



NEWSLETTER # 1, APRIL 2019

2020 PNG-KLS-SPLC Reunion



October 8 (Late Afternoon) **to October 11** (Early Afternoon) **2020**
Mt. Olivet Conference & Retreat Center, Farmington, Minnesota, U.S.A.

2020 Reunion Speakers

The Program Committee has researched the topic of reunion speakers extensively. They have received commitments from these speakers, and will announce other sessions later.

Ruth Van Reken:

- Author of *Letters Never Sent* — Ruth's personal journaling written as she sought to understand the long-term impact of her cross-cultural childhood.
- Co- author of *Third Culture Kids**: *Growing Up Among Worlds*
*Third Culture Kid (TCK) is defined as a child who spends a significant period of time during his or her developmental years growing up in a culture outside the parents' culture.

Ruth is a US citizen who grew up in Nigeria and raised three daughters in Liberia. She now lives in Indianapolis, Indiana. Ruth struggled with TCK issues in her own life, and began writing about her experiences as a way to understand them. She sent us this description about her work with TCKs:

As an adult MK I have spent the last thirty plus years of my life looking at the shared story of children who grow up globally mobile, no matter if they are from the international business, military, foreign service, education, or missions communities or 'sectors.' I have had the opportunity to travel to over fifty countries hoping to give understanding and normalize this increasingly common experience for current TCKs, their parents, educators, and the professionals who work with them so they can use the benefits with joy and grow from the challenges as well.

To give you a sense of Ruth's current involvement, this month she is presenting a professional development seminar at an international, 'non missionary kid' school in India and in April, she is attending the totally cross-sector *Families in Global Transition* conference in Thailand.

George Weiblen, PhD:

- University of Minnesota Science Director & Curator of Plants at the Bell Museum, Minnesota's official natural history museum and planetarium.
- Dr. Weiblen has participated in more than 20 expeditions to Papua New Guinea, living in the country for several years, and coordinating indigenous participation in scientific research. He is fluent in Melanesian Pidgin and participates in New Guinea forest preservation initiatives.
- Distinguished McKnight University Professor in Plant Biology. George earned his B.A. at Reed College and his Ph.D. at Harvard University.

2017 reunion attendees found George's PNG research really interesting. In 2020 he will bring us up to date. His interests include botany, biodiversity discovery, forensic applications of DNA technology, and citizen science. He has coordinated more than 20 research grants exceeding \$3.7 million dollars that produced more than 60 peer-reviewed scientific articles. George's research is centered on the interactions of flowering plants with insect pollinators and pests.

A Question For You—PLEASE LET US KNOW

In each Newsletter we will ask you a general question that helps us plan this reunion. This newsletter's question is:

Do you plan to attend the 2020 Reunion?

Please respond to this email with YES, NO or MAYBE

And a Request—Do you have experience with Website Design?

- We have learned that we will need a reunion website in place, to allow for potential credit card transactions as well as having another way to share information with you and others.
- We're hoping someone on our contact list has enough experience to create a simple, free website for those purposes. Later we can make it more attractive, but for now simple would be great.
- Please let us know if you could help: Contact Mark Brandt at pngmark@gmail.com

We appreciate any and all of your feedback. We all look forward to seeing you in 2020.

Your 2020 Reunion Planning Team:

Mark Brandt, Sam Brandt, Fred Brandt, Dawn Daechsel, Phil Davis, Paula (Schultz) Mitchell, Barb (Hueter) Reardon, Cynthia (Mansur) Schoonover, Gary Schoonover, Mark Singh-Hueter, Dianne Tuff, Les Walck.