

## A ROUSING SUCCESS

--Nancy Murdock

We had a wonderful time - and so did 73 others - at the Murdock Reunion. There was something for everyone: good food, good companions, and good fun. A bonus for us was a visit with our son Darrel and his two sons, Jason and Nic. They had a great trip in his air-conditioned car with cruise control and planned to stop at Niagara Falls on the way back to MN. Darrel said all the children looked just the way he remembered his cousins from 1971. All three of our crew participated in the horseshoe tournament, which Jason got a big medal for winning. In discussing the need to enjoy life, Darrel said, "Life is like a bowl of potato chips. Every time you mess with it, it falls apart and breaks into little pieces that you can't eat."

Wanda Schindo won the Cookie Baking contest with her Toll House Cookies; professional chef Wendy Morgan was the head judge. Dotty Salminen won the Scrabble tournament, and Michael Reese guessed within 2 the number of jelly beans ( ) in a bag! The three door prizes went to Robin Murdock, Oakie Varco, and Michael Reese. Stephanie Bowers won at checkers, and all the children were winners in the peanut hunt, etc.

Dotty's famous baked beans warranted second helpings, and Barbara DiStefano organized a great Make-Your-Own Gazpacho. She put up a sign a week before at work: "HELP! I have to make Gazpacho for 80 people. Please donate your extra garden produce." The tomatoes were mouth-watering, as was the Sugar-and-Butter corn purchased for lunch.

When we arrived Saturday, Bob said, "Where can I set up my booth?" He had a steady stream of interviews for future Muses and family background info. I set up the quilt blocks and lots more people painted blocks when they saw it was easy and fun. Everyone loved Val Davidson's beautiful center medallion of a family tree with a separate leaf for each family member. She did a terrific job of designing and executing this "Come Alive in '95" memento, which will go to Dotty when Sally finishes sewing the quilt. Another popular spot was the table of old photo albums. We had a great time seeing ourselves slender and wearing awful hairdos. Then we all took pictures of family groups as well as the whole momentous gathering.

The Muse joins with many others in heartfelt thanks to Sally and Ernie Bacon for their hospitality and to the rest of the committee for putting this pleasurable event together.

## "OPEN YOUR TRUNK"

--N. Murdock

Hot but happy, we dragged our tired feet from the car after the reunion. Pete DiStefano shouted, "Open your trunk!" Hoping he wasn't going to ask us to remove the 5 tons of assorted items from their hiding place, we complied. "How did you get the dent in the side of your car?" he asked. "We don't know," we said. "The car was parked." He peered inside the trunk and pressed against the dent with his mighty arm. The dent popped out immediately, looking like new. We were giddy with happiness; we'd had that dent for over 2 years! In fact, I was secretly planning to get it fixed this year - maybe!

## 1995 MURDOCK REUNION ROSTER

--Bob Murdock

Sally and Ernie Bacon; Eric Bacon; Rebecca Bacon and Keith Whalen.  
Dotty Salminen.  
Wanda Schindo and Deane Knox; Stephanie Bowers.  
Teddie Doane; Ben Doane; Michael Doane and Katie Ledford.  
Viki Blakley; Jacob and Shawn Blakley; Casey and Scott Phillips.  
Randy and Carol Salminen; Logan, Dillon, and Tucker Salminen.  
Penny Hawke.  
Bob and Nancy Murdock.  
Darrel Murdock; Jason and Nic Murdock.  
Gene and Chris Murdock.  
Scott Murdock.  
Eric and Robin Murdock; Lindsey, Timothy, and Ashley Murdock.  
Barbara and Pete DiStefano; Derek, Mary Anne, and Jon DiStefano.  
Lisa DiStefano and Oakie Varco.  
Wendy Morgan; Annie and Jill Morgan.  
Mary and Michael Reese; Nicholas and Christina Reese.  
Daniel and Carolyn Leskinen; Stephanie, Calder, and Alizabette Leskinen.  
David Leskinen and Donna Wilmot; Lisa Sampson; Nick, Jamie, and Justin Wilmot; Brett Leskinen.  
Art Murdock and Lorraine Skamarycz.  
Kimberly Murdock and Scott Draiss.  
Ron and Diane Murdock; Ben, Karina, and Bart Murdock.  
Walter Murdock and Gretel Honis.  
Keith Murdock.

## REUNION RAMBLINGS

--Bob Murdock

Well, I certainly had a good time at the Murdock Reunion. Setting up my Muse office at a table under the big canopy, I was able to chat with all kinds of relatives, some of whom I hadn't seen for years, and some I had never met. What a pleasure, getting info about birthdays, addresses, and family news. I did take time out to eat lunch, play Scrabble, and attend the big auction.

Randy Salminen was the auctioneer, just like in 1985, and he was in top form, getting high bids for most of the "brown bag" items. My brother Gene outbid me for one bag. He got so excited that at one point he bid against himself! Logan Salminen and Shawn Blakely did a good job of delivering the goods, collecting money, and making change.

It was great to see both Ron Murdock, with his family, and Keith, the two younger sons of our late great Uncle Ken. Ron had an awesome big screened canopy for his tribe. I'll be profiling this branch of the Murdocks in an upcoming Muse. I think we have the birthdays straight now.

One thing that impressed me was how well behaved all the kids were. David Leskinen and Donna Wilmot had five of them under their wings. Angels, all! The kids had plenty of space to roam, and lots of things to do: soap bubbles, water bags fights, make quilt squares, ride the golf cart. Keep 'em busy, that's the key.

**REUNION RAVE REPORT**

--Wanda Schindo

My friend Deane and I totally enjoyed the reunion, including the bonfires and the Brown Bag Auction. Personally, I enjoyed seeing people I hadn't seen for 30 years - especially Darrel. And I enjoyed spending time with my granddaughter Stephanie. Many thanks to Sally and Ernie! The kids had lots of fun, with the water balloons, golf cart, etc. I enjoyed myself - in spite of the mosquitos!

**A WEEKEND FOR THE GIRLS**

--Missi Morgan

While reading an issue of Parents Magazine, I came across an article about a moms' getaway. I thought it was a good idea, so I called some of my girlfriends to see if they wanted to go on a girls' only getaway. (Not all are moms.) Most said yes! Luckily, we all significant others who did not object to the idea. So far we have 4 of us going, but we're trying to get more.

We decided to stay close to save money, though the one with no money problems suggested Atlantic City. We're more on the Hampton Beach pace. Actually, we are trying to get a place in either Cape Cod or ME. Our goal is to have a few days where we are not "Mom" or "his wife" or "their employee." We are just going to be girls having fun. We already agreed no hard labor. Well, maybe a few meals at "home" to save money, but we want to be pampered. I'll let you know how it goes.

**CAPE NEDDICK NEWS**

--Orrel Frost

The quilt piece for the Murdock Reunion has been so much fun to work on. However, my glasses aren't good enough for hand work, and I haven't hand sewn for such a long time that it's definitely the work of a novice!! I was going to sew a fabric cat (for Mischa) onto the appliqued heart, but Roz was too busy to show me how to do it. So I bought cloth paint and painted him on.

We are disappointed that the hurricane didn't come close enough to deposit a little rain for us. It is very dry here. Pam and Colleen are visiting, and it is very nice to have them. Colleen vacuuumed for me this morning, so I am going to give her an allowance if she continues doing the same kind of jobs she does at home. She loves helping and I am delighted with her help. As I write this, Charlie and Colleen are playing Solitaire on the computer. Colleen is in seventh heaven!

**VACATION TIME**

--Pam Clark

We have been having a wonderful time with my Mom and Dad, who are the perfect hosts. It is very relaxing here. The hardest work we do is pounding the pavement in and out of the lovely ME gift and craft stores!! We are renewing acquaintance with my cousin and her two precious children.

Richard was invited to MD by a brother who sent him a ticket, so he has been able to have a short break from the tedium of job-hunting.

**CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE BROTHERLY KIND**

--Art Murdock

I read in the Muse last winter that Bob and Nan had left home at a certain time and headed north to NH on Thanksgiving. On the same morning, Lorraine and I started from home to visit her son in NJ. By my calculations, the two cars passed each other going in opposite directions on the George Washington Bridge in New York City!

**BASEBALL, ANYONE?**

-N. Murdock

Ian recently walked over to the school one evening to play ball with his neighbors. The first pitch was fouled into the ivy. "Ball lost; game over," says Ian. "The World's Shortest Ballgame."

**NEW VENTURE**

--Donald Lytle

Your birthday greetings, both in person and via the Murdock Muse, were deeply appreciated. They added much to the warmth of my eighty-first. Thank you.

Yes, dreams can become reality. As of August, my long-planned home-based mail order business will come to life. The catalog, Distinctive Gifts by Mail, features carefully selected, affordable gifts. There is an item for every occasion. Now, in truth, I am dependent in many ways on relatives and friends as I seek to launch my venture successfully. Any suggestions would be eagerly welcomed.

[Ed. Note: We are giving Don permission to use our mailing list. Hope you all enjoy his offerings.]

**QUILT WRAP-UP**

--Nancy Murdock

If you are in process of making a block for the reunion quilt, please finish it and send it to Sally Bacon, 6683 Reeves Rd., Jordan, NY 13080. It will be in good company: there are lots of fun, creative blocks in that quilt. In case you don't remember, it should be 6 1/2", so that it will be 6" after it's stitched into the quilt. Enjoy!

**SMALL WORLD**

--Lorraine Skamarycz

I was reading about the Howlett Reunion in the Muse, and was interested to see a familiar name: Jamie Arsenault. He said he injured his hand at work. Well, this was at the same plant where I work in the office, Modern Contract Furniture. I asked Jamie how he happened to be at the Howlett Reunion. "Oh," he said, "I have a very good friend named Stephanie Howlett!"

## KID'S COLUMN

### THE GHOST STORY

--Annie Morgan

The day ... before Amgree's birthday... SOMETHING HAPPENED! That was the day his friend Allie was coming over. Here is how it starts.

Amgree went to high school, went to all classes and then walked home with Allie. His house was dark. Through the window he saw something moving around inside. The two boys were too chicken to go inside so they went to Allie's house. Amgree told Allie's mother about what they saw. She said, "Would you like me to call?" They said, "No, that's all right" and spent the night at Allie's house. The next morning Amgree and Allie went back over to Amgree's house and crept inside. They were frightened. They could see dark shadows moving... All of a sudden the lights flicked on and they heard a deafening "SURPRISE!!!" All Amgree's friends and family jumped out to wish him Happy Birthday and they had a great party.

### JOKE CORNER

Jerod: I'd like a ticket to Fishhook.  
Ticket Agent: Fishhook! Where's that?  
Jerod: At the end of the line.

Stephanie: Did you hear about the angry inch-worm?  
Logan: No, why was he angry?  
Stephanie: He had to convert to the metric system.

### COLLEEN'S PICTURE

--Pam Clark

Colleen drew a picture of returning to school & birds flying south. The left bird says, "I love you." A janitor is sweeping up the piles of wind-swept leaves.

### MINNESOTA NOTES

Nic Murdock, who got all A's in summer school, likes all kinds of music and plays the electric guitar. He loves skateboarding but broke his \$80 board after he took a 360-degree turn. He's working odd jobs and saving to buy a chevy Blazer.

Jason Murdock plans a big party in June when he graduates from H.S. He had a cycle accident in May. He went around a corner at 30 mph, hit a sand patch, and flipped over. He had his arm in a cast for 1 1/2 months.

### TONY AND NIKKI

--Darrel Murdock

Tony's letter is his first ever after a long hard road of conquering his autism-based limitations. He also has taken up coloring and recently completed his first picture, a potted Christmas tree. Nikki's art is freehand (no tracing). She uses "How to Draw 50 Animals" as her guide.

### IT'S A BOY!!

--Carol Howlett

Gage Paul Braga-Howlett arrived on Aug. 2nd at 10:12 PM. He weighed 8 lb. 8 oz. and was 21 inches long. The proud parents are David Paul Howlett and Rose Marie Braga, 45 Central St., Hudson MA. Phone 508-568-0233.

Grandparents are Doug and Carol Howlett. We now have 1 girl (Brittany) and 1 boy (Gage). Rose's mother, Gloria Braga of Portugal, stayed with Dave and Rose for about a month to help with the pregnancy.

Would you please send a copy of the Muse to Dave and Rose. I am sure they will save it for Gage. [Ed. Note: Heartiest congrat-ulations for all from the Murdock Muse!]

### JOB HUNTING

--Tamie Murdock

Nothing to report yet on Roy's job hunting. It's in the Lord's hands. The company is hanging - and so are we.

Still working with all th kids from the "Projects." Roy is "on call" at all hours and I even give rides periodically. We have between 20 and 30 coming, calling, and going at all times. Roy even went to court to testify on behalf of one. Roy is called "Coach" by all. When bullets fly, he is safe and never afraid. At first he was stopped by police a few times - suspected of being either a dope peddler or a junkie!

Most of the time we take a different bunch each night to the gym and play basketball. They call me the "Basketball Junkie." It is a joy to know them. The difference between sitting in church pews and actually going to the places that are in need is involvement. One gets emotionally involved - bonding, I guess is the word. It is tiring and yet exhilarating.

We'll let you know when we move.

### AROUND THE BEAT

--Bob Murdock

**Quilt Awards** - Nancy entered two wall quilts in the Howard County (MD) Fair in August. Both were artistic, not traditional, design. One, a colorful aquatic quilt made as a gift for Lynda Brugge, won a 3rd place ribbon. The other, "Variations on a Painting," was awarded second place, with a red ribbon.

**Auction Surprise** - Gene Murdock won the bidding on an unknown item highly praised by Randy, the auctioneer. It turned out to be a set of ceramic pieces hand crafted by Millie Murdock (1921-1991), Ron and Keith's mother. Gene was delighted. "Why, I would have come here just for this!" he said.

**Blessed Event** - For a time we lost contact with Sandy Fontaine, our granddaughter in Florida (Darrel's daughter). Her Muses were returned to us. But we reached her by phone in late July and learned that she's at the same address, but has chronic mail delivery problems. Her big news was "It's a Girl!" Bailey Alana Jones was born June 29, 1995. Sandy had hoped to go to the Murdock Reunion, but traveling with a newborn was out of the question. Darrel will have to find another way to see his daughter and two grandkids (Morgan, Bailey's sister, was two years old June 17).

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\*\*\*The editors also thank all who call each month with news.\*\*\*

To become a member of the Murdock Muse staff, submit three offerings: letters, articles, cartoons, pages of jokes, etc. You may get on the mailing list by submitting articles, etc., by sending a donation, or by telling us how wonderful the publication is and how much you would like to receive it each month.

**QUOTATION OF THE MONTH**

"Life is like a bowl of potato chips. Every time you mess with it, it falls apart and breaks into little pieces that you can't eat."

--Darrel Murdock

**SEPTEMBER CELEBRATIONS**

--Bob Murdock

Birthdays: Dotty Salminen will be 66 on the 3rd. On the same day, Lindsey and Timothy Murdock turn 7. They are Uncle Gene's twin grandchildren. Sept. 9 will honor the 36th birthday of Viki Blakley. Larry Boudreau's big day will be the 12th. On Sept. 14, Jarrod Shepard will be 7 years old. He is Wanda Schindo's grandson. Kathryn Rookes, daughter of Bill and Sandra Hiscock, also celebrates on the 14th. Art Murdock turns 47 on Sept. 15. Also on the 15th, Mary Anne DiStefano will be 17. Marcia Howlett will party on the 17th. On the same day, Pete DiStefano the Younger turns 27. Rennie Leary will be 33 on Sept. 19. On the 20th, Nancy Jean Murdock will be 37. She is Uncle Gene's daughter-in-law. Marcia Howlett's twins, Sarah Cole and Eric Johnson, turn 31 on Sept. 25. And the 30th is a big day for Gary Witmer, son-in-law of Lennie and Bob Schlicke.

Anniversaries: For Foster and Sue Howlett, Sept. 2 will be their 7th. Gene and Chris celebrate their 38th on the 5th, the same day that Cindy and Nick Coppolino honor their 8th. It will be 3 years for Chris and Angel Howlett on the 6th. Sept. 11 will mark the first anniversary for Keith (Tom's son) and Maria Howlett. For Eric and Robin Murdock, Sept. 15 is their 9th. Muse Editors Nancy and Bob celebrate 45 years on the 16th. And for Craig and Janet Heald, Sept. 25 is their 5th. Craig is the son of Marge Aukstikalnis.

**TRAVEL PLANS**

--N. Murdock

Bob and I will celebrate Labor Day weekend with Polly (my sister) and Carl Soberg and family in NH. We have a semi-promise to play Trivial Pursuit. Then we'll spend our 45th wedding anniversary attending a quilt show and classes in PA.

**WHO'S WHO IN MUSELAND**

--Bob Murdock

A copy of the Murdock Muse address list, updated August 12, 1995, is included with the September Muse, unless you received a copy at the Murdock Reunion (Aug. 19). In this list we attempt to identify all the Muse readers and families who are on our mailing list. Please let us know if you don't have a copy of the list, or if you spot any errors or omissions.

As a result of the Reunion activity, the Muse editors are pleased to announce four more families who are being added to the mailing list. Since they are not reflected in the Aug. 12 update, we are listing them here:

Dan and Carolyn Leskinen (Stephanie, Calder, Alizabette): P.O. Box 1018, Moravia, NY 13118; (315) 497-9075

David Leskinen and Donna Wilmot (Lisa, Brett, Nick, Jamie, Justin)  
8250 Sixty Rd., Baldwinsville, NY 13027  
(315) 638-9321

Eric and Robin Murdock (Lindsey, Timothy, Ashley): 9212-C Givens Circle, Biloxi, MS 39530; (601) 388-4228

Scott and Nancy Murdock: P.O. Box 8086, Bossier City, LA 71113; (318) 949-4983