

THS Class of 1969
55-Year Reunion Planning Group
Email to Planning Group from Mark Neis 3-15-24

UPDATE FROM THE FRONT LINE PLANNER. At a meeting last year, the question of dampening of attendance on a Saturday due to KU/KState home game football game was brought up. Based on history, one of the 2 schools had a home game each weekend. In another example of "God smiles on the Class of THS '69" (my own made up expression), KU is AWAY at West Virginia and K State is AWAY at BYU. I'm thinking right now that if all you hustlers get the word out about the Sept 21 event, we might see 150 people go through over the day. I will be ready.

In the 30 years I made a noon meal for my bar and my Judges downtown, in December, a cold clear day, weather would increase folks' appetites, and more meat was consumed. Again, I will be ready after we get a firm "sign up" list. The reason folks don't sign up ahead of time, we found, is they have a conflict, then before the event, the conflict is resolved, and they attend last minute. Again I will be ready. All event planners build in 10% or a little more of unannounced attendees. Any '69'ers with family or friends should be told those folks may accompany, we just suggest a \$10 per person donation.

Breakdown of costs: 1) Table ware, table cloths, plates, cups, and serving ware. We have unused and never open forks, knives, spoons, lunch plates. Only need to buy dinner plates, 300 plates for about \$40 and gold plastic table cloths- \$40 2) Ice will be about \$20-\$25 3) Rental box van to use getting to Reynolds Lodge and to quickly load up and leave the facility about \$65 (two days and miles) 4) Hot boxes to keep hot food hot and a hot food slicing station: \$60-\$75 4) Taco Bar: \$125 (15 lbs ground beef, plus extra's serves 100 people) 5) Dinner, gets more tricky: 6 beef tenderloin roasts X \$140 per roast, supposed to serve 130-140 persons 4 oz each (sounds low but it's rich flavor and there is other food) \$840. I propose to make 5 tenderloin roasts and 2, 5-7 lb prime rib roasts that would cost out, right now, about \$160. So total meat cost = \$850-\$875. Potatoes, side vegetable, dinner rolls??, \$125. Food total should be under \$1,000 including water and tea. I am seeing about a 10-15% increase in food costs, mostly the meat entrees, naturally.

\$80 + \$25 + \$65 + \$70 + \$125 + \$875 = \$1,240. Since Gov Kelly and Legislature got food sales tax redux to 2% on edible food, add \$35 = \$1,275. 120 people who on average donate \$10 covers costs. Some members have expressed to me privately they want a "nice event". Worst case scenario, 3/4 our predictions attend, we go down \$250 to \$300 from the costs. I spell out the costs of the meal to show why catering is such a great business, since any good caterer would charge \$50-\$75 per person for this type of meal depending on whether they work the event with their own labor. I notice that catering is so expensive, it's become a "drop the food and leave" situation. Taking advantage of our class mates' efforts to help set up and tear down cuts the cost by at least 75% over conventional catering. I clicked on the HyVee Store catering menu and the choices are too complex to give prices, they make you go in person. I spell that scenario, "likely very high cost". My attorney group was out hundreds in Fall, 2022, to buy smoked turkey, brisket, and a couple of side dishes for 30-25 people. Only the smoked turkey was memorable. Ended up paying \$20+ per person, and we did all the serving work.

So we all remember to promote the event, starting now, we're almost inside 6 months from Sept 21, a time many plan a travel calendar. Get our classmates to respond, hopefully, which should mean it's on their calendar and plan to attend. I confirmed that over 200 people (classmates and a number of friends/family) came to the Warren Estate function in September 2019. My older brother's class of '66 had a great turnout at their 55th. We're past Covid shutdowns, we're offering music, food, friends -- what more can you include in a reunion of way-over-70 year olds!

Mark Neis