disbursements as needed.

Jenny Vahsholtz gave an overview of the Vahsholtz website where it was asked for the number of "hits" it had received. She said a "counter" could be added to the website to calculate that number. She also shared that the domain name should be registered so that all the different spellings of the family name could be searched.

Barb shared how her DNA testing from Ancestry.com had revealed the percentage of ethnic origins she represented. Again Sharon Powless and Barb shared the outside events of the coming days.

The future of the reunions and the keeping of the records and newsletter was the major topic of conversation.

After Bob and Marge Vahsholtz once again shared their retirement plans and request for someone else to take over, Jenny Werner and Janet Powell volunteered to keep the family address records, the use of social media and our Vahsholtz website to spread the news of

the Vahsholtz cousins.

Marge wanted to continue to maintain the family tree, but the newsletter will be discontinued.

Bob and Marge will publish one final newsletter this fall [*this is it! Ed.*] with an overview of this year's reunion and updates of what is to come in regards to the sharing of information. They will include a summary of how the reunions started and expanded into the nationwide reunions we have had over the past 10 years. Bob gave special compliments to Les Vahsholtz for all that he did before his death to implement the expansion of the Vahsholtz connections across the USA and Europe.

Geri Tate was asked to submit what summary of these Cousin Reunions she could find. It will include the highlights of major events through the years beginning with Melvina Hitzeman who started the genealogy; the visit of Martin and Hannchen Vahsholz from Germany, the Zwillipp book; creation of the website by Les Vahsholtz; newsletter by Peggy Scott.

Due to the lack of younger people being able to attend and cost of the travel, it was also decided that the two-year national reunions would become regional.

Janet Powell and Jenny Werner volunteered to host a Kansas regional Vahsholtz reunion in 2020 with the help of Geri Tate and Carole Vahsholtz—date and location to be shared later. Everyone would still be invited but there would be more of a push to get the local Vahsholtz families to attend. It might be only a one-day event.

Barb Patterson volunteered to lead a Wisconsin region and Greg Vahsholtz to lead the Northwest region. ■

History of the Vahsholtz-Cousins Reunions

By Geri Tate

These reunions have been held for some 50 years, inspired by the work of Louis and Melvina Hitzeman.

Many years ago Dennis Vahsholtz and his mother Lillie wrote this brief history:

This is what my Mom and I can remember. Aunt Meta Veerhusen thought it would be a good idea to get the nearby relatives together for a type of reunion every fall, just to stay in touch. These would have been the sons and daughters of Ida and Ed Vahsholtz, their 1st and 2nd cousins and Aunts and Uncles that were still living. This was started in the early 70s and was usually held at local restaurants in Herington or Abilene.



After a few years they started to invite more people and contact information got shared. A couple of times pot

luck dinners were held after a church service, but not very many. Lloyd and Ella Vahsholtz from Washington State started coming and also the Americus, Emporia and Council Grove relatives, and it just kept expanding. As more people got involved there started to be a little program or slide show each year.

A highlight of these reunions was October 4, 1992 at the Rock Springs Ranch in Kansas, where several reunions have been held.

Through the efforts of Duane and Joanne Vahsholtz and his Uncle Lloyd and Ella Vahsholtz, a connection was made with Martin Vahsholtz from Remagen, Germany. Martin and his wife Hannchen came to Kansas to that year's Vahsholtz Cousins Reunion. My brother, Les Vahsholtz and I met them, along with Lloyd and Ella, at Seneca, Kansas.

We all traveled to Old St. John's Lutheran Church #2 cemetery west of Bern where Christian Vahsholtz is buried. It was a very emotional experience for Martin. He and



Hannchen hung a banner on his ancestor's tombstone .

At the reunion, Les was Master of Ceremonies and Meta Veerhusen and Lloyd and Ella were hosts.

I became involved after my parents, Martin and Eleanor Vahsholtz, couldn't drive to the reunions. My husband and I took them to a restaurant hosted by Fred and Merle Vahsholtz in Abilene, Kansas.

Another milestone was the reunion at St. Paul's Lutheran Parish Hall in Herington, Kansas in 2002. That was the

year Bob & Marge Vahsholtz and a production team presented *The Road from Zwilipp*,

the history of the Vahsholtz family, built upon the Hitzeman research.

In 2006, Les got the Vahsholtz website started, and Peggy Scott began this newsletter. That year Les and Carole Vahsholtz hosted the reunion in Rock Springs, where it was decided to hold reunions every two years.

Efforts were launched by Les to attract younger members through Facebook and other media. In recognition of the scattering of the family, it was agreed to go further afield, choosing vacation spots to attract families who might combine reunions with vacation trips.

The 2008 and 2010 Vahsholtz Cousins Reunions were hosted by Allan and Martha Brockmeier in Branson, Missouri, followed by 2012 and 2014 reunions in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

The big news for the 2012 reunion was when Les Vahsholtz, who'd been diagnosed with ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease), presented slides and made his farewell speech using his talking computer. He announced he'd be stepping down from his many leadership roles.





Bob and Marge introduced Hulda Vahsholtz Friedrich's book *MEMORIES Growing Up in Kansas—1880's*, edited from her 1937 journal.



The 2016 Vahsholtz Cousins Reunion was held in Garden Valley, Idaho, hosted by Ruth and Ron Richter.

Lloyd and Sharon Powless

agreed to host the 2018 reunion in Wisconsin. When Lloyd suffered health problems, other Vahsholtz cousins stepped in to help, team hosting the Milwaukee reunion.

We don't have records of attendance at Kansas reunions prior to 2004, but we believe the strategy of national reunions, while enjoyed by all attendees, has required more effort by the hosts, increased expense for the guests and has not served the intended purpose of uniting our far flung family as much as hoped. Thus it was decided in Wisconsin to return to the simpler format of regional reunions where all family members would be welcome.

	2004 Kansas -----	88
	2006 Kansas-----	50
<i>Attendance Records</i>	2008 Missouri -----	27
	2010 Missouri -----	45
	2012 Colorado-----	74
	2014 Colorado-----	72
	2016 Idaho-----	39
	2018 Wisconsin -----	29 ■

So, You're Going to Host a Reunion

By Ruth (Vahsholtz) Richter

Reunions are great fun! When just arriving as the reunion begins, you get all psyched up to meet and greet and begin the fun and games. Most of us don't give too much thought to what has gone on before to make sure that it *is* fun and games!

Ron and I hosted the reunion in Idaho in the summer of 2016 and it was great fun, showing off our nifty beauty spot in the U.S. to those folks who had not been to Idaho before. I'd do it all again just for the pleasure of that.



However, long before the actual reunion, a really good venue needs to be found and nailed down for the weekend you want to have it. Summertime can be difficult to find a weekend available, especially if you don't start way in advance. A program needs planning; not over-planned, with too much structure. People really want to just visit with each other getting to know new family and friends, but they also need some kind of a schedule to follow, they need to know where to get meals, what there is to do in the area, and on it goes.

BUT to me the biggest thing the host(ess) needs to do is work really hard to make sure you actually have people coming to the reunion. In my experience, many years of planning reunions for alumni as well as the Idaho Vahsholtz reunion, **contact, personal and regular contact, is the key to a successful reunion.** Sending out an email/letter that initiates the thought to folks of even considering coming to the reunion is the first step; that letter needs to pique their interest! And it needs to be sent out way early; maybe a whole year in advance, depending on the situation.

Send a second reminder or more detailed letter, since some folks are going to come back with good questions that need good answers and follow-ups, plus writing to the individuals who asked the good questions! Reminder notices to follow, nagging a bit for signing up by the deadline, making sure they know the costs upfront, and any other thing they might need (we had a bedding problem but got what we needed mostly from the thrift store!).

Make sure guests sign up for the fun and games they say they want to do ... and pay for it!

BUT it's the *personal* contact that will make the difference and letting people know they'll be welcome, you're excited they're coming, can't wait to meet them or see them again, and that you'll make sure their needs are being handled. Reunions are great and everyone invited to one should consider attending. Being the host is fun too, but there are challenges requiring commitment. It's well worth the effort if it's a success! ■

GUIDELINES for Hosting a Regional Vahsholtz Cousins Reunion

By your editors

A decade ago, we worked with Les to develop hosting guidelines. No hard and fast rules. At Wisconsin we agreed upon a new start with regional events and today's communication methods. This is an update for regional reunions, including some suggestions from the past. Feel free to try new things, do your best and have fun!

1. **First, Make a Plan** If you're thinking of a three-day event at a resort, that's a different ball game than simply inviting nearby family for a picnic in the park. National Vahsholtz Cousin Reunions might attract 50 or so people from near and far. A Regional Vahsholtz Cousin Reunion might center on relatives and families who live nearby with just a dozen or so expected. Maybe a regional event could be built around a planned visit by a relative from afar. Make a good estimate of how many might attend and build the plan accordingly. A few phone calls or text messages might lead to expanding or shrinking the plan.
2. **Reunions Should Self-Fund** The treasury is small and intended to cover postage and ongoing expenses. Attendees should pay for their own meals, rooms and entertainment. Sometimes a collection may be needed to cover something. Try to minimize funding risks that depend upon attendance or other variables. There's probably no need to seek donations for the V Treasury for the time being.
3. **Set the Date** In recent years we've met in the summer, every other year, hoping people would plan vacations around the reunion and more young people would attend. But summer is a busy time, not only for family members but for motels, dining and entertainment events. Establish the date as early as possible, in consultation with the whole team who will be involved. Choose any time that seems useful. Motel rates are highest on weekends, but those days are best for working families.
4. **The Host Facility is Key** We used to meet at parks and the like, generally one-day reunions and most came from their homes or stayed with relatives or in nearby motels. With national reunions, it was necessary to arrange multiple-day motel accommodations, and may be needed for regional events as well. There's nothing wrong with simply gathering for a lunch or barbecue at someone's home. Meet at a favorite restaurant. The further your guests have to travel, the more complex arrangements will likely be needed. Maybe guests from afar can be put up in local family's guest bedrooms.
5. **Invite Distant Cousins** Try to make these events more than just the "usual crowd" gathering for the usual activities. Look for reasons to meet—memorable anniversaries, relatives visiting from afar and the like. Contact Jenny and Tim for help in reaching out to relatives distant in both miles and normal family contact. The idea is to bring the family closer together and build bridges. Consider mailing invitations to those lacking email, etc. One of the best parts of a reunion is getting acquainted with distant cousins. With families scattered, these reunions provide links to help bind us together.
6. **Plan Activities** You may want to schedule a fun activity to do together. Hopefully something that involves interaction between family members; certainly something that will help make the reunion memorable. The location chosen should provide some options to consider. You may need to provide someone to look after (entertain?) small kids. Try to keep the costs down and let people know through media and the website all the costs that may be incurred in attending. National reunions typically meet in recreational spots where there's lots to do. People who are distant seem more likely to come if they can turn the reunion into a family vacation. Plan to arrange for times and places for people to meet, greet and get acquainted. Such things are the heart of these gatherings.
7. **Coordinate** Don't try to handle this on your own. It's a *family* reunion. Use media and the telephone to keep all members of the local tribe aware of what's going on and lean on them for help! Of course you'll make mistakes. We're Vahsholtz's. We bounce right back and keep going.
8. **Publicity** Reunions thrive on good planning. Stay

in touch by sending invitations via emails, snail mail, Facebook and the Vahsholtz website. Generate and keep publicity flowing and building enthusiasm for the reunion. Lots of pictures help. Get them from the facilities you'll use and the events you're planning. Use graphics and photos to get people geared up. You don't have to be certain of all the planned activities or even the timing to start publicity. It's all about having fun as a family.

9. **Communicate** Personal contact is the very best publicity, so talk to other family members and spread the word. Emphasize the need for RSVP. It's very difficult to plan an event for an unknown number of guests. Even so, leave room for a few extra guests, because they do tend to drop by unannounced!
10. **Sum it Up** When your reunion is over, use family media to spread the word about how much fun was had, encouraging others to go and do likewise. A few photos and a little blurb on the website and other media would be fine. Always plan ahead for the next reunion! ■

How did **THIS** Happen?

By Ruth (Vahsholtz) Richter

Have you ever thought about being an astronaut? Or maybe a physicist? Or how about being a digger of ditches? I'll admit to having thought about being a Realtor which would have been a good career for me, except all those years of living overseas wouldn't have worked out so well. Husband Ron says I should have been a truck driver like my Dad, Fred Vahsholtz, was off and on over the years. You see, I like to drive and go places!

Growing up on a farm near a tiny town in Kansas, dreaming grandiose things wasn't really in our mindset, though I went through a period of time playing with paper dolls when I was sure I could be a fantastic clothes designer. Hmmm, jeans and a T-shirt are more the standard wear here in Idaho!

So, after we retired here we were both looking for something to do; some kind of volunteer work, and you might have thought we'd go for something that matched our career expertise. However, Ron became a disc jockey on the local volunteer radio station, and is known to sing along with the oldies but goodies he plays. It's usually unintentional because he's forgot-

ten—again—to turn off the mike! I chose to go in a different direction and ended up starting a small thrift shop called “Granny's Closet,” affiliated with the Senior Center in our small town (see the article in *Vahsholtz Cousins*, March 2014). After more than ten years our wonderful group of volunteers and I decided to move away from that venture and start a separate thrift store. We rented our own space where we can direct the donations ourselves, 100 percent.

The new venture is called *Payette Forward*. Those folks who came to the Idaho Cousins Reunion two years ago may notice, it's a play on the name of the river that runs through our valley and the concept of paying it forward to our community. This idea was conceived less than two months ago, has been up and running just six weeks ago at this writing, and is already a HUGE success!

What makes for a successful career or retirement “project?” I've contemplated this a lot and having just come out of a week where I personally worked something over 50 hours (Retirement? Indeed!) with at least a half dozen others working just as much. I've con-



“Granny's Closet” has doubled in size and sales

cluded that hard work definitely plays a part. But I think more likely, especially for something like *Payette Forward*, it has more to do with a passion for what we're doing, lots of humor and laughter, and the joy of a job well done.

My mother used to say “any job worth doing is worth doing well” and that's been a good motto for me in life as well as retirement. Mom told me that truism when I was supposed to be dusting furniture as a child

and I didn't quite "get it". But when I went back to work full time in my early 40s in a new career field, I knew I'd have to work really hard, throw myself into the learning curve quickly, and have a passion for what I was doing. Throw in a good dose of humor, laughter, hugs, and love, and it was all a great experience.

My advice: no matter our age (I happen to turn 77 today as I write!), we all have something to offer that is beneficial to others, and in the end, it's likely to be even more beneficial to us! Further, no matter our age, the job, whatever it is, needs doing. So we should get it done to the best of our ability, quickly, even if it's distasteful. The best reward comes from feeling good when it's behind you. ■

A Rare But Important Genetic Disease

We recently had a phone call from a Vahsholtz cousin in Washington State (Daughter of Lloyd and Ella Vahsholtz) wanting to alert the V Family, especially descendants of John C.D. Vahsholtz (1879-1973) and Elizabeth Alice Mosteller (1878-1953), about a genetic disease that has been discovered in their descendants.

One of their granddaughters was diagnosed in 2015 with **Alpha-1 Antitrypsin Deficiency** (Google it!) and died while waiting for a liver transplant. It's a genetic condition sometimes called "genetic COPD" passed from parents to their children through abnormal Z or S genes. Lloyd and Ella Vahsholtz were both carriers of the gene, increasing the risk to their descendants. Only 100,000 cases are known in America, partly because the symptoms resemble COPD and can only be diagnosed by a blood test. That blood test can determine if you have the bad gene, could minimize the damage and save your liver; maybe even your life.

More specific information can be obtained from the Alpha-1 Foundation; 1-800-245-6809—Cathy Horsak there can help you get a free, confidential test. ■

Editor's Farewell

We're going to be moving into a retirement community in the state of Washington in the near future. We don't want to leave our lovely hill here in California where we've been retired for 30 years. When we moved in, Marge said, "They'll take me out of here in a pine box!"

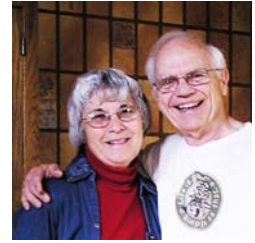
Well, maybe not. Our health has held up reasonably well, but as we joined so many of you already in your eighties, we find "you're only as old as you think you are" no longer works as well as it did a decade or two ago.

We've enjoyed our years here in the country where the weather is always nice. Retirement has been filled with projects that have proven interesting and fun. Most of you in our age bracket will probably agree—the old rocking chair holds little charm. We remain as busy as ever, but we're down to working on our projects only 40 or 50 hours per week, and we're not nearly as effective at getting things done as we'd like. That's why we've had to give up this newsletter and several other interesting projects.

Our new digs will be a third the size of this house, so while we'll be taking lots of things with us so Marge can continue maintaining the Vahsholtz genealogy, we need to find a new home for some backup files. There are drawers and ring binders full of Vahsholtz Family research, books and paperwork here in our offices.

It broke our hearts when Melvina's files were lost at the time she downsized. We need help in preserving the data we have accumulated over the past 30 years. People have entrusted us with lots of old letters as well as things, like an original birth certificate and many copies of photos we used over the years in editing the Zwilipp book, updates, this newsletter, articles and so forth. That material is the foundation of our Vahsholtz computer file currently numbering nearly 4,000 Vahsholtz relatives.

Before Les died, we had discussions in which we agreed the day would come when a new edition of the Zwilipp book would be needed. When that day arrives, whoever edits that book will be profoundly grateful for the stuff you helped preserve! Give us a call or send an email. ■



Bob's shirt says "Life is Good; Simple as That"

Vahsholtz Cousins has been published for 12 years. Circulation has grown to some 250 Vahsholtz families, supported entirely by donations. Those who supplied email addresses received full color copies attached to an email as a PDF file, which they could read on screen or print as desired. Those having no email address received a black and white edition mailed to their last known address. Copies of past editions can be found on our website, www.vahsholtz.com

"Snail mail" has been the biggest cost item of the whole Vahsholtz publication enterprise, due to costs of printing and stamps. Your donations made it possible and were appreciated. As this publication comes to a close, the treasury is sound. If you'd like to make a donation, or have expenses related to ongoing Vahsholtz Cousins expenses, contact Treasurer Tony Vahsholtz avahsholtz@gmail.com or mail to: 12419 S. Downing Way, Nampa, Idaho 83686. ■
