

~ Reunion 2012 Wrap-Up ~

Clingman-Jones Reunion 2012 is in the books as another special gathering of the descendants of the founding eleven brothers and sisters. Good Family fellowship, good fun, and good food were highlights as usual. The only downer was the effects from the severe draught in Arkansas, a burn ban which canceled setting off fireworks or having campfires, plus floating the Caddo was a bit of a challenge. Just as a reminder of how much fun it can be, check out these short videos:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I82B9LV6VQU>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0mZ-cAeIfo0>

Family Business Meeting – No one on vacation ever says, “Gee, I think I would like to take a break today from this fun time and sit in on a long-winded business meeting.” But that happens every year at our Reunion. The Family Business Meeting is our Family version of a “town hall meeting,” where Family members are brought up to date with what the Executive Board is working on and the challenges it is facing, as well as giving them a chance to discuss their ideas for making things better and to bring up issues of concern.

For example, because of input from Summer Cameron-Engel at the 2011 FBM, the development of a Master Plan for the primary area – “downtown Jones Valley” – was initiated, and JJ Cameron presented to those in attendance his initial drawing which documents cabin locations and areas designated for specific purposes, such as recreation, parking, etc. – a real step forward in helping to be sure our limited space can be carefully managed. So you see, good things can happen when you get involved.

Additional items covered at last year’s Family Business Meeting included:

- Release of Liability Waiver: Our ongoing program to help legally protect the Valley. Each adult Family member that uses Jones Valley signs it once and it goes into a file for safekeeping. In addition, there is a waiver for adult guests to sign, and it was noted that all guests must be accompanied by a Family member each time they visit.
- Cookbook: This popular, must-have item, developed by Floss Diffie and released at the 2011 Reunion, was brought to the meeting’s attention as being available at a special reduced Reunion price. All proceeds continue to be donated to support the Valley.
- Trash Pickup: It was brought to the Family’s attention that pickup of bagged trash had been contracted for, and a truck was parked behind the dining hall for that purpose.

- 100th Reunion: Summer Cameron-Engel discussed the approach of the 100th Reunion in only nine years and suggested that we should be capturing Family history before it disappears. She commented that we should be planning to commemorate the event with things of lasting quality. One thought offered was a marker for each Family line with a short story. She is quite right, the 100th will be here before we know it, so let the planning begin.

So as you can see, the FBM covers all kinds of important stuff, from “trash” to “planning.” Plan to attend and bring your ideas.

Executive Board Meetings – Your Board, with representatives from each active Family line, meets not only at the Reunion, but now, usually several times during the year made possible by teleconferencing – generously provided by Shane Nichols. This “up-to-date” (as my great-grandfather said when he saw my mother’s refrigerator) communication has facilitated moving forward on many issues and keeping everyone involved in the decision making. The Board’s Reunion 2012 and December 2012 meetings included the following:

- Guest Release of Liability Waiver: Draft presented by Nelson Cameron approved for use.
- Signage: Swimming hole/dam area and speed limit safety signage approved.
- Memorial Bricks: A memorial brick for each of the founding ancestors was approved for the Montgomery County Heritage House Museum walk in Mt. Ida.
- Water Access: As part of the renovations of Uncle Claude’s cabins, a request was approved to access the Family dining hall/bathrooms water line with all installation and on-going usage costs to be paid by the Cameron family.
- Dam Safety Cable: The acquisition of a cable to improve dam safety was approved. The cable would be used during the Reunion.
- Family Cemetery: Maintenance work to address repairs needed by several ancestors’ headstones was approved.