

Sweepstakes Winner Kendie Reich Celebrates Family Reunion & Renews Wedding Vows in Reunion Capital USA

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MD August 20, 2008—"I felt like a princess in a fairy tale. It was an indescribable experience" exclaimed an elated **Kendie Reich** of the County's own Laurel, Maryland, the **grand prize winner** of **Prince George's County Family Reunion Sweepstakes**. After months of planning, Kendie, husband Kevin, their four children, and a host of family members and close friends recently gathered in **Reunion Capital USA** to celebrate a different kind of "family" reunion-Kendie and Kevin's 25th wedding anniversary. The Family Reunion Sweepstakes is sponsored by the **Prince George's County Conference and Visitors Bureau**, and partners include the **Marriott Greenbelt**, **Six Flags America®**, **Gaylord National Resort & Conference Center**, **First Priority Trailways**, and **Entertainment Cruises**. The Sweepstakes event is in support of the **Livable Communities Initiative** that is working to strengthen families and foster pride in Prince George's county, its communities, and businesses.

The First Lady of Prince George's County, **Leslie E. Johnson**, and District 4 Council Member **Ingrid Turner** greeted the reunion party at an evening reception and pizza party at the **Marriott Greenbelt** to kick off three days of activities. Mrs. Johnson spoke about how "family is so essential to our community. Share stories and learn more about your history, enjoy each other, and the younger children. Learn from the seasoned members. They are the ones whose shoulders you stand on."

After a buffet-style breakfast the following morning at the Marriott and a genealogy workshop presented by Nathania Branch-Miles, family and friends departed for **National Harbor** courtesy of **First Priority Trailways**. Pictures surrounding the famous sculpture *The Awakening* were quickly followed by a race to the docks to board the Seadog for a cruise around the Potomac. Donated by **Entertainment Cruises**, the 45-minute tour presented all with a unique and seldom-seen view of the historic landmarks and sites that dot the river's edge.

Arriving back at National Harbor, the reunion party was warmly greeted at the **Gaylord** and treated to a bountiful buffet feast at the **Pienza Italian Market**. "This is no ordinary restaurant. I have never seen anything like it," says Kendie. "You just have to go and experience it."

County Executive Jack Johnson honored the family later that evening during Kendie and Kevin's 25th wedding anniversary dinner celebration by presenting them with two proclamation plaques praising their commitment to family and memorializing the Reich Family & Friends Reunion Weekend, dated August 3-5, 2008.

On Tuesday-after breakfast and a morning worship service-family and friends headed to **Six Flags America®** for a catered picnic and a day of rides, pictures, and laughter. **Dr. Jacqueline Brown**, Chief Administrative Officer for the County, greeted the family and affirmed "strong families build strong communities." Joining the Reich family for a group picture on the playground, Dr. Brown praised Kendie's father for "the amazing legacy he leaves to his children and grandchildren."

Kendie Reich-recalling memories of her son's playground accident on the Saturday before the reunion, and thinking back on her once in a lifetime reunion experience says, "There is nothing more important in my life than family. We have felt so loved and embraced...I feel very blessed that I live here, that I worship here, and that our family and families of **Reaching Hearts International** (www.reachinghearts4kids.org) can reach out to the families of Prince George's County and that the families can reach back to us." The couple and their children share a passion for a mission which helps orphans and severely disadvantaged children receive proper food, shelter, clothing, education and medical care in nurturing surroundings under the protection of those who will give them the "love, hope, and care that every child deserves."

After praising Marriott's General Manager **Robert Allen**, Assistant Manager **Patrice Brooks**, Event Planner **Nana Sarpong**, plus all the Chefs and staff at the hotel, Kendie remarked on the leadership of **Matt Neitzey**, Executive Director of the Prince George's County Conference & Visitors' Bureau, and thanked his staff (**Carl Smith**, **Lucy Teagle**, **Njina Jackson**, and **Dan Brown**) for all of their help in planning and organizing the reunion activities.

Special recognition was heaped on photographer **Allan Hare, Jr.** who faithfully followed the family throughout the reunion to capture their fond memories.

When asked what he liked most about the reunion, 7-year-old **Zachariah Reich** probably said it best. "I liked being the bible boy in your wedding renewal ceremony, I liked Six Flags® and the hotel. Actually, I liked all of it!"

Our sweepstakes winner, Kendie, sums it up: "I think if anyone is looking to create an amazing family reunion, or any type of reunion experience, Gorgeous Prince George's County is the place to come together, and the Visitors' Bureau is the place to start. I would encourage anyone and everyone to come and make memories of a lifetime."

To learn more about organizing **family, military, school, church, or fraternal reunions**, upload and share reunion stories and recipes, find out what to see and do, and where to stay and play, and how you can make your reunion special, visit **Reunion Capital USA's website** at: www.ReunionCapitalUSA.com, or call the **Prince George's County Conference & Visitors' Bureau** at 301.925.8300.

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