

Bransongoers Reunion 2013

Well, I first want to say thank you to my husband, Don, for being diligent in his efforts to attend the Reunion this year. We have not missed one since we started going about 8 yrs ago.

You see, Don had Bariatric surgery on May 29th and one week postop, we were headed to Branson! I told him that we could skip it, but he said he would be fine. I was going to help him drive, but it rained continually for the entire trip until we got to Springfield. It would be torrential for a few minutes and then slow down, a very yucky day for sure! Don drove the whole way to boot!

When we got to the hotel, we unloaded the vehicle and headed to Panera to meet Linda DeRyke for supper. This was to celebrate Linda's birthday a few days before that! Then, we planned to take her to a show and the one that I had longed to see was "SIX". It was thee best show I have ever seen in all my years going to Branson. (Make sure you put this show in your Bucket List for next year!) And, oh, by the way, thanks to Linda for taking ME to the show!

I've decided I like to come early on Wednesday, so that I can see some shows, shop, etc. Once the Polio Reunion starts on Friday, there is too much stuff going on and I don't want to miss any of it! After all, I only get to see most of you once a year, so I hang out with the group religiously!

Thursday am, I crawled out and let Don sleep in for sure! I headed down to our group room to help set up the room! It's always fun yacking while getting the room ready! Believe me, it looks a whole lot different on Thursday am than it does on Friday at noon! It gets transformed and organized by lots of people! God Bless each and every person who helped on the forefront!

Thursday night, Ron and Barb Aksamit, Betty Richards, Phyllis Bischof, Don, and I were advised by good ole Linda DeRyke, to go see the Hughes Brothers. She guaranteed that they were just as good as the "SIX" show! This I couldn't believe! When we arrived, we realized that we were going to see the "Voices of Glory" group at the show AYO. Needless to say, I was more than a little disappointed. However, this was a group of 3 siblings entertaining us, age 20, 17, and 13 years of age! They were absolutely phenomenal! We were all immensely impressed with their talent. This is a new act to Branson (they came in 5th on America's Got Talent 3 yrs ago). For sure, this show needs to go in your Bucket List for next year also!

Friday am came and people started arriving more and more. Several people had to cancel at the last minute, with health issues, and I surely missed each and every one of them!

However we had some really awesome newcomers, two couples from our Omaha polio group! YAY! Barb and Stan Johnson, and Darrel and Patti Suddeth! We had another couple come from Winnipeg, Canada, Steve and Hannah Brown. Tom and Marci Cash were new this year also. They came with Don and Cara Jean Homan and are relatives! Richard and Connie Grim came to us all the way from Branson! He has played Santa for years and looks the part! Maxine Nelson came with her two daughters, Paula and Jo. Maxine gave me some sound advice about my swimming pool not having a lift in it.....Thanks Maxine.

Friday evening was our Polio Supporter/Survivor meetings. This is truly my most favorite event of the weekend. I think it is up close and personal, and people are speaking from their hearts. This year we shared our highs and lows for the year! Linda shared her LOW for the year and then showed us how her NEW chair could

go way up high, literally! I told her this is your HIGH for the year, no pun intended! It was quite funny, and we all had a good laugh!

Friday evening, I took Karen and John Dulany down to Cherry Berry for their 50th Anniversary celebration! Linda DeRyke joined us for a little bit, and then hurried back. We enjoyed visiting with some people from our hotel who happened to be from the same part of Nebraska that Karen is from! (Sorry John! No one knew you!).

Don enjoyed playing cribbage with Ron and Barb Aksamit and sometimes Wilma too throughout the weekend. Anyone else know how to play, please feel free to let us know next year and join us!

We had two great speakers this year. We had a Pulmonary Doctor (Dr. Dennis Daniels) and Jan Harper, RN, Director of the Cardiac and Pulmonary Rehab Department the hospital. They each spoke about the polio virus and how it affects our heart and lungs. Dr Daniels spoke about the symptoms of Post Polio Syndrome, vs post polio sequelea. They both took questions from the group and it was almost a 3 hr presentation! He stressed that Polio patients should never be on straight oxygen, but to use a bipap to eliminate a buildup of carbon dioxide. Last, but not least, he was hysterically funny. I felt like I had attended a comedy show, free of charge! And did I mention, he likes the Steelers!

The other speaker was a Walgreens pharmacist, Wayne Vogle, and admitted he had one polio patient in a 30 yearr career. But, he was willing to answer any and all questions we had regarding medications.

Saturday evening was the annual banquet and the theme was "THE CIRCUS". Barb and Stan Johnson came dressed in matching patriotic shirts and clown wigs! I'd say they took the prize for costumes! John Dulany, Ron Aksamit, and Linda DeRyke all had

clown stuff on and were cute! Tables were decorated with darling clown hats and sparkling stuff, donated by Annie Bassham and Barb Johnson.

The food was catered by Annie and RB's daughter, Jill, and it was very good. She literally had a smorgasboard of desserts, which I tried NOT to look at too long! Thanks Jill.

Tim Hadler , friend of Linda, entertained us with a variety of songs. I loved how he would give a history of how music developed from years ago to the present. His son, Austin, also performed! What a cutie, he was! Austin led us in singing Happy Anniversary to Dulany's, Hukil's , and Johnson's, each getting their own song!. He had a new cd out and several of us purchased them Great job Tim.

The raffle was a huge success. People were all very generous with their donations and we made over \$300. This amount was the most we made yet. It goes toward the speakers and entertainment, so we are set for next year. Thanks to all for your support in this project! (Betty got involved selling tickets and we found, she was a natural. So, plan on it again next year, Betty!)

Phyllis was in charge of the books and I know this is much work for her, but we made money on this as well. If you didn't have time to look at the books, you should have. Lots of good reading material was there to be had. Thanks Phyllis.

Sunday afternoon, we started tearing down and organizing for next year already. Thanks to Robert and Mary and Annie and Linda for all the help putting stuff away, taking inventory, etc.

Sunday evening, Wilma, Linda, and I wheeled up to Subway! What an **adventure** that was! It was a beautiful night to take a "walk. "We wheeled to Cherry Berry for dessert afterward, then Don and I escorted Linda home with several totes in our vehicle. We got

her settled, headed back and were asleep by midnight! It was just the perfect night for a great weekend. (This Subway trek might become a tradition for all the wheelers out there!)

Thanks to everyone for a most beautiful and fulfilling weekend
God Bless. Judy

Ps. I thought since Toni and Millie weren't here this year, I would get much rest! But, I discovered there are a whole lot of "night owls" down there! We broke records on late night chats this year! Good quality time!