

FFN Newsletter

10th Reunion as Seen by the President

What a great and grand time we had in Kearney, Nebraska sharing time with members of the family gathered there for the 10th Felzien family reunion. We started this in 1980 in St. Francis, Kansas and decided then to hold the reunion every three years and ultimately being hosted by different sections of the family. This year Pat Thorell, Dallas and Virginia Ott and the Bash family who are descendants of Otto and Susie Felzien hosted the celebration. The Susie Felzien group was the largest group attending and the second was the Gus Felzien descendants. The oldest attending family member was 88 and the youngest was 2 months. It was delightful to see so many younger parents with young children in attendance. When we move the gathering places to different parts of the US and Canada, we meet many more family members who have never attended the reunion before.

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Starting a Family Website

Daniel began the family network in 2004 with high hopes of creating a place in cyber space where family members could gather to become familiar with recent and up-to-date family matters. Investigate www.felzien.net to see what's new. Daniel also is ready for more to do with websites involving our family. Please reference the back pages to learn more.



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About Family in Focus!

The purpose of the Family in Focus! article is to highlight different parts of our family so we can better know each other's history, and will perhaps spark conversations between us either at the reunion or in-between. It is not meant to be a full tale, only a snippet of the full story.

The next edition of the FFN Newsletter will be dedicated to the branch currently living in Canada,

how they got there, and what they did or now do to sustain their living.

This FFN Newsletter segment is dedicated to the Gus Felzien Farm stories, tales and dreams.

Future stories for the Family in Focus will be dependent on your input; please provide us with your stories.

Please read Family in Focus!

To live, to love, to learn and to leave a legacy: These principles help balance body, heart, mind and spirit. They are universal. They represent the future of our Family.

Children's Art Contest

We had hoped to have the children in different age categories submit their art (no help from parents, please) for a contest before the last reunion. The idea was to have a contest with and between the age groups in hopes we would have the winning triennial art be the logo for our T-shirts or caps.

If you recall, each branch of the family had a designating color T-shirt. This helps locate people when our reunions are big, as in fair style.

Hopefully, we will have some participants before the next reunion. You have plenty of time to prepare; start 'arting-it-up', scanning your art into a pic, submitting it so everyone can vote on it to be the winner!

Family in Focus!

Gus Felzien's Old Homestead, Saint Francis, KS

I can't in my lifetime tell you how many times I have heard different stories about the Gus Felzien Farm. The last time was at the 2007 reunion in Kearney, Nebraska. Stories were wild and impassioned, as usual. One in particular, raised the idea the "old farm" was up for sale; oh, the excitement of the idea! Of course, everyone likes to hear of the huge country parties thrown in the hay bay of the barn, to include fiddle and a grand piano. I have always wanted to walk the farm, but never was I able to catch someone at home, so I would normally turn back to town on the rare occasions I visited Saint Francis (Sainty).

So, it happened. After the reunion, I caught the current owner at home, Martin Hilt, near 41 years old. After apologizing for all the Gus relation constantly bothering them, we talked for about two hours over many things. So is it true you ask, all the stories passed down and around?

Well, here is the story in short form as I understand it: One of Father Ernst's sons, Gus Felzien, b. 1865, left Nebraska and in 1883 homesteaded farmland near Bird City, Kansas under the Homestead Act. He farmed there for a few years, but in 1888 Ernst asked him to return to help with the NE farm and he uprooted and moved back to Nebraska. He met his wife there, and before their third child, he, she, and the two kids bought and worked the old Buck Ranch outside Sainty. In 1912 or 1914, Gus built a very well built barn on the property, and shortly thereafter in 1920, they hired the best builders money could buy to build a house. This craftsman style...

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Healthy Felzien Family Portrait Quiz

Can you recognize this healthy looking family? The color on their faces must relay the true feeling of living correctly. They must be spiritually, emotionally, physically, and mentally strong. Do you still have to guess which members of the family these people are??? Does your nuclear family resemble something close to these smiling people? I hope so. Family photos like these are what we want to see in future Felzien Family Newsletters. If you have such healthy and professionally looking photos, we would like to see them. Your family might make it into our newsletter. I hope you will submit yours today! If you haven't already guessed who these people are, maybe you need a hint??? The winner of the guessing game will receive a small prize!

Cost of a Website

Believe it or not, a website does cost money for operation. Many hours are put forth on a volunteer basis similar to all the volunteer hours someone researching our genealogy does. Sometimes it is a thankless job ... but someone has got to do it, right? ;-). Although the many hours are free (thanks to all who assist with input and time), there are costs associated. During the 10th Tri-annual reunion, a collection of \$213.00 was provided towards maintenance costs. The amount of money spent thus far for the past three years is \$564. Thank you for your contribution.



The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Families

Highly Effective families:

1. Are proactive. They act based on principles and values and accept personal responsibility instead of reacting and blaming.
2. Begin with the end in mind. They have a clear purpose and work together to accomplish their shared vision instead of being self-focused.
3. Put first things first. They coordinate and plan to spend quality time with each other instead of rushing past each other.
4. Think win/win. They appreciate each other and cooperate instead of competing.
5. Seek first to understand. They listen to others more than trying to be heard.
6. Synergize. They celebrate their differences instead of being frustrated by them.
7. Take time to sharpen the saw. They spend time for recreation and renewal together instead of watching endless hours of mindless television.

FFN

Family Address
816-555-7111
[Fax number]
[E-mail address]

[Company slogan]

Find us on the Web:
www.Felzien.net



Nebraska Felzien Reunion and Graveyard

The reunion was better than others for different reasons...it is always good to find your favorite flower in a garden. For one reason, we were able to see the grave markers of some of the ancestry. After church, we walked across the street to the graveyard. It was simply amazing to see the markers. It would have been better to meet the people in life; however, this was also okay. The reunion was a big hit, especially the "field trip". Please reference this photo and

...continued on page 7.

Your Website, Our Website, by Daniel

Daniel also is ready for feedback not only on the .net website to learn how it could be better, but also on whether the family is ready to create an interconnecting organization (.org) of Felzien businesses to propel the family in wealth of unity, and financial opportunities. Below is a portal into what his ideas are. He has many, many ideas. Read what he writes, and then you can decide if you have any questions. Why not contact him to learn more? He can most easily be reached by his email address at Daniel@Felzien.net

Good Day. My name is Daniel Felzien. I want to thank you for the opportunity to address you. My desire has always been to have a stronger and unified family. I was raised somewhat in a farm land environment with my Father's family. I have witnessed some closely fit nuclear family gatherings and activities, but I have also seen individuality and singularity of different ideas and family branches. Our family members reach out to one another all the time. But, is it possible to become closer, to improve our family bonds to one another, and to better our situation as a whole family? I hope so. I believe creating a functional and useful website would bring our family, regardless of the spelling, i.e. Welsen, Felsen, Felzen, Felzien, together from across the world.

In 2004, when I purchased and designed Felzien dot net, my intensions were rewarded by being in contact with a Welsen family in Denmark interested in the next family reunion. How remarkable it is to be able to reach out and contact people with whom you may never have had a chance to have gotten to know. The World Wide Web is a powerful tool; and, with Felzien.net, my objective was to bring our family together in a network for good times and closeness. Felzien.net is a place to share such things as family information relevant to everyone, e.g. Reunions, Genealogy, etc. Things such as art contests and T-shirt sales only make reunions more enjoyable, and the website is a place to display them. Of course, while a website can provide leadership and ...

organization to a group of people, it is not the end all of answers. Therefore, I envisioned a President, VP, "family banker", Secretary, and Reunion Host(s) to hold three year terms, electable at each reunion. Because not one person can do everything, I think it is important to have the opportunity for others who actually want to perform and accomplish things to have a chance every third year to do something.

In the same spirit, I purchased and am also holding close Felzien dot org. My intensions with this web space is to create an organization built by and consisting of Felziens and their commerce. I would like to see Felzien's advertising their own businesses on the site, and being able to give other Felzien's a discount for product or services. This organization, may include dues, but would also be a way to advertise business. There would be other benefits available to those who participated. There are discounts for phone, rental car services, etc., once we apply for them. I have many more ideas to improve our family's position. One idea is the tax deductible donations to the organization. These donations would be supporting such things as awards and scholarships to deserving Felzien students based upon identified qualifications and expectations at specific points in their lives to improve the education of those individuals and to improve their position in the world. A last idea I will share here is

...continued on page 5.

Like airplanes, families need a clear destination, a flight plan and a compass to make it through turbulence. These are your principles, your values and your mission. "Every family has challenges. The thing that makes the strongest families effective is that they apply principles in their decision making and living.

President's Letter

...continued from page 1.

... We were entertained with music provided by the Jerry Ott family children and discovered a possible addition to the Branson, Missouri performers. We were all very impressed with their talent. A skit put on by Beverly Ott and others was very entertaining and funny and brought laughter to the crowd of over 70 attendees!

Those of us now in the oldest generation realize that we must find a means of communicating with those younger generations so this family gathering will continue after we are gone. The ideas of Dan Felzien who has spent the past three years working on the Felzien Family website will undoubtedly present information to the cyberspace generations now and yet to come that will ultimately create a means of keeping them tuned into family. Our genealogy research has reached new

heights with the work of LaVonne Gemaehlich Murray. She has provided information previously unknown and will continue her research which will end up on the website. I will be turning my archive of family history over to her for safe keeping for future generations when we have our next (11th) reunion in and around Bend, Oregon in 2010 being hosted by the Gemaehlich branch. Stay tuned for information on this reunion, as plans are being formulated and scheduled!

We have to really give our hosts for this past celebration a big "Thank You" for such a great reunion. I know they worked hard and they are glad it is over now. A great job!

LeRoy Felzien

Corrections

As this is the first edition, there are no previous editions with any corrections needed.

Again, I would like to thank all who attended the reunion and for all those that helped with the assistance of this newsletter.

Thank you, D.F.

Website

...continued from page 4.

...the chance to use farm land to build for and with family investment a soundly ran bio-refueling station, using some land to grow the biofuels. In this not-for-profit organization, we would need to have officers and a definition of rule or procedure to run ourselves. We would need a President, "Chief Financial Officer", Secretary, etc. to serve for an identified term.

But, all of my hopes and intensions of empowering our family will not work if we cannot get the family's agreement and participation. Of course, the positions of office or even if only assisting one of them, is a totally voluntary position, and everyone has busy lives, but where someone can give back to the family is something special.

So far, what we have listed are the Family Network President and vice president, the Family Accountant, Secretary, and Family Reunion Host(s). These positions are listed on the website for all the family to see on .net. As the webmaster, I am able to correct broken links and post information and new ideas with the assistance of everyone. I want to invite you to view and then be a part of the family network and organization. Please provide your feedback on the website, it's content, and the ideas that we have for our family. Please feel free to contact me if you would like to be a part of this.

Thank you, Daniel Felzien

Family in Focus

...continued from page 2.

This craftsman style house was the first in the county to have inside plumbing, including toilets! (In actuality, the house mimics some of the Denver craftsman houses I see now selling for \$4-500,000.00, but Gus's was in the country.) Gus did not believe in tractors, and farmed the land with only horses on principle. It was easier when children like Elmer and Eddy were grown. He had a hen house, pig furrowing building, pig pens, with a pork smoke house (still standing) above ground, and a nicely sized

barn. The acreage was near 400 acres (two quarters (160 each) and a 40 acre sliver across the river more) that the family farmed. Son Elmer married in 1931. The Farm ended up in son Edward (Eddy) Felzien's possession and he farmed it with a total of three tractors, four boys, and four girls until Alzheimer's got the best of him. When he was found roaming farms and land away from the home place, the family sold the farm in 1964 to move into Sainty.



The tour led from the house outside. The pork smoke house could still be used today. However, the hen house had been used as a back drop for a puppy pen some 30 years ago. Apparently, bales of hay were made around puppies, and when the heat lamp was used to keep them warm during a cold night, the entire structure burnt unnoticed before the dawn. Yes, the stories about the grand piano parties are true. Although the piano still sits in the barn loft, the rain has severely damaged its condition during Eddy's illness and before the Felzien's sold the farm to the Hilts. Oh, but I can tell you only from the hand crafted, carved legs, that piano was a prime piece of furniture, or a musical instrument. As she lay

there, her keys strewn here and there, in a weak voice she still told a big story.

Looking inside the barn, I wished I would have had my chalk to make more visible the initials and date carved out of the bricks: RF & BE (or BF), 1914. The barn continues to look strong and well maintained. Martin let me know his Father fixed the hole in the roof shortly after they purchased the property, and the barn hasn't been any worse since. (Reference photo next page)

Now that the story ends here, we know the farm is not for sale, nor does it look like it will ever be again soon. Martin mentioned how much he values the barn and the whole property, and in fact, added acreage to the farm. He has added a few silos as well.



The piano is in terrible disrepair, but it is the property of the Hilt's. Upon the estate sale of my Father's, the things he had given to me did not include the farm as I half-wished it would have, but the truth is the family Hilt have had the farm 43 years, and nearly as long as the Felzien's 50 years, and should probably not be considered a "Felzien Farm" anymore. The things I know in my name passed to me from my father, Jimmy, and passed from his Father, Eddy, include the fiddle of Eddy's currently being held by Ned Felzien, the John Deer Model A I lent to a man named Bracelin at the time of Jimmy's estate sale, and of which I don't anymore know its location. Bottom line: time moves on, and things and people change.

Written by Daniel Felzien

Family Reunion

...continued from page 4.



The reunion was a big hit, especially the "field trip". Please reference the photos of the markers. The first or left reads FELZIEN at the bottom of the stone and in the shade. I believe it includes the Father of Ernst and other members. Ernst (or Ernest in English) was also in the same yard.



FFN

Family Address

Street:

City,

ST:

Zip:



[Recipient Name]

[Street address]

[Address 2]

[City, ST ZIP Code]