

# REUNION PLANNING 101



**MINNETONKA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION  
HOW TO PLAN A REUNION**

One year before your event, develop a small core committee of 6 to 10 classmates. You might want to survey the classmates you know for some ideas.

Decide on what the committee wants as that will determine what venue to pursue. Some things to think about:

- Do you want a sit down dinner?
- Do you want a buffet?
- Do you want just hors d'oeuvres?
- Do you want a band, DJ, or just CDs?
- Do you want to make a whole weekend of the event?
- Should Friday night be classmates only?
- Should Saturday night be significant others included?
- Should Sunday be family day with a picnic at a park or boat ride?
- What about a golf outing?

Suggested places:

- Lafayette Club, Minnetonka Beach. [www.lafayetteclub.com](http://www.lafayetteclub.com)
- Minnetonka Country Club, Shorewood. [www.minnetonkacc.com](http://www.minnetonkacc.com)
- Bayview Event Center, Excelsior. [www.bayviewevent.com](http://www.bayviewevent.com)
- Jake O'Connor, Excelsior (lower level called The Cellar holds 100). [www.jakeoconnors.com](http://www.jakeoconnors.com)
- Gold Nugget, Minnetonka (can hold up to 75 in a separate room. Only holds 40 if doing a sitdown dinner). [www.goldnuggettavernandgrille.com](http://www.goldnuggettavernandgrille.com)
- Old Log Theatre, Greenwood. [www.oldlog.com](http://www.oldlog.com)
- Al and Alma Cruises, Mound. [www.al-almas.com](http://www.al-almas.com)

- Paradise Cruises, Lake Minnetonka.  
[www.twincitiescruises.com/lake-minnetonka](http://www.twincitiescruises.com/lake-minnetonka)
- Spasso Restaurant, Minnetonka (has a separate private dining room).  
[www.spassomn.com](http://www.spassomn.com)
- Southshore Community Center, Shorewood.  
[www.southshore-center.org](http://www.southshore-center.org)
- Chanhassen Dinner Theatre, Chanhassen. [www.chanhassendt.com](http://www.chanhassendt.com)
- Or the Private home of a classmate.

Pick a date. Usually in the summertime. Create deadlines based on the date of your reunion and work backwards.

We suggest that you have minutes of each meeting so assignments don't fall by the wayside.

Determine the cost of the ticket based on your events and the expenses you will incur. Examples of additional expenses are:

- Entertainment
- Food/Beverage
- Rental of venue
- Mailings – Envelopes, printing, postage
- Copies
- Printing of tickets
- Nametags
- Decorations
- Signs
- Photography

Think about an early bird price to get an idea of RSVPs. Knowing how many will attend is the hardest number to come up with.

The Minnetonka Alumni Association (MAA) was started in early 2000 for a variety of reason, one of which was planning the All School Reunion which we do every four years. The Association also wanted to help with individual

class reunion planning. Some classes have monies being held by MAA. In addition, you don't need to start from scratch for your list of classmates.

Contact the MAA for a list of your classmates. Our website is:  
[www.minnetonkaalumni.com](http://www.minnetonkaalumni.com)

In addition, they can provide you with a list of current demographic information. We suggest that you make an Excel document for easy updating or an Access database.

You will need to develop committees. Suggestions are:

- Facilities – Friday night
- Facilities – Saturday night
- Entertainment – Friday night
- Entertainment – Saturday night
- Program – Friday night
- Program – Saturday night
- Classmate Booklet
- Search for Classmates
- Media – Develop a website, Facebook page, etc.
- Budget - oversees all monies

Decide if you want to do a questionnaire that can be made into a Classmate Booklet. A way to defray costs is to have advertisements in your booklet. You also could ask for donations if appropriate. It is important to have a clear deadline for classmates to get their information in as you will need lead time to get it to the printer.

Some questions that have been used in the past are:

- My most memorable moment in high school was....
- Would you believe in high school, I was...
- I knew I was grown up when....
- When I was in high school, I never thought I would...
- In the last twenty years, I have learned....
- What exciting things have happened to you since graduation?
- Our senior class motto was XXX, how does that apply now?
- If you had a chance to be 18 again, what would you do differently?

One idea is to mail out the classmate booklet a couple weeks before the reunion so classmates can read about people. However, postage can be expensive.

E-mail is the most inexpensive way to get the word out about your reunion. You also can put information about your reunion on the MAA website. Be sure to list the names of classmates you can't find.

Decide if you want a photographer at your reunion.

A picture board is a nice feature to have. Ask those that cannot attend to send in a picture of their family. Those that are attending can bring a family picture with them or send it in early.

You will have to decide if you want a program. Many classmates have memorabilia. Suggestions for the program could be:

Start with your yearbook and go through the "most likely to" listing. Add statistics like – who came the farthest? Who has the most kids, etc. Another idea for defraying some of the costs is to hold a raffle. See if a classmate has something they could donate. For example, in the Class of 1970, we were fortunate to have an artist who donated a picture that we had framed and raffled off. We made \$300 on the raffle.

For nametags, we have pasted the classmate's senior picture on the nametag. Some staff really liked this idea. Others, not so much =)

Additional resources:

[www.classmate.com](http://www.classmate.com) it costs to join it but well worth the expense.

You can put free reunion advertisements in the Star Tribune, Sun Sailor, and The Lakeshore Weekly.

There were two companies that will help you organize and find your classmates for a fee. They are:

- Taylor Reunion Services at 1-800-677-7800, and
- Reunion Organizers of Minnesota 612-557-0177

There are a number of books available on how to plan a reunion. Two suggestions are:

Let's Have a Reunion. A How-to-Do-It Guide for your class reunion.  
(Second Thoughts, 63 West Burton Place, Chicago, IL 60610)

The Reunion Handbook by the National Reunion Assn, P.O. Box 295,  
Nevada City, CA 95959

Get the date out as soon as possible. Option would be e-mail or a postcard with SAVE THIS DATE!

Include a listing of local hotels in the mailings.

The night of the event, ask friends and/or family members to be your receptionist for the check-in process otherwise the committee will need to do it which makes it difficult to socialize.

If you have a sit down dinner, think about having cocktails 1-2 hours before so classmates can mingle. Once they sit down at a table for dinner, they usually stay at the table.

Suggestions for decorations are:

- Banners
- Blue and White daisies in white vases
- Blue and white balloons
- Centerpieces of boats, anchors, etc.

We recommend that you do a survey after the reunion for suggestions, what they liked etc.

**One final word of caution, we have heard from some classes that they were over ambitious in their plans and they got stuck with a large bill when they didn't have the attendance they expected.**

We are open to your feedback. Please email us at our website:  
[www.minnetonkaalumni.com](http://www.minnetonkaalumni.com)

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