

HOW TO HOST THE RASHID FAMILY REUNION

Rashid Club of America

Taking on the responsibility of hosting the Rashid Family Reunion can present many challenges, yet so many rewards. For the first-timer, it can be very intimidating. You are essentially planning a 3-4 day event for up to 350 people, providing hotel arrangements, meals, entertainment, mailings, program books, directories, t-shirts, etc.

Hopefully the following guide will assist in the planning and orchestration of a terrific weekend. Although this is based on many years of experience, many of these factors are ever-changing. This is just a roadmap... so feel free to make your reunion unique in it's own way. But start early!! There's LOTS to do...

PRE-REUNION

LOCAL HOST/PLANNING COMMITTEE

- Reach out to all of your local family members to assist in this endeavor. Even if some members can't devote much time, there are still many lesser responsibilities that can be assigned.
- Committee responsibilities - most of which will be detailed later in this guide:
 - Hotel liaison (negotiating block room rates, meals, hospitality suite, event space, etc).
 - Entertainment (Friday night, Saturday day activities, Saturday night).
 - Fundraising options (raffle prizes, t-shirts, Program Book sales, etc).
 - Marketing (save-the-date mailer, registration packet (and stuffing/ mailing), website, Program Book (design/printing), goodie-bag).
 - Family picture (find/schedule photographer).
 - Mass (priest and music).
 - Hospitality Room (manage/stock/staff).
 - Registration (RSVPs/finance/check-writing).
 - Registration Table duties - often two people in two hour shifts.
 - Emcee/Prayer prior to the three scheduled events (ie: Friday night, Saturday night, Sunday brunch).

GENERAL PREP WORK

- Obtain \$2,000 starter money from Club Treasurer.
- Obtain Federal ID from Club Treasurer to set up Reunion bank account.
- Obtain Rashid Club mailing list from Alan Rashid (Alan.Rashid@Lepus-Systems.com).

BUDGET/FINANCES

- Managing the budget for the weekend can be one of the greatest challenges for the host families.
- Budget for less than the expected attendance. If you have held previous reunions use the lowest turnout and budget for 10%-15% less. If you haven't held a reunion before, use information from a city with similar characteristics (location, attractions, number of local family, etc.).
- As you read through this guide, you will notice the many factors that will affect the budget - eg: the weekend meals, entertainment, printing/ mailing costs, etc.

- Tracking RSVPs, payments, dues, and maintaining a detailed expense report is critical. See page 9 for a sample spreadsheet of items often included.
- Ideally by reunion's end, you will have enough funds to return the \$2000 advance. If a profit is made, all the better!

WEEKEND AGENDA

- Following is a typical schedule of events for the weekend (hours, of course, can vary):

FRIDAY:

Registration - 10:00am - 5:00pm
 Cocktails & Dinner - 6:00pm - 8:00pm
 DJ/Entertainment - 8:00pm - 11:00pm

SATURDAY:

Registration - 9:00am - 4:00pm
 Business Meeting - 10:00am
 Open Afternoon - Sightseeing, Shopping, Pool Time
 Bus Tours to Local Attractions 11:00 am - 4:00 pm
 Family Picture - 5:30pm
 Cocktails - 6:00pm - 7:00pm
 Dinner with Program and Raffle - 7:00pm
 Band/dancing - 8:00pm - 12:00am

SUNDAY

Mass - 9:00am
 Brunch - 10:00am - 12:00pm

- Depending on when the actual 4th of July falls, many family members may extend their stay by several days on either end of the weekend. (Please keep this in mind when negotiating room rates with the hotel). Often a casual BBQ or dinner is planned the Thursday before, or the Sunday following, for those still in town. Often the cost of this extra event is graciously absorbed by individual hosts, and not covered by the general ticket fees for the weekend.

HOTEL

- Start scouting hotels as soon as you know the official dates for your reunion. Contact the event planner/catering manager for assistance in blocking out rooms, establishing a discounted room rate, planning meals, room set-up requirements, etc. This contact will be integral in managing the many details, and help make the weekend flow as smoothly as possible.
- If available, download from the Rashid Club website (www.rashidclub.com) the previous reunion's hotel contracts to use as a reference and help in hotel negotiations.
- A few details to consider:
 - Find the appropriate rooms/space for the Hospitality Suite.
 - Find the appropriate room/space for Sunday Mass - enough to seat 80 or so. Arrange for a piano, if available.
 - Microphones for Friday/Saturday nights. (There is typically a fee for A/V rental).
 - An American flag to be placed in the Business Meeting room, and the Banquet room.
 - A separate room for the Registration tables and/or staging of Goodie Bags/t-shirts.
 - Easels for welcome signs, seating charts, etc. (There is often a hotel rental fee for these, but it can be negotiated into the contract).
 - Parking rates may be negotiated.
 - Fees for Cashier/Bartender.
 - Final date for final attendee count for catering commitment.

MEALS

- Generally you will work closely with your catering manager to arrange and plan most of the meals for the weekend. On occasion, host families have relied on out-of-hotel venues for the Friday night meal to save costs. But much consideration needs to be taken in regards to location, and the ease of transportation for older family members.
- When committing to headcount for meals, we suggest counting 100% attendance for Saturday dinner, 95%-100% for Friday dinner, and 85%-90% for Sunday brunch.
- You may want to arrange for vegetarian options.
- Arrange for a tasting of options for catered meals.
- Children 12 and under “eat free” for the weekend. Children 0-3 are typically subsidized by the hotel, and children 4-12 are covered by the Rashid Club. Children’s meals are typically cheaper than adult meals and are negotiated with the hotel (eg: chicken fingers or other kid-friendly food).

MAILINGS

- Alan Rashid (Alan.Rashid@Lepus-Systems.com) has the most updated address lists.
- There are typically two mailings that preface the reunion: a save-the-date postcard (mailed in January); and the main registration packet (mailed by March).
- Keep a record of all change of addresses, and send to Allen Rashid.
- Send all-family email notices/updates from the host family or from the Chairperson of the Club.
- Notices can also be made to the homepage of www.rashidclub.com.

REGISTRATION FORM/MAILING

- This mailing contains a welcome note, schedule of events, Registration Form, and hotel reservation information, and often information/brochures on highlights of the local area.
- The Registration Form (see sample attached on page 8) typically includes the following:
 - The names of all adults attending.
 - The price for the weekend meal package for adults and children. (We suggest that you limit the meal options to an “all-in” weekend price, or “Saturday dinner only” - eg: if an individual can’t attend Sunday brunch, they still pay the weekend fee).
 - Annual membership dues. (Be sure to allow those family members not attending the opportunity to pay their dues on the Registration form.)
 - T-shirt orders.
 - Program Book ad orders.
 - High school graduates eligible for the scholarship.
 - Any other optional weekend event that requires reservations and/or fees (eg: bus tour, golf, etc).
 - Note: host families often have an early-bird raffle to encourage prompt RSVPs. (Hotels typically give 2-4 free room nights with the contract, and one or two of these can be given away in the raffle).

WEBSITE - WWW.RASHIDREUNION.COM

- Registration can also be done through the Rashid reunion website - and is much easier to administer in most cases. If utilizing, remember to include the incremental credit card processing fee in the total price. To date, Alisa Butler (alisa@alacartedesign.net) is managing this site, and updating it annually per the requirements of the host city.

ENTERTAINMENT

- Often the entertainment for Friday evening is a DJ. But feel free to be creative when discussing options. Past reunions have had local “street performers” entertain, hosted a “Vegas Night”, etc.
- Saturday night usually warrants a live band for the entertainment, and can vary widely in price. Plan on at least \$1000-\$1500 for a good band.
- It’s a good gesture to offer to feed the DJ/band members before or after they play.
- A few options for the younger children for Saturday afternoon could be: dance lessons; face-painting; story-telling, pool activities, etc.

PHOTOGRAPHER

- When scouting hotel areas for the family picture, consider ease of access and set-up of chairs and/or risers.
- The family picture is typically taken Saturday before the banquet - 30-45 minutes before cocktails.
- In recent years, photographers have also stayed and done individual family portraits after the main group shot.
- The photographer may bring his own risers to accommodate the shot.
- Confirm with the photographer plans for selling and distribution of the prints (ie: price, delivery info, sign-up sheets, etc).

T-SHIRTS

- Printing and selling t-shirts (or some other apparel) is not required, but it does provide a fun and memorable keepsake from the weekend.
- Historically, the reunion t-shirt is one basic type, but recently host families have offered women’s cuts, and even sweatshirts and other apparel. This depends largely on what printer contacts you can make, and how cheaply they can be produced.
- T-shirts are typically designed by a member of the host family.
- It’s a good idea to order a few extras to be sold the weekend of the reunion.

FAMILY DIRECTORY

- Alan Rashid is the keeper of the Directory listings. Contact him for any updates over the past year. And provide him any return-of-address changes from the save-the-date mailing or Registration packet mailings. Once finalized, he can send you either Directory hardcopies, or a digital file to print yourself.
- The hard-copy Family Directory can be purchased at the family registration table. But a PDF can be requested via email by contacting Alan Rashid, or downloaded from www.rashidclub.com.

PROGRAM BOOK

- Although not mandatory, consider publishing a Program Book to include in the weekend packet. It typically includes: introduction/welcome letter; the agenda for the weekend; a thank-you to local families and businesses; memorials to recently deceased family members; business ads, etc.
- Selling ad space (whether memorial or business ad) can be a good method of defraying reunion costs. See accompanying sample form (page 8) for suggested price/size structure.

- Printing costs can be high. If possible, arrange for a barter ad with a local printer to help subsidize costs.
- Print several extra copies to have on-hand the reunion weekend.

RAFFLE PRIZES

- Although not required for the weekend, there are often raffle prizes for a drawing Saturday night. Tickets can be sold at the family registration table, and throughout the evenings Friday and Saturday.
- Also consider 50/50 raffles - it's a good supplemental money-maker.

GOODIE BAGS

- Goodie Bags are handed out when a family member registers. The bag often contains fun little odds-and-ends from local businesses, literature on local events/sights, snacks, etc.

SUNDAY MASS

- Consider asking family members with musical talents to play or sing during the Mass.
- Often there is a Mass booklet including songs and readings.

DURING THE REUNION

REGISTRATION

- Registration tables are typically set up Friday from 10-5, and Saturday from 10-4, but may differ by several hours depending on events planned.
- The weekend Packet envelope, handed out at the registration table typically contains the agenda for the weekend, the Program Book, the meal tickets, name badges.
- Hand out the goodie-bags.
- Have "welcome" signage at desk.
- Have a location at the registration table for family members to provide change of addresses. Often a hardcopy of the Directory is used for members to edit and/or confirm current listings.
- Have a Banquet seating chart (for Saturday night's meal) at the registration table for families to sign-up in advance.

HOSPITALITY SUITE

- Often the Hospitality Suite becomes a central meeting space for the weekend. The larger the space, the better!
- Do you need extra tables/chairs?
- Does it have a fridge and/or sink?
- You may want an identifying sign outside the door.
- Often many of the local families pitch in to stock the Suite with food and drink.

- Make sure the Suite is periodically checked, cleaned, and restocked.
- Some supplies to consider: napkins, plates, cups, water, coffee and creamer, iced tea, lemonade, coffee urns, drink dispensers, serving trays and bowls, coolers, etc.

FRIDAY NIGHT DINNER

- Friday's dinner is typically more casual than Saturday - both in dress, and atmosphere. Dinner is often a buffet, and except for a brief "welcome" announcement, there is no scheduled program.

BUSINESS MEETING

- Make sure there is an American Flag at the Business Meeting.
- Stock with bottled water, and perhaps coffee.

SATURDAY NIGHT BANQUET

- Do you need any special A/V equipment?
- Don't forget the centerpieces (which could be used again for Sunday brunch).
- Cocktails typically start an hour or so before dinner. You may need to arrange with the hotel to purchase tickets instead of cash for drinks.
- Dinner is usually prefaced with a welcome by the Club Chairperson and/or host representative, a prayer, and the National Anthem.
- There is often time allotted between dinner and the entertainment for a short program. This may include a family speaker, politician, entertainer, etc.
- The raffle drawings are often picked before the band starts, or between sets.
- Between band sets, pre-recorded Arabic music and Dabke is very popular with the family.

SUNDAY MASS

- A donation is expected for the priest, and please invite him to stay for brunch.
- Include table/podium for priest.

POST-REUNION

- Complete Reunion Summary Report and return all Membership Dues and profits by August 31. Send two separate checks - one for the Dues and one for any profits.
- Return the \$2,000 starter money to the Club Treasurer.
- Forward any change of addresses to Alan Rashid.
- Celebrate a job well done! And take a little time off...

Registration Form (sample)



Register and pay online at www.rashidreunion.com or complete this form and return by mail with your payment before **June __, 20__**. Register before May 1, and you'll enter the drawing for one free night at the *(host hotel here)*!

Name(s): Please list names of all adults attending

Address _____ City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____ Email _____

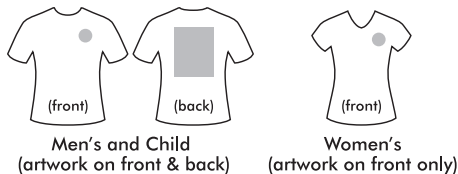
WEEKEND PACKAGE includes Fri. and Sat. night dinners, Sun. Brunch

____ # of Adults @ \$ ____ .00/ea Adult Total \$ _____
 ____ # of Children ages 4 – 12 (paid by Club) Child Total \$ -0-
 ____ # of Children ages 0 – 3 (free) Child Total \$ -0-

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES

____ @ \$ ____ .00 per Adult (18 and over) Dues Total \$ _____
 (Even if you are unable to attend the reunion, your annual dues must still be paid at this time.)

T-SHIRTS @\$ ____ .00/ea



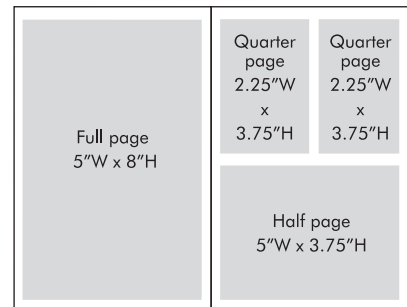
Adult Men's: ____ S ____ M ____ L ____ XL
 Adult Women's: ____ S ____ M ____ L ____ XL
 Child: ____ S ____ M ____ L T-Shirt Total \$ _____

PROGRAM BOOK

Please join us in making this Program Book memorable by including greetings, memorials, advertising and other personal messages. (All ads are full-color)

____ Full page (5"W x 8"H): **\$200.00**
 ____ Half page (5"W x 3.75"H): **\$125.00**
 ____ Quarter page (2.25"W x 3.75"H): **\$80.00**

Electronic art should be saved as a hi-resolution (300dpi, CMYK) JPG or (preferably) PDF and emailed to: *(host email address here)*



Hardcopy ads (or individual photos/artwork to be scanned) can be sent to:
(host address here)
(host address here)
(host address here) [All art must be received by **June __, 20__**] Program Book Ad Space Total \$ _____
(host phone here)

TOTAL Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Make check payable to "*(host bank account here)*"

RETURN THIS FORM BY JUNE 2

Send your Registration and Payment to: *(host address here)*
 Questions about payment? Contact *(host)* at *(host email address and phone here)*

Financial Summary (sample)



RASHID FAMILY CLUB FAMILY REUNION - FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Invitations Mailed	000
Adult Attendees	000
Children (0-12)	00 (_ under3)
Adult Ticket Price	\$000.00

REVENUE

Family Club Seed Money	\$2,000
Adult Ticket Revenue	\$00,000
T-shirt Sales (net profit)	\$0,000
Ads	\$0,000
Rashid Club Dues	\$0,000
Raffle Tickets Sold	\$0,000
Total Funds Raised	\$00,000

COSTS

Friday Dinner	\$00,000
Friday Entertainment	\$0,000
Saturday Dinner	\$00,000
Saturday Entertainment	\$0,000
Photographer	\$000
Sunday Brunch	\$0,000
Mailing/Printing	\$000
Website	\$000
Directory Printing	\$0
Program book printing	\$0
T-Shirts	\$000
Other Expenses	\$000 (supplies, hospitality room, etc.)
Total Costs	\$00,000

TOTAL PROCEEDS \$0,000

Proceeds breaks out as follows:

Return of Seed Money	\$2,000
Rashid Family Club Dues	\$0,000
Profit	\$0,000