

2005 Friends of Uranium City Reunion

The Friends of Uranium City Reunions are difficult to explain to those who have not experienced one. They are even difficult to put into words by those who have been to most of them.

There is something very special about them that has to be experienced to understand. But just what is it?

There's an excitement about them that starts before you even get there! It starts on the web page with the list of people who have committed to attend the reunion. "Jesus, Ed Leckner is going to be there, so is Andy Schultz and Charlie Somers too!"

The excitement continues as you read down the list. There are names of people who have been to previous reunions and there are always new names. There are names of people you haven't thought of in years and you begin to wonder how they are. You hope to find the names of special friends and are disappointed if you don't see them there.

As you approach the gates to the Cypress Hills Provincial Park the anticipation builds. Who will the first person you see? As you drive up to the resort there are already people at the entrance shaking hands, smiling from ear to ear and greeting one and other. You walk through the doors and the lobby is full.

There's a guy sitting on the couch with a big grin on his face and he says "Hey Wilson do you remember me? You taught me how to drive?"

You rack your brain and try to add 30 years to the face. "Norman Jutras for crying out loud!"

You can only stop for a few minutes because there are so many people to see. You continue down the stairs to the conference room, where you find the registration table with Len and Joyce, who make everyone feel welcome.

There are people from Uranium City everywhere. They're in the parking lot, the lobby, the restaurant, on the roads, in the campgrounds, the golf course and through out the resort. It is almost like being back in Uranium City again. Everywhere you look there is someone from your past.

There are slide shows and maps, videos, photos and old news papers to look at and hundreds of people to visit with. The place buzzing, there's an excitement in the air!

The most used phrase that weekend is "Do you remember?" Do you remember this guy, do you remember when that happened, do you remember, do you remember, it just never stops. Only by coming together can we share and preserve those memories.

Most of the reunion time is set aside to spend with old friends. At the end of the day your face and sides can hurt from all the grinning, laughing, hand shaking and hugs you share. Old friends are genuinely pleased to see you and they show it.

You just can't stay in one spot for very long because every time you turn around there is someone else you want to see. "There's Ben and Hilda and there's Rose and there's Peggy Monks and there's Beverly and there's Othelia, and Bruce and Karen." It just never ends.

Friday and Saturday the place is really alive. The bar is open, the BBQ is happening, the videos are playing and everyone is visiting. It goes on late into the night and no one seems to want it to end.

Sunday it slows down a bit as some people start to leave for home. There's a bit of a melancholy feeling because you know that you won't see most of them again for at least 3 years and some you may never see again. That's what the reunions are like for me.

There is an old saying, that says you can never go home again and there may be some truth to it, but let me tell you this.

For three days in August at the Cypress Hills Resort you can get pretty darned close and that's what makes the reunions so special.

I hope to see you all at the next one.

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