



Planning Your Class Reunion

Helpful Hints from the Adrian High School Alumni Association

Whether you are a seasoned reunion veteran or just getting started with a five- or ten-year class reunion, the Adrian High Alumni Association can be of assistance to you. Our mission is to support the Adrian Public Schools by 1) fostering connections and nurturing relationships between alumni and friends of the Adrian Public Schools 2) helping alumni organize activities and plan reunions and 3) raising funds in support of programs for the enhancement and enrichment of Adrian's fine public education system.

In addition, we maintain a mailing list of the almost 20,000 graduates of the Adrian High School which we offer to reunion groups as a service of our office. Hopefully we help you feel connected to one another and reconnected to your former schools.

The Association realizes that many of you are experienced reunion planners. Some of this information may be wisdom you already have. However, we have included some new ideas, an alumni resource contact and the ability to promote your reunion on our web site. Much of the information shared here are things learned from many years of reunions planned by many different class contacts and committees. We hope this proves to be helpful.

Getting Started

The planning of your class reunion should ideally start one year in advance of the reunion. The longer the time since your high school graduation, the more advance planning time is helpful. Often sites you want to use for your reunion activities are booked a year in advance by other organizations and, in addition, locating classmates can be very time consuming. However, don't panic! If you have less than a year, a nice reunion can be planned in a short amount of time.

Committee Formation

Committee members should include a variety of your classmates to promote balanced planning, encourage diverse and creative ideas which will help to attract as many attendees as possible. The size of the committee can vary, but remember, the more the merrier.

Select Leadership and a Date

Once the committee has been formed, there are some important decisions to make immediately:

- Select a Chairperson with strong leadership and organizational skills.
- Select a Treasurer with strong personal accounting skills who preferably has access to a computer and the Internet.
- Select a Secretary to maintain records and meeting minutes for future reference.
- Select a date as soon as possible in order to have the best selection of venues for your special weekend. Let the Alumni Office know of your reunion dates and send a copy of your schedule. We'll add your information to our records so we can publicize it in our newsletter, post it to our web site (www.theadrianmaples.com) and keep it available in case one of your classmates calls for information. If you are including a tour of the high school in your reunion plans, let the alumni office know as soon as possible so we can be sure that we have a tour guide available on the date you have chosen.

Start-up Funds

Funding for temporary operating expenses such as postage, printing and deposits can be a problem especially for a first-time committee. The committee members could advance "seed money" for these operating funds, planning on reimbursement once registration fees come in. Classes can have funds left in their activity fund at the time of graduation transferred to the alumni Association's "Class Funds." Those funds remain available to the class until they are

used up. Some classes have carried those funds for more than 20 years, adding left-over reunion money to it for use during the next reunion event. Using this service of the Alumni Office allows you to maintain a class bank account without having to open a personal account or applying for a tax id number.

Locating Classmates

Start this early. The AHS Alumni Office will provide you with a mailing list of the most recent available addresses of your class. The Foundation can provide this information to you in a variety of formats: a paper list, electronically on disk or as an e-mail attachment in Excel.

We do ask that as you get corrected addresses, you return that information to us. We do appreciate your assistance, and this will help you as you plan your next reunion. We try to keep track of everyone, but to insure our database is 100% accurate is impossible. We run our addresses through the United States Postal Services' National Change of Address several times a year but we also have our share of "missing" alumni. Divide up the list among your committee members and start looking. Some of the addresses may still be parent's old address and you may find them in the local phone book or online. You may be able to track down some on the Internet through online phone books or one of the many alumni search services listed in the Appendix B. A Facebook page is extremely helpful in locating lost alumni. Our past reunion planners have suggested that this helps immensely. Show your list to friends, as they may also know where someone is living. Develop a working relationship with reunion committees from the previous years and directly following your class' graduation year. Chances are the people you're looking for may have had siblings in other classes.

If you are working from a paper list and feel you have it updated and as accurate as possible, send a copy back to the Alumni Office. We will update the individual records and prepare a new list for you.

Subcommittee Assignment Suggestion

Delegate duties to avoid lots of time-consuming meetings. There is a story of one very seasoned reunion group that met only twice and enjoyed a very successful gathering. However, it is recommended that your committee meet more often than that for a well-planned event. For ideas, please see the Appendix A for a list of typical committee tasks.

Contracts

All vendor arrangements for the reunion should be in writing when at all possible. Verbal agreements could be misunderstood or changed leaving the group with few or no alternatives. Be sure that all contracts contain the type of service, date, time, price, equipment to be used, menu items, gratuities and so on.

Invitations and Reservations

It is most advisable to mail a “save-the-date” card as soon as you have your date set and mail your invites at least three months in advance. Many classes have been setting up their own mini reunion web sites where classmates can post photos, register for the event, get directions. Class Facebook pages are becoming very prevalent in the reunion process. We can include the web address on our web site and newsletter. For paper invites, we suggest including a response card and envelope addressed directly to the Registration and Mailing Chairperson for convenience.

Setting Costs

It is best to ask for payment with the mailing and to offer a slight discount to individuals who register before an early-bird deadline. E-mail registrations are also a convenience for attendees but receiving payment may become an issue. It is best to stress that people have the option to register by e-mail but they must send payments early to confirm their attendance. You don't want to secure a number of dinners with your caterer and then have 10 less people, as you may still have to pay for their meals.

When setting your costs, don't forget to figure in additional items such as tips, printing, decorations, postage, space rental and other fixed expenses associated with the event. A good rule of thumb is to add at least 15% to costs (unless the tip is figured in to the meal contract) then add an additional 5-10% to cover your fixed costs.

The Party is ON

Please keep in contact with the Alumni Office. We'd like to obtain updated addresses and photos from your event that we can include in our alumni newsletter.

After the Party is Over

Pat yourself on the back and schedule a post-reunion gathering to celebrate a job well done. Discuss what worked well and what you wouldn't repeat again. Have your committee Secretary record your responses for reference when planning the next reunion. In addition:

- Discuss who will be responsible for housing the records, leftover yearbooks, decorations etc. The Alumni Association is happy to assist by housing address records, but we cannot be responsible for housing any yearbooks, decorations or other items. We currently maintain a paper file for every class – we'd be glad to file records there.
- Discuss what to do with leftover funds. Consider a donation to the Foundation. This is an excellent means for your class to leave a lasting impression on APS. There are many options we can help you explore, including an "Adopt-A-Seat" program in the new Performing Arts Center. We also have a classroom grant program that accepts donations. Left-over funds can be deposited in a Class Fund maintained by the Alumni Office. These funds are available for use at your next reunion.
- By all means, let the Alumni Office know how the reunion went! We gratefully accept photos and write-ups to be used in the newsletter and on the Alumni web and Facebook pages.

Enjoy! Reunions are rewarding and hard work. Thanks for your effort and remember—keep in touch, we appreciate hearing from you!

For additional resources or help please contact:

Adrian High School Alumni Office
785 Riverside Ave. Ste. 2
Adrian, MI 49221
(517) 263-2911
Lisa Wilkie, Director

Appendix A

Sub-committee Suggestions

Treasurer and Finance—Prepares budget for committee, establishes checking account, sets costs and maintains all financial records.

Decorations—Establishes a theme for the reunion and design table and room decorations, if desired. Try a display of class memorabilia that might include letter jackets, pep club sweaters, buttons, bumper stickers, play programs or pictures from your era. The Alumni Office has several Maple Blue table cloths that can be used. There are also limited decorations that can be borrowed as well. Most classes opt to set their own theme or gather their own décor for the reunion.

Registration and Mailings—Prepares items for check-in area such as nametags with graduation photo, name in large print, and current city and state of the attendee. You may want to ask for volunteers to serve as hosts for each event. The Alumni Office offers graphic assistance for preparing, printing and mailing the registration materials for a very nominal fee.

Optional Reunion Activities—Are you planning anything other than the reunion events? Things that appeal to one group or another? Special activities for the spouses of graduates? This group can organize school tours, golf outings, city tours, late night breakfasts or a family picnic. Be creative and ensure all of these options make it on the registration materials.

Site and Food Selection—Sets the dates and contacts at various locations such as motels, hotels, country and golf clubs, banquet halls and other facilities to host your events. Visits the sites and, with your general committee members, select a satisfactory date, time and location and menu. Some classes host a formal evening while others are more casual – it is really up to the individual classes what works best.

Faculty Contact—Perhaps some of your favorite teachers would like to join you for one or more events. This group determines which faculty members are available and after suggestions from the whole group, extends special invitations to those requested. The Adrian Schools Foundation keeps some records of faculty and is happy to assist you with locating these people to the best of our ability.

Publicity—Mail a postcard six months to a year in advance asking people to “save the date” of your reunion and offer contact information (such as the web site, e-mail address or regular post address of the Registration Chairperson). Let them know more information will follow. The Publicity Committee works closely with the Registration Committee, helping to design and mail the registration materials. Try newspaper articles and broadcast public service announcements around the winter holidays to catch people who have returned home for the holidays. As the date gets closer, send out press releases to the local media and ask your school office if they can post your information on their outdoor marquees.

Reunion Book—Some classes publish a yearbook of reunion activities and personal biographies. If you decide to do this, you will need to include a biographical information form with your registration materials, decide if the book will be available before, during or after the event, and if this will be included as a reunion favor or at an additional charge. This requires a lot of work but is a wonderful memento of the event. There are many examples of these books done by varying classes in the alumni office.

Appendix B

Commercial Web Sites

Some classes may choose to use the following web sites to assist in your planning. These commercial sites are in no way tied to, nor endorsed by, the Foundation or Alumni Association, but may prove to be helpful.

www.555-1212.com online phonebook that allows you to do reverse searches

www.whitepages.com can find individuals on line

www.alumni.net alumni registry/search

www.classmates.com alumni registry

www.classquest.com classmate search and web site hosting

www.classreunionsearch.com reunion listing/search

www.findmypals.com links to additional web sites for finding alumni

www.gradfinder.com alumni registry/search

www.reunion.com reunion listing/search

www.reunited.com site to register your reunion information

www.seniorclassmemories.com top songs, movies and sports for your graduation year.

Appendix C

Location Ideas, Caterers, etc.

The Alumni Association is happy to provide suggestions for possible locations, caterers, activities, services and commercial web sites that may assist reunion planners as they make decisions regarding their special event. We provide this information as suggestions to find helpful resources. We do not endorse any one business, service provider or website over any other. This list may not be complete and any omissions are not intentional. This list may be updated at any time. Please make us aware of any business, activity, service provider or web site you think should be added to this list for the benefit of future reunion groups.

Lodging

- Carlton Lodge

1629 W. Maumee Street

Adrian, MI 49221

Phone: (517) 263-7000

- Holiday Inn Express

1077 W. US 223

Adrian, MI 49221

Phone: (517) 265-5700

- Super 8 – Adrian

1091 W. US 223 Hwy.

Adrian, MI 49221

Phone: (517) 265-8888

- Super 6 – Adrian

1575 W Maumee St

Adrian, MI 49221

Phone: 263-5741

Tecumseh Inn Motel, 423-7401

Evan's Lake Motel, 431-2233

Super 8 (Brooklyn), 592-0888

Clinton Inn (Clinton), 456-4151

Bed & Breakfasts

- Heartwood Place

3723 Wisner Hwy.

Adrian, MI 49221

Phone: (517)265-3550

- Ellis Inn (Blissfield), 486-3155
- Dewey Lake (Brooklyn), 467-7122
- Chicago Street Inn (Brooklyn), 592-3888
- Stage Coach Stop (Brooklyn), 467-2300

Reunion Gathering Venues

Lenawee Country Club
4110 Country Club Rd
Adrian, MI 49221
517/265-2142

Christian Family Center
1800 W US 223
Adrian, MI 49221
517/263-6232

Adrian College (Tobias Room, Outdoor Patios)
110 Madison St
Adrian, MI 49221
517/265-5161

Siena Heights University (Benincasa Dining Hall)
1247 E Siena Heights Dr
Adrian, MI 49221
517/263-0731

The Seasons
136 S Main St.
Adrian, MI 49221
517/605-8551

Dynamic Occasions
2011 W. Beecher S
Adrian, MI 49221
517/759-4234

Lenawee County Fair & Events Ground Building
602 Dean St
Adrian, MI 49221
517/263-3007

UAW Hall
1450 Beecher St
Adrian, MI 49221
517/263-8030

Devils Lake Yacht Club
2097 Marsh Dr.
Manitou Beach, MI 49256
517/547-7352

Stage Coach Stop
Golden Nugget Lodge
1237 US 12
Tipton, MI 49287
517/759-6276

Carlton Lodge Banquet Room
1629 W Maumee St
Adrian, MI 49221
517/263-7000

Steele Carriage House
130 Main St
Adrian, MI 49221
517/265-7798

LA Café
4460 W Maumee St.
Adrian, MI 49221
517/263-8788

K of C Hall
3375 Treat Hwy.
Adrian, MI 49221
517/263-3807

Smaller Social Venues

ZZ's Grill
520 College Ave.
Adrian, MI 49221
517/263-5550

Fricker's
720 S Main St
Adrian, MI 49221
517/266-7991

Sauce Italian Grill & Pub
149 N Main St.
Adrian, MI 49221
517/759-4757

Gov. Croswell Tea Room
125 E Maumee St
Adrian, MI 49221
517/759-4249

Hooligan's Grille & Pub
113 E Maumee St.
Adrian, MI 49221
517/920-4291

The Brick Wall Pub & Grill
114 W Maumee St
Adrian, MI 49221
517/759-4072

Caterers
Adrian Public Schools
517/266-4549

Vo-Tech Culinary Arts
517/263-2108

Stone's Catering
517/264-5500

Coast-to-Coast Deli
517/264-2123

Sauce Italian Grille – see above

Gov Croswell Tea Room – see above.