



Hilsen, familie!

Greetings, Benrud Family,

I do hope this newsletter finds you enjoying the holiday season!

As the holidays approach, our family prepares to celebrate the traditions that have been such a part of our time together over the years. Our family would prepare meatballs and purchase lefse, buttering and rolling it carefully. My brother, Nicholas, learned how to make krumkake and has become quite the professional at it. I can remember my Grandmother Stella reciting the Norwegian prayer before dinner...the sing-song Norwegian bringing tears to our eyes. The memories our family has around our Nordic heritage abound. Let us keep those memories alive this holiday, while creating new ones with our family and friends.

Here is a pertinent quote for our newsletter...

"If you look deeply into the palm of your hand, you will see your parents and all generations of your ancestors, all of them are alive in this moment. Each is present in your body. You are the continuation of each of these people."

-Thich Nhat Hanh

Incredible to think about!

I know you are excited to find out about the details for our next reunion. It's hard to believe that it's been almost a year and a half since our last family reunion together! Amazing how the time flies. We hope you enjoy this edition of our newsletter, as we've packed it with updates, notes from the field, and important action items.

As you prepare for the holidays with friends and family and purchase all the lefse in a 25 mile radius, remember how wonderful it is that we have family across the globe and that our Benrud clan is bigger and prouder than ever.

Skal!

Kristine Lee MacDonald
Olava Branch

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.

Vision Statement

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



Exciting news! The Benrud Board is actively planning the 2020 Family Reunion, which will be held in La Crosse, July 31 - August 2, 2020. We are looking for a new venue and we have some great ideas! Please stay tuned for details!

Reflections Benrud Family Reunion 2015 **Iris Othrow, Past President**

Our 2015 reunion is history. As usual it was a huge success. I had fun catching up with cousins, making new friends, participating in some of the scheduled activities, and I was in awe at our church service as family filled the pews at North Coon Prairie Church, and shared a meal after.

Honoring Ole Christian Benrud was a highlight. This reminded all of us what a loving, caring group of people we come from. We had a rare and special opportunity to be surrounded with family that we may not have ever known if it weren't for these reunions.

I'd like to thank everyone who helped make this reunion such a success. The Benrud Family Board, who all stepped up, took on responsibilities, and followed through. To those who just did whatever needed to be done in the moment, thank you! And to all of you who attended, participated, and had fun. You all made the time together so special and rewarding. For those who couldn't make this reunion, I hope you can make it in five years. It will be a reunion you will never forget. Your newly elected board is already working and planning for 2020. I also need to thank everyone for donations. Our bottom line, we were able to pay for this reunion without going into our family savings. Thanks.

Now, I'd like to share a couple of comments from others who attended.

"I think sometimes we all take it for granted as to what a great heritage we have and these Reunions go a long way in keeping us focused on our roots. With all the troubles and turmoil facing our nation having a weekend with one's extended family puts things back into perspective that we are a hearty group and we will continue to appreciate the values given to us by our forefathers and that the Norske will always be survivors. Have a great summer and look forward to seeing you in 2020 or sooner. With much appreciation," Robert Lee

"I thought that the reunion was a great success. I had a great time." Wayne Homstad

"Each year our officers, helpers, etc., that plan our family reunion do a great job. I came home with wonderful memories to add to the ones attended before. I know that I join my fellow family members in saying, "Thank YOU!!" Lillian Rumppe

More exciting news! Our little white church is now undergoing work to get climate control with AC and heat! Thank you for all of your work to ensure that we can add these commodities and that we can keep the church up to date. This has been a work in progress, and we will continue to do our best to take care of our beloved church.

Benrud Little White Chapel to receive Air Conditioning and Heat

In 2009, after 20 years of investigation, planning, fund raising, and working with Norskedalen, the Benrud Family was able to accomplish what so many had doubted would ever happen. We were able, as a family, to create an incredible memorial to our ancestors, by preserving a building that had once been a Lutheran church in Sparta, Wisconsin. I was President during the time that we worked to bring this building to Norskedalen. When we appeared before the Norskedalen Board in June of 2009, they approved the project, but did not want the heating and air control. We had raised money (over \$152,000 for moving and remodeling and an \$80,000 endowment for perpetual care) including for the air and heat, but the staff and some board members were against it because it wouldn't be traditional. They soon discovered they needed some heat for winter and especially at Christmas events and added a pellet stove. This summer, new staff, including Lori Dubczak, Executive Director, was hired. I took the opportunity to again raise the issue related to air conditioning, particularly the negative effect that the lack of moisture control was having on the artifacts stored in the Chapel. Lori immediately took the issue to the Norskedalen Board and they approved investigating both heat and air conditioning. She also comments in the following e-mail on the replacement of the front door which was wood and had taken a punishing from the elements over the past few years. In October, Curt Benrud, a family member who was instrumental in overseeing the entire move and restoration, received the following e-mail from Lori. Lori said: "We worked with 4 different heating and air conditioning companies, seeking not just bids, but also their expertise on what should be done to be the least intrusive to the Chapel and still accomplish our goals. At last night's board meeting, the bid from Ron Hammes Refrigeration was chosen not just because it was the lowest bid but also because of their reputation with local businesses whose opinions we trust....the cost will be taken out of the remaining Chapel

Construction account and the interest on the Chapel endowed funds. The cost of the steel door that was just installed - and is absolutely beautiful! - will also come out of these funds, as will the electrical work. This will deplete the construction funds as they currently stand. But the Chapel will have the desired climate control - heating and air conditioning - not only better-preserving the artifacts and the building, but also allowing the Chapel to be used year round." ~ Lori Dubczak, Executive Director, Norskedalen Nature & Heritage Center, lori.dubczak@norskedalen.org 608-452-3424 If you still haven't had the opportunity to visit the Chapel, please do so. Norskedalen is always in need of volunteers and if you can, please consider contacting Lori and offering your services. We have already reserved Norskedalen for August 1, 2020 for activities related to the Chapel and for our reunion. The new staff is creating new opportunities for us and for others visiting Norskedalen. We are excited about the future. Submitted by Julie Backus, President of Benrud Board, 2005 -2010



Hilsen from the Historians:

1. This past July, Dean and I had the opportunity to visit "Livsreise" (Life's Journey), the new Norwegian museum in Stoughton, WI. It is a wonderful place and free! The exhibits are amazing; open Tuesday - Saturday: 9:30-4:30.
2. Greg's project: a proposal to create a professional pedigree chart was approved by the board. Over the past years he had collected so much information, much of it written in Norwegian. This will be translated, so future documents should be accurate.
3. Marie's project: to document exact addresses of 1st cousins (next generation after the original six children) so family can find where their ancestors lived in the USA and Canada. If you have some of those addresses, please email/mail them to me. Thanks so much.

Historian: Greg Olson (greg.olson15@yahoo.com)
Assistant Historian: Marie Peterson Marin



The apple doesn't fall far from the tree...

The most top 5 family last names in the family tree as of 2015:

Anderson = 180 or 4.88%

Olson = 158 or 4.29%

Benrud = 157 or 4.29%

Peterson = 121 or 3.28%

Lee = 92 or 2.5%

There are 1759 women listed and 1922 men listed in the family tree including spouses for a total of 3681.



North Coon Prairie Lutheran Church in Newry, WI from the reunion.

Reunion Memories

Thanks to all of our board members and our Reunion Committee for planning such a lovely event in summer 2015. We look forward to our next reunion in 2020!

News from the Field #1

In mid May, Erik Benrud went to visit our cousin Ragnar Ostbye, who lives near Gjøvik, Norway. He was a good friend of Erik's father. Erik timed the trip so he would leave on the evening of May 17th,...just in time to celebrate the *syttende mai* celebration in Oslo.





Like most grandmothers, Stella Lee Andersen (Olava's daughter) enjoyed baking for her grandchildren. When she served sandbakkels, strull, rosettes and other Scandinavian delicacies, she was rewarded with smiles and hugs. Lefse too, was a big favorite. Little Joe, the youngest of all, looked at her aged hands one day and said, "Grandma, your hands look just like lefse." She laughed and agreed.



Lee Andersen recounts a summer experience of his daughter, Caitlin Andersen, while in France.

Notes from the Field #2

"Dad, I'm okay" she said, a little out of breath.

Not exactly how you want a conversation to start with your daughter when she is half-way around the world in Nice, France. My rejoinder, of course, was "What do you mean 'You're okay?' What's going on?"

What was going on is what we've all become a little numb to – terrorism. Our daughter, Caitlin Andersen of the Olava Lee branch, was in the middle of a school abroad program in France this summer after her second year at the University of California, Berkeley. With a bunch of friends she headed down to the Promenade in Nice to help the locals celebrate Bastille Day and to watch the fireworks. As the celebration started to wind down, she and her friends headed to the beach, just below the Promenade. Minutes later, she looked behind her at the sounds of commotion on the area she had just left. To her horror, she saw a large truck barreling through the crowd just above her. She and her friends ran down the beach, away from the commo-

tion, then climbed the stairs back onto the Promenade and hastened back to their dorms, about a mile and a half away.

It was during her scamper to safety that she called us, back here in the states. Of course, the news was only beginning to break here. Thank goodness she thought to call us, as we'd have been worried sick hearing the news without knowing beforehand that she was okay. Unfortunately, of the 85 innocent people killed in the attack, one young man was a Cal Berkeley student in the same study abroad program as Caitlin. His fate was not known for several days because of the confusion surrounding such an event, and the fact that injured people were widely scattered in local hospitals. Caitlin, along with several other students from Cal, helped as part of the search party and distributed flyers seeking information for the young man, Nick Leslie. Two other international students taking part in the same program also perished in the attack. One was from Estonia, the other from the Ukraine.



Food for Thought

Did you know that when the Benruds sailed from Norway to America in the 1870's that they did not enter through Ellis Island as many of us might assume? There was no Ellis Island until 1892. Our ancestors came through Castle Clinton Emigrant Landing Depot, then known as Castle Garden. Most of Castle Clinton's records were destroyed in a devastating fire, but it is estimated that between 8 to 10 million immigrants were processed there between 1855 and 1891. When you visit New York City, take time to explore this historic site in Battery Park at the tip of Manhattan. The circular stone building, originally a fort completed in 1811, is now a U.S. National Monument administered by the National Park Service. In addition to our revered ancestors, other notable Castle Clinton immigrants include Andrew Carnegie, Joseph Pulitzer and Oscar Hammerstein 1st.

Our ancestors brought their Scandinavian Christmas traditions with them to America. Uncle Ole Lee always placed a sheaf of grain atop his front yard flag pole for the birds to show that all God's creatures were appreciated. The farmers back in Norway believed this gesture assured them of a good crop the next season. "Julebukking", (Christmas fooling) was popular in their close knit communities. Between Christmas and the New Year, neighbors wearing costumes and masks would visit door to door. Treats and drinks would be served, but the visitors would remain totally silent. Only if someone guessed their identity would the masks be removed. On those cold, blustery evenings, such traditions and the lighted tree represented the warmth and love of friends and family. God Jul og Godt Nytt Ar, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Action Steps

#1: It's time to update our Benrud Family Tree! Please email Julie Backus at jewelsdi@yahoo.com with any updates. See the form at the end of this newsletter for what information to provide.

#2: Mark your calendars for the next reunion in La Crosse on July 31st through August 2nd, 2020.

#3: Send an additions and updates for our next newsletter in Fall of 2017 to Kristine Lee MacDonald at krisleemacd@gmail.com

News from the Anton Branch



Check out the five generations in this photo! Grandparents, Jim & Sophie Benrud of the Anton Branch. Those in the photo are (back row, left to right) Allen Benrud (great-grandfather), Sophie Benrud (great-great-grandmother), Jim Benrud (great-great-grandfather). Front row (left to right), Kameo Maynard (grandmother), Taylor Maynard (mother) and baby Bricen Daniel Bakken born Aug 22, 2015.



Annalise Olivia Benrud
Annalise is the daughter of David and Joslyn Benrud, and the granddaughter of Paul and Martha Benrud



Karrie Aaseby's daughters Kay Aaseby, Kris Kutschera, and Maren Lang hosted an 80th birthday party for their mother on September 18, 2016 in Menasha.



Burton Benrud, Ruth Price, Katie Benrud, Iris Othrow, and Karrie Aaseby enjoying coffee and beignets at Burton's place of business, Café Du Monde.



Taylor Lang daughter of Jeff and Maren Lang, granddaughter of Karrie Aaseby Since I graduated from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities in Spring 2015, I have been lucky to intern and find a full-time job at Be The Match. Be The Match, operated by the National Marrow Donor Program saves lives through cellular therapy. In a broad sense, this means we facilitate unrelated bone marrow transplants for patients with blood cancer (lymphoma, leukemia, etc). I work on the development team, raising money to fund patient assistance, adding potential donors to the registry and furthering research. I'm very lucky to work for an organization where all the employees are extremely passionate about the mission!

Brothers Michael and Burton Benrud traveled to the desert in California to enjoy some great music.



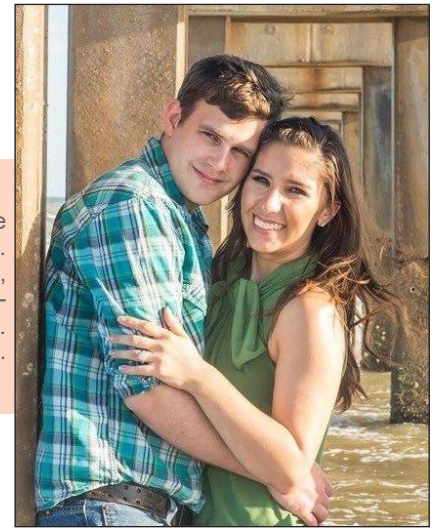
From Velda Sjovold

My husband, Ralph is the son of Elvina Lucille Sjovold . Elvina is the daughter of Ella Pauline Benrud who married Cyrus Bennett Johnson. Ella is the daughter of Anton Pederson Benrud & Maria Doken.

Ralph's mom, Elvina, is 99 years old, pictured above. she lives in Luther Place, a condominium in Outlook, Saskatchewan, Canada. She has macular degeneration, but is very healthy otherwise. She walks in the hallways two miles per day. Her husband, Oscar Arnold Sjovold passed this year (see below) on August 7, 2016 at the age of 100 years. He would have been 101 in December 2016. They celebrated their 75th anniversary, last October 16, 2015. Elvina will celebrate her 100th birthday, April 9, 2017.



Kendall Benrud and Darrin Morgan Jr. are please to announce their engagement. Their wedding is planned for April 22, 2017 at the Springs Events Venue- Magnolia Manor in Angleton, Texas. Kendall is the daughter of Michael Benrud.



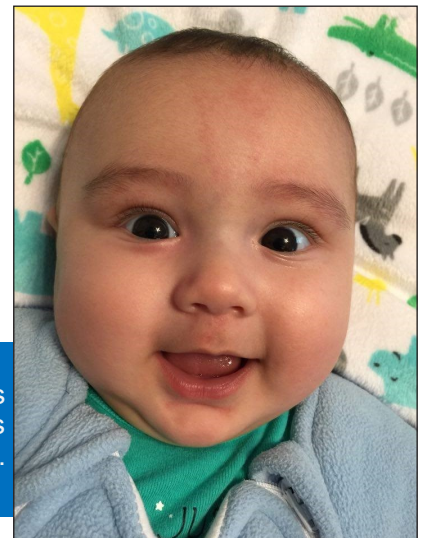
SJOVOLD, Oscar Arnold (above) December 10, 1915 - August 7, 2016 Oscar was born on the family farm five miles southwest of Outlook, to Andrew and Mary (Torvestad) Sjovold. Oscar is lovingly remembered by his wife of 75 years, Elvina (Johnson), sons Ralph (Velda) and children Tracy, Michelle (Roger) & Travis (Suzanne); Darryl (Diane) and children Neil and Carmen; Les (Judy) and children Tamara (Les) and Evan; eight great grandchildren, Cale & Rhett Warren, Fraya & Maryn Sjovold, Haley Sjovold, Mason & Kaelyn Dyck & Caitlyn Olsen, one great great granddaughter Lily Poser, one sister, Agnes Kumpula, brother-in-law Floyd (Gloria) Johnson, and numerous nieces & nephews. He was predeceased by his parents, two brothers Palmer (Mary) and Alvin (Gellen); four sisters, Ruth (Harold) Reeves, Amanda (Tony) Holmlund, Esther (Pete) Christenson and Lillian (Dave) Rutherford; brother-in-law, Emil Kumpula along with numerous nieces and nephews. Oscar saw many changes in his one hundred years of life, from attending West Star School on horseback, to the miracle of being able to fly on a jet plane to visit Norway. He also saw many changes in farming practices through the 75 years on the farm and was very proud that the land his father homesteaded is being farmed by his grandson, Evan, the fourth generation Sjovold. Oscar's parents died by the time he was 17 years old, determining his profession as a farmer at an early age. With the family in debt to the municipality for their mother's health care that had to be paid off, he became a fervent supporter of the public health system and the NDP. As a result of the community and family support he received as a young man, he was committed to community service, sitting on the Bethania Lutheran Church board, Credit Union board, a Masonic Lodge member, Conquest Gun Club leader, and as proud Norwegians, he and Elvina belonged to the Sons of Norway. Oscar loved to fish, hunt and travel. He also loved to visit with people, the main reason he made two trips to town each day for many years, using Elvina's grocery list & the mail pick-up as an excuse. He moved off his beloved farm in 2008 to Luther Place in Outlook and then into the Outlook Health Centre in 2013. Oscar's funeral service was held on Friday, August 12th at Bethlehem Lutheran Church with Pastor Harley Johnson officiating. Interment at Bethania Lutheran Cemetery. Thank you to the Bethlehem Lutheran Ladies who provided a bountiful lunch and thank you to all who donated to the Bethlehem Lutheran Church and Outlook Health Centre, we appreciate it. The family is grateful for the wonderful care Oscar received while residing in the Outlook Health Centre, for the many people who visited with him and who supported the family during his illness. Thank you to Floyd & Marjorie Childerhose of Outlook Funeral Chapel for such professional and caring support to the family.



Leif Kutschera, son of Kris Kutschera, grandson of Karrie Aaseby, graduated from Menasha High School on June second. He graduated with high honors and was chosen to give the commencement address.

He also received youth service high honors with over 250 logged hours of community service. Mainly from helping at the elementary school summer school art classes. He is pursuing a major in interior design at the University of Minnesota.

Desmond Christopher Benrud was born 5/31/16. His parents are Christopher and Gip Benrud. Desmond's grandparents are Karen and Burton Benrud.





Paul Mee and Erin Othrow tied the knot on May 24, 2015. PJ is doing inside sales at Heartland Technologies in Little Chute and Erin is working in customer care at Thrivent Financial. They are making their home in the Menasha, WI area.

Miles Suter was born March 31, 2016 to Michelle and Christopher Suter. His grandparents are Karen and Burton Benrud.



News from the Olava Branch



Samantha Doss Pusateri, daughter of Dr. Gary and Kathryn Pusateri (Olava Branch), graduated summa cum laude from the University of Wisconsin Eau Claire this last spring with a degree in Kinesiology. Her entire family is proud of her accomplishments! #gosamgo

We applaud the frequency of longevity in our extended Benrud family. Clarice Lee Bessey, daughter of Leonard (Olava branch) and Clara Lee, was born in Cashton, Wisconsin, September, 1916, and died in Pacific Palisades, California, just short of reaching 100 years. Five children survive her: Marilyn, Elaine, Jack, Richard, and the Rev. James Bessey who has frequently officiated at our Benrud Reunion worship services.

A University of Wisconsin graduate in vocal performance, Clarice is remembered for her beautiful voice, singing sacred music in the Cashton, Westby, Viroqua and La Cross Lutheran churches. These congregations joined annually to form large choirs called "Choral Unions," performing concerts including Handel's Messiah where she was the soprano soloist. From a young age Clarice enjoyed singing duets or trios with Lee cousins Ethel, and Neola, with cousin Lucille at the piano.

True to her Nordic roots, she regularly attended Benrud reunions, the final year being 2010, flying with her children from California to celebrate the dedication of our Little White Chapel. Hers was indeed a long life well lived.



News from the Carl Branch



On 4-16-16 at 4:16 pm granddaughter of Evelyn and the late Carl K. Benrud, Nicole Wendt, daughter of Steve and Sue (Benrud) Wendt married Jeffrey Carlson at Grace University Lutheran Church in Minneapolis, MN. Grandson, Matthew Swanson (wife Stacey), son of Wayne and Carolyn (Benrud) Swanson officiated the double ring ceremony. Grandson, Marcus Wendt was a groomsman and daughter, Julie Benrud-Luhman (husband Lance), read scripture. Nicole and Jeff are home in Eden Prairie, MN.

Erik Benrud (right) journeyed to Peking University as a faculty member on a trip to the mountainous region of Jinggang in China, which was where Mao Zedong gathered his forces after initial defeats."



September 2015, Paul and Jan (Benrud) Strand hosted a mini Carl P. Benrud Reunion on their farm in rural Kenyon, MN. Pat Neet and her husband David O'Kain, Doug Neet and Mark Neet came for a visit from Oregon and California. Their parents are the late Albert and Lila Benrud Neet. Lila was the daughter of the late Kenneth and Lillie Benrud. Kenneth and Lillie had three children, Carl, Lila, and Marlin. Both Carl and Lila are deceased. Together with all the family time and eating, we toured the Goodhue County Museum in Goodhue, MN, where we viewed the World War I Uniform that our Grandfather, Kenneth G. Benrud wore and saw his medals that were on display. In addition, we listen to the stories that our Uncle Marlin shared. It was a wonderful time that we had together.

The picture attached is Evelyn and the late Carl Benrud family, the late Al and Lila (Benrud) Neet family and the Marlin and Oryen Benrud and family.

Updates for the Family Tree are due no later than June 15, 2020

Mail changes to Julie Backus, 891 N. Roadrunner Road, Apache Junction, AZ 85119 or E-mail to jewelsdi@yahoo.com or call Julie at 414-745-4362 or enter on the website at www.benrudfamily.org. Please review the 2015 family tree for missing information, particularly for incorrect or missing mailing addresses, marriage dates and birth/death dates.

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY.

_____ Name of person submitting changes

_____ Phone number &/or E-mail

Note: New or Corrected Information only:

_____ Name (New Birth or Marriage/other addition)

_____ Mailing Address (street / post office box)

_____ City, State/Province, Zip/Postal Code

_____ Phone (**NEW AREA CODES?**)

_____ E-mail (don't forget to E-mail me if it changes)

_____ Death (Name, complete date, location of burial)
e.g. city/cemetery

_____ Cause of death (will not be printed but will be saved)

_____ Birth (s) (full name, gender, date, location of birth)

_____ Marriage (full name of spouse & indicate married name)

_____ Marriage Date & Location (city/state/province)

_____ Divorce Date and Name of Divorced person (s)

- _____ Occupation of any family member (include name)

Other information:

Thank you for helping us stay connected!



BENRUD READER
891 N. Roadrunner Road
Apache Junction, AZ 85119

Benrud 2020 Reunion

By Carolyn Swanson (Benrud Family President)

Address: 3907 Idaho Avenue
Crystal, MN 55427

Phone: 612-533-1070

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Thank to all of you who attended and made the 2015 reunion at the Days Inn in La Crosse last year a success! There were approximately 240 people in attendance over the three days. A special Thank You to Iris Othrow, President, the Benrud Board, and to everyone else who worked hard to orchestrate a wonderful family time together. Maunga Tusen Tak!

To those who couldn't be with us, there was a Sunset Cruise on the La Crosse Queen, Golf, Farm and Church Bus Tour, a Genealogy Class, Norwegian Dancers, Kransekakke Demonstration, Beer Tasting, lots of activities for the children, and we learned to play Kubb, Saturday night dinner with Silent Action, a Live Action, presentation of awards, plus many more activities. The reunion closed Sunday with our family church service at North Coon Prairie Lutheran Church. The service was led by, Reverend Edith Roberts and Reverend James Bessey. Hans Peterson and Hannah Kalisch provided us with special music together with the Benrud Choir directed by Jan Strand. After the service, there were family pictures and a delicious Norwegian Meatball Dinner served in the Church basement. The reason the service was held at the North Coon Prairie Lutheran Church was, Ole Christian, the son of Peder and Anne Soffie was buried there. Ole was 22 when he died, and didn't have any descendants. The gravestone needed to be restored and Greg Olson took on the project of restoring it and adding a new marker. Thank You Greg!

The 2020 Family Reunion will be held in La Crosse, July 31 – August 2, 2020. The Benrud Board is actively looking at a new venue and we have some great ideas. Details to follow in future Benrud Readers!

As a reminder, as your family grows with marriages, births and the passing of loved ones, please send those updates to Julie Backus. It is so helpful to make those updates now verses making them in 2020 prior to the reunion. We appreciate your help!