

Make it Happen!

By Marty Halverson

The goal is to *Strengthen the Family!*

After the Reunion, what are ways to stay connected with family members, near and far?

In order to unify our young family we created a team spirit. We had a:

- Song
- Mascot
- Motto
- T-Shirts
- Cheer
- Signal
- Regular Family *Happenings*.

Now, with 35 of us spread all across the country, we have new challenges. How can we keep that traditional unity when everyone leads such separate and distant lives?

We created a Cousin's Club with:

- Membership Cards
- Pledge
- Newsletter
- Personalized Crosswords, Matching Games, Word Searches
- Coloring books using family photos and personal trivia.
- Mailing Labels with special Logo
- Booklets with photos and memories of the family reunion
- Family History *Storybooks* for kids

We communicate in today's language, which includes blogs, emails, and the Internet.

Visit my blog: www.travelinoma.blogspot.com for a visual of what a blog actually is, and how it works. There are ideas for family activities and links to other blogs with more suggestions.

To set up a blog, one easy way is to visit www.blogger.com

Blogging For Dummies, by Susannah Gardner, is one of many books that can be helpful. However, you'll learn the most just by blogging.

Helps to make your blog successful:

- Write a mission statement
- Keep a list of ideas and topics for posts
- Decide how you will define success
- Pray before you post
- Find unique ways to bear testimony of gospel truths

What can a family do to connect via the Internet?

- Cookbook
- Personal history
- Research ancestral homeland
- Photos of ancestors with captions
- Write skits for reunion
- Hold long-distance baby shower
- Share wedding plans
- Coordinate Christmas Shopping
- Host Halloween parade using on-line resources like *Shutterfly.com*
- *iTunes.com* to compile recordings of family songs
- *SKYPE.com* to connect live video to computer
- Update loved ones on medical conditions

- On-line journals with photos
- Family Bookclub
- Plan family fishing trip or hike
- Share testimony with kids and grandkids
- Be part of the conversation about who we are and what we stand for as members of the LDS Church.

Elder M. Russell Ballard said,

“Talk honestly and sincerely about the impact the gospel has had in your life...It is worth the effort if but a few are influenced by your words.”

Strengthen your far-flung family. Communicate in today's language, and make good things happen!