

# *Guide for Hosting a Bellinger Family Reunion*



*Have you thought about hosting a Bellinger Family Reunion?  
Not sure where to start or what to do? Well worry no more!  
In this guide you will find answers to all of your questions. If you  
have a question that's not answered in the Q & A, please contact one of  
the Committee Members for clarification*

## ***1. When Planning a Family Reunion, what things should I consider?***

*A. Location*

*B. Price Per Room*

*C. Amenities*

*D. Date*

### **A. Location**

- Are there restaurants, family friendly activities, and shopping around the hotel?
- What is the distance from the airport to the hotel?
- Does the hotel offer shuttle service to and from the airport?

### **B. Price Per Room**

- When planning for a reunion you will need to speak with the Group Sales Department. When you meet with the Group Sales representative, you should be prepared to negotiate.
- An excellent room rate would be anything under a \$100 per night.
- A fair room rate would be anything from \$100-\$119 per night.
- Anything over the rates mentioned above may become too expensive and could lead to financial hardship causing some family members not to attend.

### **C. Amenities**

- Does the hotel offer free breakfast?
- Does the hotel offer free shuttle service?
- Does the hotel offer any other complimentary services to its guest?

### **D. Dates**

- Normally, the reunion is designed for every two years (odd numbers in years) during the Fourth of July weekend
- You have three options
  - Fourth of July weekend (expensive) take in consideration family members traveling
  - Weekend prior to July 4<sup>th</sup> (better option)
  - Weekend after the July 4<sup>th</sup> (better option)

***If you can answer “Yes” to most of these questions you have more than likely selected a good location.***

**2. *How far in advance should I begin planning the Family Reunion?***

*Answer:* As soon as possible. Planning a reunion can take some time, so it is best to start immediately. One year prior to the reunion, you should have the hotel confirmed and be able to present the hotel information at the reunion preceding the one you are hosting.

**3. *If I feel overwhelmed and am seeking advice, who can I contact?***      *Answer:* Please relax

and take a couple of deep breaths. Any of the Bellinger Family Reunion Officers have had experience planning a reunion and are willing to assist. You can also contact other family members who have previously hosted reunions.

**4. *What is the average cost of a Family Reunion?***

*Answer:* This depends on the location that the reunion is being held. \$5,000 or less is a good budget. \$6,000 is a fair amount; anything above \$6,000 would be on the high end. Once again, this is totally based upon the city/location of the reunion.

**5. *What is the average cost for Saturday's banquet?***

*Answer:* This depends on the location where the banquet is held. When planning the banquet, be sure to negotiate a price for all services including the meal. On average Saturday's banquet meals cost \$35-\$40 per person. This can be lower depending on the location.

**6. *What type of meal should I plan to have served at the banquet?***      *Answer:* Buffet style

is great because it gives family member options and allows for seconds. When selecting the meal, please keep in mind the different dietary needs of our family. All family members should be able to find something to eat at the meal. We have family members that are vegetarian and some that do not eat beef or pork. Therefore, it works best if fish and chicken are served. If there is an option for a third meat, then beef or pork should be selected.

**7. *On average how many guests should I tell the hotel/venue will be present for meals?***

*Answer:* This will depend greatly on the number of guests who have paid fees and booked rooms. On average, a good number to start with would be 50 people. Prior to the head count, you can increase the number if necessary. Make sure you confirm that the room/venue can accommodate more guests if necessary.

**8. *I am looking for a Disc Jockey (DJ), how much has the family paid in the past?***

*Answer:* The family has been exceptionally blessed to have found DJs that range from \$175-\$250 for the evening; however, this could vary.

**9. On average how much does Sunday morning breakfast cost?**

*Answer:* In the past, Sunday breakfast has ranged in price from \$1,000-\$1,200 for our group. Traditionally, the family has selected hotels such as Embassy Suites and Hampton Inns that offer a free breakfast. Therefore, there is no charge for breakfast. If you would like to have the family eat together in a banquet room, please check with the hotel. Some hotels like the Embassy Suites will allow the family to take breakfast into the banquet room and only charge a set-up fee. The set-up fees ordinarily range from \$125-\$175. The family can also use the banquet room for morning service.

*\*Remember, some locales are different, so don't be thrown off your game if the hotel has free breakfast, but charges for the banquet room. Also be prepared to use your hospitality suite for Sunday Service.*

**10. How much is the hospitality suite?**

*Answer:* Usually the hospitality suite is free as long as you secure a minimum number of rooms. But again, each locale is different. If the hospitality suite is not free, be prepared to negotiate a fair price (e.g. \$100-\$150 per night)

**11. On average for how many rooms should I contract?**

*Answer:* Begin with 25 rooms and confirm with the Group Sales Representative that you can add additional rooms if needed.

**12. How do I go about getting a check and/or credit card to reserve the block of rooms?**

*Answer:* Contact the President and the Treasurer to secure the hotel.

**13. Before I sign the contract with the hotel and/or venue who should I contact?**

*Answer:* Contact the President/Vice President, this allows for two sets of eyes to view the contract and make sure that all needs have been addressed.

**14. What are some things that I should remember to ask for both Saturday night at the banquet and Sunday morning?**

*Answer:* A microphone and a podium. Sometimes the hotel will provide these for free. If there is a fee, it should not be more than \$100. Also, if using a DJ Saturday night, check to see if he/she has one available for Saturday night usage.

**15. Who supplies the food for Friday night in the hospitality suite?**

*Answer:* The host city should, but if needed, the family reunion will pick up the expense.

**16. What kind of food is typically served Friday in the hospitality suite?**

*Answer:* This is at the discretion of the host city. Foods such as spaghetti (with and without meat (veggie spaghetti), green beans, salad, chicken and rolls are inexpensive and can serve a crowd. Other food items include cold cut trays, cookies and desserts.

*Note:* Please keep in mind the dietary needs of our family.

This is just a sample of food suggestions; feel free to choose your own menu.

**17. How creative can I get with the reunion?**

*Answer:* You can be as creative as you like. However, please discuss your thoughts and ideas with the President/Vice President

**18. Are off site activities necessary during the reunion?**

*Answer:* They are not necessary, but it is nice to get the family out of the hotel for at least one function on either Friday and/or Saturday. In the past, the family has bowled on Friday night and had picnics on Saturday during the day.

**19. What types of activities are held in the hospitality suite?**

*Answer:* The hospitality suite has been used as gathering place for the family. Typically, family members use the room to converse with one another, play cards, board games, eat, and to hold the family meeting (if not held at the picnic).

**20. Who are the current Bellinger Committee Members? 2019-2021**

*Answer: President – Garvis Leak*

*Vice-President – Torrance Jacobs*

*Secretary – Tiffany Williams*

*Vice-Secretary – Catherine Taylor*

*Treasurer – Veronica Perry*

*Asst. Treasurer – Destiny Martin*

*Social Media – Aurelia Williams*

*Historian – Roslyn Bellinger*

*Historian – Stacey Hagood*

**21. Do I need to maintain a budget?**

Yes, please maintain budget and provide soft copy (electronic copy) at monthly business meeting.

**22. What about on-line registration/payments?**

Great question – You will work with the committee members (treasurer/asst. treasure, etc) to get access to the website and retrieve on-line registration & payments