

"Benrud-Heritage"

► NOVEMBER 2014

► NUMBER 21

# Benrud Reader

[www.benrudfamily.org](http://www.benrudfamily.org)

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## Reunion 2015 Plans Are Being Made

by Iris Othrow

Registration packets will be mailed in April 2015 for the July 31, August 1 and 2, 2015 Benrud Family Reunion. Extensive plans are underway! There are both new events and activities from the past for your participation.

The theme for our reunion is Honoring Our Roots. We will be paying a special tribute to Ole Christian who was the brother of Anton, Lena, Carl, Olava, and Maren and died at the age of 23 leaving no immediate heirs. As usual T-shirts and other goods with this theme will be available for you to order ahead of time. Watch for a picture and description in your registration materials.

Friday night will bring a return to the La Crosse Queen Steamboat cruise on the Mississippi river. This will run from 7:30 - 9 pm and include pizza, beer, and soda. This has proven to be a fun activity for all ages but, there are limited spaces available (149) so send your registration in as soon as possible after you receive it in April.

At the headquarter hotel, Days Hotel and Conference Center, you will find the history displays, swimming at the hotel pool, the silent auction and most activities on Saturday. These will include Kubb, heritage classes, genealogy, children's games and more. The bus tour with stops at family farms, local churches, and Norskedalen will include a box lunch, and special tour of the Benrud Little White Chapel. It will leave from the hotel. Saturday evening will include a casual supper with a choice of a taco bar with all the trimmings or an American burger, or hot dog with accompanying sides. After supper Hans Peterson and Hannah Kalisch will entertain us. We will also have a short family business meeting and live auction in the evening. We're also working on Norwegian beer tasting and a young people's electronic game room.

Sunday will begin with a church service at North Coon Prairie Lutheran Church in Newry. Rev. Edith Roberts is working with Hans and Hannah on the service. Ole Christian is buried in the cemetery here, and we have arranged for a new marker for his grave. Pictures will be taken and lunch will be catered by Borgen's of Westby. And there will be more to come!

As you can see there is ample variety and we aim to have something for everyone to enjoy participating in. Come for the fun and get to know your extended family. One more special thing about this reunion...there will be no registration fee! We will count on your donation to cover the extra expenses. Where there are direct costs involved (food, class expense etc.) you will be asked to pay those charges. Watch for all these details on your registration forms in April.

We have secured a good price of \$84.00 that includes breakfast at the Day's Hotel, and hope you will plan to stay there. However, there is an abundance of alternative lodging in the La Crosse area. Please check the following website <http://www.explorelacrosse.com/places-to-stay/> for a variety of accommodations. Some family members are looking at the Stoney Creek Hotel and

Conference Center as a place to spend the night and join us during the day at Day's Hotel. Again, there will be more information in your registration materials in April.

I look forward to seeing you at our Benrud Family Reunion 2014, "Honoring Our Roots."

This poster was posted by Diane Piper on Facebook and reminds me of our 2015 reunion theme. If you haven't joined the Benrud Family Facebook Page, please do so. Reunion information and other family information and pictures can be posted there by anyone who is a member. Check it out!



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*Continued from pp 1*

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## **BENRUD FAMILY** **WEBSITE**

Dan Kobler has launched our new Benrud Family website. He has added content and pictures as he has received them. Please send him news and pictures from reunions at [dan@dakobler.com](mailto:dan@dakobler.com). Check it out at <http://benrudfamily.org/>

### **Benrud Vision Statement**

The members of the Benrud Family foster traditions of family, heritage, and culture.

### **Benrud Mission Statement**

The Benrud Family will provide opportunities for members to maintain contact with one another, to learn about the culture common to all of them, and to gather in celebration of their family heritage.

### **COMING SOON**

### **EMAIL CORRESPONDENCE**

We are working on trying email correspondence through a service called Mad Mini. This will be in addition to our newsletter. We need your current email address. Email your name and current email address to [Jew-elsdi@yahoo.com](mailto:Jew-elsdi@yahoo.com).

### **STAYING IN TOUCH WITH FACEBOOK**

If you haven't already done so, please request to join our Benrud Family Facebook page. Facebook is a good source for current information and communication. Please feel free to post any family information there, too.

Branch directors or other board members write **FAMILIES IN THE NEWS**. Send your family news to your branch director listed on this page or Iris Othrow (address on page 1) by October 1, 2015 to be included in the next Benrud Reader. Include births, deaths, graduations, honors, weddings and special events. Please note we have added **Men and Women Serving in the Military**. **No one sent me names for this so look for it in the next edition.** Pictures are always welcome.



## ANTON BRANCH



Eighteen-year-old Tripp Soma, right, holds a 46-inch muskie caught by his brother Carter, 6, on July 9 on Lake Waubesa in McFarland, WI.

Mike and Iris Othrow recently returned from an enjoyable trip on a catamaran to some of the islands in Greece.



Erin Othrow and PJ Mee are engaged. They plan to be married May 24, 2015. They are living in Sun Prairie, WI. Erin is the daughter of Jon and Kitty Othrow of Menasha, WI.

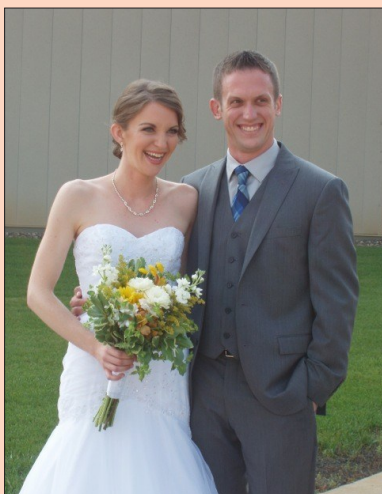
David and Joslyn Benrud were married August 23, 2014. They reside in Stoughton, WI. Paul and Martha Benrud are David's parents.



Katie Kildahl graduated December 13, 2013 from UW Oshkosh (*left*). She is shown here with her grandparents Joan and Russell Stenslien. Picture on right is Hannah Kildahl with her mother Paula at her graduation June 8, 2014 from Twin Lakes High School.



## CARL BRANCH



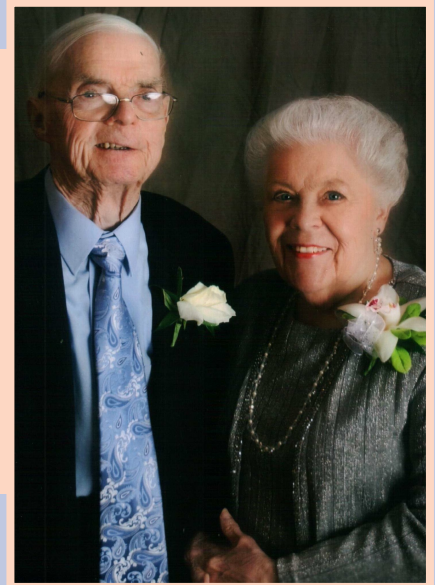
Stacey Leibeck and Matthew Swanson were married Saturday, August 16, 2014 at Calvary Community Church, St. Cloud, MN. Stacey is the daughter of Edward and Christine Leibeck of Swansboro, NC. Matt is the son of Wayne and Carolyn Benrud Swanson of Crystal, MN. The couple are making their home in St. Cloud. Stacey is employed at Camp Lebonon, Upsala, MN where she works with Women's Ministry and Matt is the Bible teacher for grades 7 – 12 at St. Cloud Christian School, St. Cloud, MN.



# MAREN BRANCH

Engwal Grant Vevang and Mary Jean Vevang (nee Wiesen) celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on October 3, 2013 while on vacation in Minocqua, Wisconsin with their children and grandchildren. Grant is the son of the late Grace Olson Vevang, daughter of Peter Olson, son of Maren & Carl Olson. Grant & Mary Jean reside in Palatine, IL.

It is with sadness that we also tell you that E. Grant Vevang died on Oct. 5, 2014. He served on the Benrud Family Board of Directors in the 1990's. He is survived by his wife, Mary Jean, children Marianne (Robert) Groenland, Jo Anne (Michael) Kumar and Karen (David) Bell seven grandchildren and four great-grandchildren, and brothers Gordon and Curtis. Grant will be remembered by all for his friendliness, sense of humor, generosity and devotion to family. He was a WWII Navy Veteran and co-owner of Midwest Shipping Supplies. Find full obituary at: <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/dailyherald/obituary.aspx?pid=172726557>



Danielle Piper spent the past summer traveling and studying in Peru before returning to study at Edgewood College in Madison, WI. She will study in Germany from February until July 2015.

Dustin Piper graduated from Bangor High School on May 25, 2014. He is attending Western Wisconsin Technical College and is the son of Diane and Dale Piper.



Conrad Anton Backus, 7 lbs. 11 oz., 21 inches, was born August 14, 2014, to Chris and Sophorn Backus in Seattle, Washington area. Julie and Lane Backus are Conrad's grandparents.

Greg Olson and Karen Markwardt were united in marriage October 18<sup>th</sup> in La Crosse, Wisconsin.



## Q & A With Kaia Lee Seefelt and Hans Peterson

Those who attended the Benrud reunion in 2010 may remember the song that Hans Peterson wrote and performed to represent the Olava branch. Roger Benrud and Dorothy Twesme asked him to record that song and were generous in helping make that happen. *Olava's Song* is one of 17 songs on his forthcoming album entitled *Every Breath I Sing*.

Here Kaia Lee Seefelt asks Hans about his new project:

**KLS:** At what age did you start playing music/an instrument and under what circumstances? At school, at home?

**HP:** I have a photo of myself as a toddler playing ukulele with my Grandpa Lindy Peterson (grandson of Olava). I didn't start playing piano until 5<sup>th</sup> grade. My younger sister was going through chemotherapy for bone cancer. With so much focus on Kari, a woman from our church in Anchorage, AK wondered if I might be interested in trying out piano. She gave lessons for free for the first year. I ended up studying piano for 5 years. When my mom said that I would quit playing if I didn't take lessons, I set out to prove her wrong.

**KLS:** Were there any family members who had influence on you regarding music & learning to play?

**HP:** Singing was a big part of growing up. Dad sang in several choirs. We all sang in the car on road trips. Mom played the piano, both by ear and by reading notes.

**KLS:** Tell us about the songs on this CD.

**HP:** This new CD is my 5<sup>th</sup> solo recording project and is filled with story songs. Besides Olava's journey from Norway to Wisconsin, these are some of the themes that run through the album: taking care of Grandma in her last days, delighting in a child as he grows, and Olava's grandson running a little grocery store in Cashton. The CD also has three beautiful instrumentals, including two of Scandinavian origin: Midsommarvalsen (Swedish) and Josefin's Dopvals (Josefin's Baptismal Waltz – Norwegian)

**KLS:** I can tell you are excited about this project. Say more.

**HP:** This project contains some of my most mature songwriting. Scott Jibben, who engineered and co-produced the album is a pro. I really like how the musical arrangements unfold. Some are sparse with minimal instrumentation (ie piano and violin). Other songs have the entire band including drums, bass and percussion. The project has some fabulous musicians involved too. Hannah Kalisch, who toured with Lori Line, plays some phenomenal fiddle. Peter Mayer, one of Jimmy Buffet's guitar players is a friend; he sings and plays guitar on a couple songs. Many people are familiar with Peter Ostroushko because of his amazing mandolin playing and frequent appearance on Prairie Home Companion. These outstanding players add finesse and mastery to the solid base of players with whom I normally work.

**KLS:** What advice do you have as a musician and as a parent to instill a love of music in our children?

**HP:** We approach music in our household as a passion to nurture and a routine to establish. Our two boys are expected to take private music lessons until they graduate from high school. It is becoming more difficult with our 16 year-old, Nelson, due to academics, sports, and boychoir. However, it's been fun recently to have him be the one to ask me to sit down and play along on some fiddle tunes rather than the reverse.



As a 10 year old, we expect Simon to practice 30 minutes a day, five days a week. That time flies by as he might practice piano, violin, drums or singing. Recently, I told him that he would receive 1000 points in our reward system after he memorized a short Norwegian folk tune that is part of Olava's song.

**KLS:** Will you be at the Benrud reunion this summer?

**HP:** Yes! And I am honored that the board asked me to perform some of these songs that commemorate the roots we have in common. Simon is planning on being there too, singing in Norwegian!



### Historian's Corner Reunion Updates

Hello Cousins; Plan to visit the History Room at our 2015 Reunion! Thanks to all of you who brought displays, pictures, letters and memories to the 2010 event. The room will be larger this time with more space for us to gather and share stories. A reminder to the cousins who kept the displays for the past few years to bring them on Friday, July 31<sup>st</sup>, if possible. If you have some item you would like to share, please do. Greg Olson has done more research for Ole Christian, the youngest of the family. Since he died young, without any direct descendants, he belongs to all of us! Look for more information about him.

For the Benrud Family Website, please send pictures of the families of the first cousins. The first cousins were the children of Maren & Carl, Lena & Lars, Anton & Maria, Anton & Julia, Olava & Joseph, and Carl & Gina. For example, I sent the picture of my grandparents, Ole and Mae Olson and their children. Send your photos to Dan Kobler: [dan@dankobler.com](mailto:dan@dankobler.com) or to his home: 2325 Humboldt Street, Denver CO 80205.

In the 2015 Family Tree, we plan to add a more detailed map of the family farms, churches and cemeteries, as well as stories from each of the family branches. Ride the bus for a tour of the area on Saturday, August 1<sup>st</sup>, which includes a box lunch and a visit to the Benrud Little White Chapel at Norskedalen. If you prefer to "do the tour" on your own, there will be a packet of information at the registration table with maps for you to pick up.

If you have questions, comments or historical stories to share, please contact me. (See contact information for Historian.) I always enjoy talking with my cousins! Marie Peterson Marin



## **We Need Everyone's Help for the 2015 Benrud Silent Auction!**

It is not too early to start thinking about the Reunion Silent Auction. This event is our primary moneymaker and is SO important to the continued success of future reunions. We use the funds raised to help meet our many reunion expenses and to cover costs of the annual newsletter.

We depend on you to bring items for this event. Home made craft items, children's art, or bakery are always great. The reunion in 2015 will feature baskets. Pictured here are two examples. Any theme works for an interesting basket.



To the left is an example of a Christmas theme basket. Above is a wine theme basket.

If you've never participated in a silent auction, it's great fun. You just put your name and bid on the accompanying sheet and then another person may come along and bid higher but you can then bid over them. The highest bid gets the item when the auction closes on the Saturday night of the reunion.

We are also planning a live auction on Saturday night of some special things. Please be thinking about whether you have an item to donate that will be suitable for this type of auction.

Enjoy creating a basket for the silent auction and looking for that special something for a live auction.  
Diane Piper, silent auction chair

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## **New and Fun Family's First Competitive Kubb Game**

by Kristin Ott

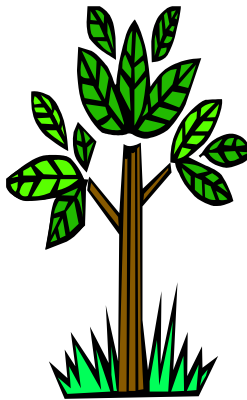
Are you one of the last Scandinavians on your block not playing the ancient Nordic game Kubb??(Pronounced koob) This fun game is gaining wild popularity in the Midwest and the U.S. National championship is even in Eau Claire Wisconsin. Join us for a morning of learning and then playing this Viking game that has you throwing things and knocking stuff down. This is a game that can be played by any age, on any surface, and you don't need to be an Olympic athlete to participate. You just need to be able to throw a piece of wood underhand, and then pick up the pieces and throw them again. The fallen pieces keep track of the score and there are no refs. As few as two can play, or 12, and the teams do not have to be even. Pretending to be a Viking is fun and good natured taunting at your opponent (or family member) that include Thor, Odin and Loki make it even more fun. If you do have this game, please bring it to the reunion and join in the merriment.

Go to [usakubb.org](http://usakubb.org) or google Kubb to see pictures and learn more about this game.



Please use the form below, or or the form on our web site ([www.benrudfamily.org](http://www.benrudfamily.org)) to send **new information and changes only** to:

Julie Backus  
891 N. Roadrunner Rd.  
Apache Junction, AZ 85119  
You can call 414-745-4362 or e-mail to [Jewelsdi@yahoo.com](mailto:jewelsdi@yahoo.com), too.



### **Updates Needed**

*In the last year many of your children have grown up and moved to their own places. Be sure we have their addresses.*

*Also, babies have been born and others in our family have died, we need your information to keep accurate records.*

*In our age of technology e-mail addresses are an important addition. Please e-mail [jewelsdi@yahoo.com](mailto:jewelsdi@yahoo.com) with your e-mail address or changes.*

## **Family Tree Update Form**

Family Branch (circle one) Maren, Olava, Lena, Carl, Anton

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
First Middle Maiden Last

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City State or Province Zip or Postal Code Country

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation/Hobby \_\_\_\_\_

Marital Status (Circle one) Single, Married, Divorced, Widow, Widower

Marriage/Divorce \_\_\_\_\_  
(Circle One) Name of Spouse Birth date of Spouse Date of Marriage or Divorce

Birth/Adoption \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of child Location of birth Date of Birth and adoption

Death \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Date Burial Location Cause of death

Give full names, including maiden name and dates, place of birth, cause of death, location of burial, complete data on new spouses and children, and any other information that will make your family records more complete. **Also, send obituaries and other news printed information to Julie.**

**Optional Additional Historical Information** This can include the date and location of, Baptism, Confirmation, Retirement, Education, Schools attended and graduation dates, Church affiliation, Social organizations, Civic involvement, Volunteer Activities, any honors or awards, and anything else.



Benrud Reader (Iris Othrow editor)

Julie Backus  
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Your Benrud Board wishes you a  
Happy Thanksgiving!

We are working hard to plan an enjoyable  
and interesting reunion for you  
July 31, August 1 and 2, 2015.  
The theme will be Honoring Our Roots

The reunion will again be held in the La  
Crosse, WI area with our main headquarters  
at the Days Hotel.



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