



FAMILY ASSOCIATION

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NEWSLETTER APRIL 2004

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IF A RENEWAL FORM IS ENCLOSED, YOU NEED TO PAY DUES

2004 REUNION NEWS FROM JESSE VAWTER

**COMBINE THE 2004 VVV REUNION WITH AN OUTSTANDING FAMILY VACATION
Now is the time and Colorado Springs is certainly the place to do it!!!**

Built from a gold rush town of the Old West, Colorado Springs is now a thriving center of business and manufacturing. West of the city, 13,110 foot Pikes Peak stands tall, providing a lovely alpine backdrop and a handy reference point for visitors. Colorado Springs is 6,035 feet above seal level and provides a breathtaking view of the Rockies' craggy peaks and the Great Plains sweeping expanse of grasslands.

Dear Cousins,

The reunion dates are Thursday, July 15 through Sunday, July 18. We have a block of 40 rooms at one of the newest (2 years old) full-service hotels in Colorado Springs, with a breathtaking view of the Rocky Mountains adjacent to the Colorado Springs Airport. The rooms are being held for **The Vawter Family Reunion** at a rate of \$90.00 for up to 4 persons in a room

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until June 10, 2004. So hurry and call to make your reservations. This price includes breakfast for two people per room.

Holiday Inn – Colorado Springs Airport
1855 AeroPlaza Dr.
Colorado Springs, CO 80916
Tel: 719 280-8516 or 1-800 HOLIDAY
www.holiday-inn.com/cosapaerotech

This hotel has free airport shuttle, free local calls, refrigerators and safes in all rooms, swimming pool, spa, fitness center, meeting rooms, banquet rooms, elevators and wheelchair accessible rooms. For dining and refreshment, the Alamo Steakhouse and Grille is a great choice and is located under the same roof.

Our Friday night activity is a church wagon supper and western show at the Flying W Ranch. This provides great Western hospitality with supper and show, museums, shops, cowboy humor and lots of fun for all. Check it out at: www.flyingw.com.

Ned and Ellen Cummings are working to make arrangements for touring as much of the Air Force Academy area as possible. Some parts of the academy will not be available, due to enhanced security since 9/11.

Some of the other attractions in the area are: Manitou Cliff Dwellings, Pikes Peak Cog Railway or Drive; Summit House (14,110 ft); North Pole- Santa's Workshop; Buckskin Joe Frontier Town and Railway; Cave of the Winds; Cheyenne Mountain Zoo; Royal Gorge/Bridge and Park; Seven Falls; Garden of the Gods and Visitor Center; Cripple Creek & Victor Narrow Gauge Railroad; Echo Canyon River Expeditions; 4 Corners Rafting; Ghost Town Museum; Iron Springs Melodrama; Mollie Kathleen Goldmine; ProRodeo Hall of Fame; Van Briggle Art Pottery and USAF Academy Visitors Center. All of these attractions have the beautiful Rocky Mountains for a backdrop.

Laneil spent a 3-day weekend in Colorado Springs in late February checking out hotels and gathering information. She came home so excited and is looking forward to a great vacation with our family. We hope to use a few extra days and take advantage of the many things to see and do in the area. We always use the reunion as reason to go to a specific area, but plan to vacation for a few days in the area to see the local sites. We have lots of great memories, and pictures of these times with our family.

Reunion Schedule:

We are still working on the details of the Reunion Schedule. The dates for the reunion have been changed, but the publication dates for the newsletter remain the same. There will not be another newsletter edition before the Reunion, therefore, I will send the completed schedule to those on the VVV Newsletter mailing list well before the Reunion.

High Altitude Tips from Colorado Springs Visitor's Center:

Colorado Springs ranks in the United States cities with the highest altitudes. The lack of humidity, and warm days and cool nights are positive parts of living at this level, and our residents become familiar with the special conditions created by the dry air with its decreased amount of oxygen.

However, visitors to the city often overlook some simple suggestions that can make their stay

free of any negative effects caused by the high elevation. To enjoy your visit in Colorado Springs, here are a few things to keep in mind to give your body time to adjust to the altitude and prevent altitude sickness.

- Stay below 7,000 feet the first day (the city of Colorado Springs is 6,035 feet above sea level)
- Give your body time to adjust (there's lots to see and do at the lower altitude level).
- Avoid strenuous exercise the first day.
- Drink lots of fluids, especially our tasty water, and avoid too much alcohol and tobacco products.

Note: Houston is around 35 feet elevation, and Laneil followed these suggestions for her February visit and had no problems adjusting to the altitude difference. She even went up into the high country with friends on the second day and had a great time and did very well.

2004 VVV Reunion Shirts:

The 2004 Reunion shirt is Kelly green and has a mountain with the Colorado Flag inlaid on the front. The back has the various spellings of our name as before.

Adult Sizes Tax & Setup Number Total

Small \$9.25 X _____ = _____
Medium \$9.25 X _____ = _____
Large \$9.25 X _____ = _____
XL \$9.25 X _____ = _____
XXL \$10.25 X _____ = _____
XXXL \$11.50 X _____ = _____
(Postage \$3.00 ea X _____ = _____
if shirts to be shipped
Grand Total = _____ -

Shirts will be available at the 2004 reunion, but postage must be charged for those to be mailed. Please send a note with the number of each size, and a check for the total order (plus postage if they are to be shipped) to:

Jesse & Laneil Vawter
11506 Sagecountry
Houston, TX 77089

Don't forget:

- Make your hotel reservations
- Order and pay for the Vawter 2004 VVV Colorado Springs shirt
- Watch for letter with complete schedule and meal information. Please be ready to return immediately with names and meal count for those who will attend.
- Come prepared to have a great time.

See you there,
Jesse & Laneil

CURRENT ADDRESSES

Because it can sometimes take several weeks for mail to be forwarded, please help by letting us know when you have a change of address. Both the treasurer and the news editor have membership lists, so the change can be sent to either one. Thanks.!

ROBERT LAVERNE VAWTER

Ila Vawter, of Newaygo, Michigan, has shared this letter of recommendation written in January 1972 for her husband, Robert Laverne Vawter. Robert was a member of the VVV Family Association for many years before his death April 7, 2003. He was the son of Robert Clayton Vawter, who was also a member of the association, and the grandson of William M. Vawter. The latter was written by Norman W. Mochel, General Manager of Weber Showcase & Fixture in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

“Mr. Robert Vawter has been employed by Weber Showcase & Fixture Company Division and Weber Technical Products Division approximately ten years, and for the past eight years has been assigned to our Research and Development Department.

“He has been involved in the development of a wide variety of products related to access flooring, partitions, shelving, clean room systems and store fixtures, in addition to the development of special tooling and jigging for our manufacturing departments.

“He is well qualified to set up and operate milling machines, metal lathes, grinders, arc welders, and other equipment typically found in a tool room and prototype departments. He is familiar with testing of materials and performance evaluation of various equipment and he is experienced in building prototypes from shop details.

“His performance has been excellent at all times, and we regard him as a very valuable member of our R & D group. I am glad to recommend Mr. Vawter; you will find him to be very conscientious, intelligent and loyal in the performance of his duties.”

IMA VAUGHTER AND URAH VAUGHTER II

Ima Vaughter, while working on his genealogy, has discovered that Urah Vaughter II, his fifth cousin, four times removed, was quite a well known fellow in Montana. In fact, he was hanged for horse stealing and train robbery in the late 1800s. The only known photograph of Urah shows him standing on the gallows. Written on the back of the photograph are the words: “Urah Vaughter II: Horse thief, sent to Montana Territorial Prison 1885; escaped 1888, robbed the Montana Flyer six times, caught by Pinkerton detectives; convicted and hanged 1889.”

Ima is writing a book about the Vaughters, and wants to include Urah, but is rather embarrassed that he has someone of this caliber in the family. His grandfather always told him that all the Vaughter men were businessmen, teachers, ministers or lawyers.

To make his book accurate, Ima has cropped and enlarged the photograph so all that is seen is a head shot. He then says this about Urah:

“Urah Vaughter II was a famous cowboy in Montana Territory. His business empire grew to include acquisition of equestrian assets and intimate dealings with the Montana railroad. Beginning in 1885, he devoted several years of his life to service at a government facility, finally taking leave to resume his dealings with the railroad. In 1888, he was a key player in a vital investigation run by the renowned Pinkerton Detective Agency. In 1889, Urah passed away during an important function held in his honor when the platform upon which he was standing collapsed.”

[The source of this “historical fact” will remain anonymous.]

THANK YOU

As always, we thank those who have contributed material for this newsletter.

ERIC STOLTZ

This update on Eric Stoltz comes from his father, Jack Stoltz of Santa Barbara, California. Eric's mother is the late Evelyn Vawter Stoltz. His Vawter lineage includes grandparents, Francis Marion and Hazel Ellen (Roten Vawter; and great-grandparents, Albert Calvin and Frances Josephine (Churchwell) Vawter.

Last December, Robert Simonson wrote in Playbill Magazine, that "with the addition of Eric Stoltz, the cast of the upcoming Broadway revival of Larry Gelbart's comedy *Sly Fox*, set to open at Broadway's Barrymore Theatre on April 1, 2004, is complete."

Eric Stoltz has an impressive list of film, television and stage credits. *Sly Fox* is not his first time on the stage in New York. He appeared as the George of Gregory Mosher's 1988 Broadway *Our Town* at Lincoln Center. His other New York credits include *Two Shakespearean Actors* and *Three Sisters*. Off Broadway he has acted in *The Importance of Being Earnest*.

According to Simonson, Stoltz is "a dependable presence in commercial and independent films for more than a decade." He will star as Simon Able, the servant of Richard Dreyfuss' conniving miser, Foxwell J. Sly.

Stoltz has more than 35 films to his credit, including "Pump Fiction", "Kicking and Screaming", "Mask", "Little Women", "Rob Roy", "Say Anything", "The House of Mirth", "Grace of My Heart", and "Fluke".

Sly Fox will have an out-of-town tryout at the Shubert Theater in Boston, from February 20-March 7. Previews begin on Broadway March 12. Joining Dreyfuss and Stoltz will be Elizabeth Berkley, Bob Dishy, Rene Auberjonois and other actors of note.

GEORGIA VAUGHTERS REUNION

The sixth annual reunion of the Vaughters family in Georgia will be Sunday, June 13, 2004, at Bethel Baptist Church, two miles north of Dawsonville. The schedule will be similar to previous years:

11:00 a.m. – Visit the cemetery, with those 60 American flags on Vaughters graves.

Noon – Brief family history, with special presentation on William Henry Vaughters

12:45 p.m. – Photographs on front steps

1:00 p.m. – Covered dish dinner

Please continue to bring those things that make these reunions great: your favorite covered dish, pictures and stories.

Jim Vaughters hopes to see you there. He can be contacted at 303-771-3937.

BABY CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Evan and Katy Vaughters of Seattle, Washington, on the birth of their two sons, Forrest Zion and Clayton Sage, who were born on November 23, 2003. Proud grandparents are Jon and Dee Vaughters of Frederick, Maryland.

Thanks to the extensive research done by great-grandfather, E. B. Vaughters, whose wife Adele still resides in Seattle, Forrest and Clayton will be able to trace their family name all the way back to Bartholomew Vawter, eleven generations prior in Virginia.

We thank John Vaughters for sending this news of his grandsons.

GRADUATION CONGRATULATIONS

Jacqueline Renee Hudson will graduate from North Pontotoc High School in Ecu, Mississippi, on May 20, 2004. Jackie has attended many VVV reunions with her grandmother, Martha Hudson, and her great grandparents, the late Emory and Clarice Mayer. She has been a part of the VVV Children's Chorus and the Vawter Family Singers.

Philip Claude Vaughter will graduate with honors from Iowa State University in May. He is the son of Dr. Paul Vaughter of Sauk Rapids, Minnesota, and the nephew of past VVV President, Phil Vaughter of Austin, Texas.

Eric Jason Taylor of East Point, Georgia, graduated December 2003 from Georgia State University with a Master's Degree in Public Administration with a concentration in management and public finance. He is now a project manager for the Office of Economic Development for the city of Marietta. Eric is a graduate of the International School of Kenya, in Nairobi, and Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana. He is the son of Tom and Diana Taylor of North Vernon, Indiana, and the nephew of Bonita Welch.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Wordna Wicker

Wordna Glen Threadgill Wicker, 77, of Pontotoc, Miss., died March 10, 2004, at North Mississippi Medical Center in Pontotoc.

Wordna was a graduate of Big Creek High School, where she was salutatorian. A graduate of Holmes Junior College and a 1948 graduate of Mississippi State College for Women, she was a former public school teacher at Ecu, Thaxton, Randolph and Algoma. For a number of years, she was a legal secretary for her husband.

Wordna was a member of the First Baptist Church in Pontotoc, the American Legion Auxiliary and the Cosmopolitan Club. She was a state officer in DAR and a delegate to several national DAR conventions. An avid genealogist, she was co-author of "Threadgills Book II". She was an active member of the VVV Family Association and the first newsletter editor. For many years, she and her husband conducted the Memorial Service at the reunions.

A longtime friend, Virginia Dillard, said there "was not a better genealogist in the state. She just had an instinct for it" and spent many hours tracking lineage for those who wanted to join the Daughters of the American Revolution. This same friend recalled a time when they were sitting around a bridge table laughing about their ambitions. "When we got to Wordna, she said, 'will just be thankful when Fred has two shirts, and I won't have to iron one each night'."

Surviving are her husband, former Circuit Court Judge Fred Wicker; a son, U.S.Rep. Roger Wicker of Tupelo, Miss.; a daughter, Ellen Wicker Cummings of Virginia Beach, VA.; a foster daughter, Mindy Staten Theile of Canton, Ga.; brothers, the Rev. James C. Threadgill Jr., of Maben, Miss., and Gene Threadgill of Oxford, Miss.; a sister, Margaret Holman of Noxapater, Miss.; grandchildren, McDaniel Wicker, Margaret Wicker and Caroline Wicker, all of Tupelo, and Frederick Cummings and Rebecca Cummings, both of Virginia Beach.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Mr. and Mrs. James Cedric Threadgill; and a brother, David Threadgill.

Memorials may be made to First Baptist Church Building Fund, 31 Washington St., Pontotoc MS 38863.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Silvey Brice Vaughters

Silvey “S.B.” Vaughters, the elder statesman of the Georgia Vaughters family, passed away on April 2, 2004, after a short hospital stay. As the dean of the Georgia Vaughters, he was a leader of the 2002 VVV reunion in Elbert County. He spoke for all of us when he said during a prayer, “Lord, I’m proud to be a Vaughters.”

On August 11, 1911, Silvey Brice Vaughters was born a mile northeast of Shoal Creek in northern Dawson County, Georgia. The Vaughters family had settled in that area in the late 1830s. Silvey was the fifth generation of the family to live there. His parents were William Oscar Aiken Vaughters (1881 – 1964), a farmer, justice of the peace, and long-time county Ordinary, and Maggie Dora Brice Vaughters (1872-1946). His grandparents were Rev. George Robinson Vaughters (1860-1936), Epsey Catherine Bennett Vaughters (1861-1916), John Marion Brice (1828-1917, and Hannah C. Graham Brice (1832-1908).

Silvey was the third of five children. Annie was born in 1908 and was the mother of Charles Burt, longtime VVV member. George William was born in 1909, Grace in 1913, and Flora in 1918. All four of them are buried side by side, just beside their parents and Brice grandparents and one row from their Vaughters grandparents in the cemetery of Bethel (Shoal Creek) Baptist Church in Dawson County.

Born only 50 years after the Civil War, Silvey grew up among the mountain people and the old time honored ways of doing things. Many of these old country people and events are described in his autobiography, “Real Life Experiences”. He was pleased to give copies to VVV cousins at the 2002 reunion.

Each major period of his life became a separate chapter in his book:

- First Years Teaching Schools in North Georgia
- Coaching Basketball and Serving as Principal
- Attending and Finishing College at the University of Georgia
- Teaching Vocational Agriculture at Lumpkin County High School,
Dahlonega, Georgia; Centralhatchee High School, Heard County;
and Murphey Candler School, Lithonia.
- Jersey Cattle Dairy Farming
- Salesman of Insurance, Securities and Real Estate
- Raising Horses

To say that he was successful in each job that he undertook is an understatement.

In 1937, Silvey married Rebecca Cown. He began student life at the University the next day so their honeymoon was delayed a year. They were a devoted couple who complimented each other perfectly. They seemed to challenge each other on who could be the nicer person and on who would live longer.

They had four children. Silvey Brice Jr. was born in 1939, Carol in 1944, Steve in 1946 and Wendell in 1948. They had seven grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

S.B. bought a 141-acre farm in DeKalb County, the east suburb of Atlanta, in 1946. He and Rebecca, the children and grandchildren, Dawson County cousins and friends knew that as home for the next 56 years. That farm was the subject of two interesting stories.

In 1989, the tax assessment on the farm increased by 72 percent, primarily because of residential use being considered more heavily than the agricultural aspect. He filed a court case, lost it, appealed to the Georgia Court of Appeals, and won – all while acting as his own attorney. He was pleased that he won on his principles, and he was proud to remind the VVV Historian/Archivist that he was a competent attorney without going to law school!

The second story of the farm is the final one. In 2002, he sold it to The State of Georgia for its

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(Silvey Brice Vaughters, cont'd.)

appraised value rather than sell it to commercial developers for several times that price. His reason was again one of principle – to prevent building and urban sprawl. Georgia agreed to keep it as open space as part of a park. At the 2002 VVV reunion, he was recognized as one of the original Vaughters environmentalist, in the same category as Swift and Julian Vaughter.

He and his entire family played and sang bluegrass and country music for many years. Two years ago, at age 91, he announced that he was learning to play the violin! Typical of his interest and zest for life.

Silvey is survived by his wife, three of his children, and six of his grandchildren. Son Wendell and grandson Steve preceded him in death. He attended all of the Vaughters reunions in Dawson County, and in 2003 he introduced 15 of his descendants who were present.

We will hear his voice, remember his jokes, admire his accomplishments, and appreciated his commitments. He left legacies and standards for all. His immediate family, the Dawson County Vaughters, the VVV Association, and the country are better for his having passed our way. Thank you, Silvey.

We thank VVV Historian/Archivist Jim Vaughters for sending this obituary and tribute to Silvey Brice Vaughters. An article from the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, sent by the Rev. Ralph Fall will appear in the next newsletter.

Merrill A. Jones

Merrill A. Jones, 72, of Indianapolis, Indiana, died Sunday, January 11, 2004, at St. Francis Hospital in Beech Grove.

Mr. Jones was a 1949 graduate of Columbus, Indiana, High School and earned a degree in mechanical engineering at Purdue University in 1953. He operated an architectural and engineering consulting business in the Greenwood, Indiana, area from 1960 until this year, designing churches, health care facilities, commercial projects and Seoul Theological Seminary in Korea. He was a licensed architect and land surveyor. He was an active member of Consulting Engineers of Indiana and was Greenwood city engineer from 1961 to 1979.

He was a member of North Vernon First Baptist Church and former member, officer and Sunday school teacher at Southport Baptist Church. He traveled to 32 countries on behalf of missions and missionaries for Overseas Council International and OMS International, ministered at the jails in Johnson and Jennings counties for 30 years and founded the Brotherhood of Christian Prisoners newsletter and Bible study. He also regularly visited inmates at many Indiana prisons.

Born in Indianapolis on Feb. 19, 1931, Mr. Jones was the son of Elmer and Edith Bullard Jones.

Surviving are his wife of 51 years, Joan Helt Jones; children, Michael M. Jones of Greenwood, Darryl T. Jones of Murphysboro, Illinois, and Joyce Ellen Jones-Myers of Anderson, Indiana; and grandchildren, Matthew Jones and Elizabeth Jones, both of Greenwood, and David M. Jones of Morton, Illinois.

He was preceded in death by his parents; a daughter, Janice Jones Hicks; and a daughter, Virginia Jones Sharp.

Merrill Jones was a descendant of William and Frances Vawter, pioneer settlers of Jennings County, Indiana. William Vawter was a constituent member and first pastor of Zoar Baptist Church in Jennings County. Organized in 1835, the church eventually moved from the country into the town of North Vernon and became North Vernon First Baptist Church. In September 2001, the congregation moved into a new building. The architect of the building was Merrill Jones, and was one of the last buildings to be designed by him.

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