

Historic Hochstetler family to hold reunion in Arthur

One of the largest family reunions in the United States is coming to Arthur July 28-29. Anywhere from 300 to 500 descendants of Jacob Hochstetler are expected to descend on the city; the reunion, held every five years, changes locations each time.

According to Wilmer Otto of Arcola, 90 percent of the Amish population in the U.S. has ties to Jacob Hochstetler, yet 90 percent of his descendants are not Amish. The Swiss German immigrant came to America in 1738.

Kate Sagal, an actress in the TV series, *Married With Children*, was descended from this Amish family through her mother. Jeff Hostetler, prominent NFL football quarterback, is also a descendent. Joseph Hostetler, "the boy preacher," was a prominent descendent helping organize dozens of churches in the new denomination known as the Christian denomination in the late 1800s. The Lovington bank, and the Lovington Christian church were both organized by him.

Lots of activities are planned for the clan including an evening dinner held in the Hersberger-Miller historic barn at the Illinois Amish Heritage Center. The keynote speaker is historian John E. Sharp. A program of Amish young people leading singing from the 5 centuries old songs from their fore bearers will conclude the evening.

There will be local community tours and workshops as well. For more information, call 217-721-9266 or 217-520-8891. The family also maintains a website at <https://www.jhfa.net/> with lots of history.

From the website

If there is a Hostetler or Hochstetler (or a half dozen variations of this name) in your family tree, then you may be a descendant of the 1738 Swiss German immigrant Ja-

cob Hochstetler. It is estimated that there are from five hundred thousand to one million of us living from coast to coast in the United States of America, as well as in a number of other countries.

The Hostetler (Swiss spelling today) family originated, perhaps in the 1300s or 1400s, in the Schwarzenburg, Switzerland area about 30 kilometers southwest of the capital of Bern. Some of them became a part of the Anabaptist reform movement in the 1600s. These Anabaptists, or Swiss Brethren, tried to follow the Bible and restore the biblical church, which they understood to be a believers' church made up of members baptized as adults upon their confession of faith in Jesus and who lived out the ethic of love and nonviolence taught by Jesus. Due to brutal religious persecution by the state churches, both Catholic and Reformed, our ancestors along with many others left Switzerland. The man we now believe was the father of the immigrant Jacob left his native Schwarzenburg area in the late 1600s and settled in Echery near St. Marie-aux-Mines in Alsace (now in France), where Jacob was born in 1712.

To escape the intolerant Catholic rulers of the time, many Anabaptists took the long, arduous and treacherous journey from their homeland to a new land called America that offered religious freedom to anyone who lived there. One such traveler from the Schwarzenburg area of Canton Bern, Harold Hostetler, wrote a poem about this journey and his experience in the new land. The song was put to different music and a variety of melodies, but in the absence of radio and newspapers the song became a form of mass media that encouraged those of strong heart to follow the example of these courageous zealots who were driven to find a way to worship their

God the way they wanted to. In order to hear this significant song as interpreted and performed by my friend and Swiss citizen, Urs Hostetler, just click here and you will be entertained by a song from a relative that was written a century and some decades ago that speaks of the dreams and difficulties of adapting to life in America.

Another such escapee, Jacob Hochstetler, age 26, arrived in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on Nov. 9, 1738 with his wife and two small children on the ship *Charming Nancy*. They spoke the language of the land they left which was very similar to an early form of "Pennsylvania Dutch". The young family settled in the Northkill area of what is now Berks County with others of their faith, called Amish Mennonites in the New World. Here, near Shartlesville, additional children were born. The economy of the Amish community was based on farming, and they tried to live peaceably with all people.

During the French and Indian War, Indians began making assaults on the colonial settlers who had taken over their lands. On the night of Sept. 19-20, 1757 (which has become known as the "Hochstetler Massacre") a small group of Delaware Indians surrounded the Jacob Hochstetler home. The young teenage sons Joseph and Christian reached for their hunting rifles in an attempt to kill or scare off the attackers, but their father, true to their Christian pacifism, did not allow them to kill the attackers even at the risk of their own death. The Indians set fire to the house and the immigrant mother, an unnamed daughter, and a teenage son Jacob were all tomahawked. Jacob and his sons Joseph and Christian were taken captive, but all of them were released after some years and they returned to Berks County. The European-born children, Barbara and

John, were already married in 1757, living on farms nearby, and were unharmed.

The Northkill Amish community eventually disbanded when people started moving to other parts of Pennsylvania. Jacob died in nearby Lebanon County in 1776, but Barbara and her husband Christian Stutzman died in Berks county. John and Christian and their families moved around 1784, soon after the War for Independence ended, to a new Amish community in what is now Somerset County in southwestern Pennsylvania. Here John and his wife Catherine (Hertzler) died, but Christian and his family who had joined a related Dunkard Church (later known as Church of the Brethren) moved on west to the Ohio River Valley by 1795. Joseph around 1806 moved to another new Amish settlement in what is now Juniata County in central Pennsylvania. All 32 grandchildren of Jacob Hochstetler left Berks County. Some of them finished out their days in other areas of Pennsylvania, but many continued on west to Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana. The next generation and their descendants continued the westward movement and eventually fanned out into all parts of North America.

One of the few remaining tangible testimonies to our forefather is a simple, wood framed, house that his oldest son John built as his retirement home on his farm in Summit Mills, Somerset County, PA around the year 1800. Unfortunately, a tornado in June of 1998 lifted the little house off its foundation, taking the off the roof and strewing it across the fields. Remaining was a twisted structure, tipped into the basement. A dedicated and courageous relative, George Hostetler, has selflessly undertaken the reconstruction of this significant structure, which is one of the few physical reminders of our

forefathers, and encourages all of us to become "Stewards of Our Family History". Please visit this link, which is a journal of efforts made to reclaim the original building materials, and reflect on the role you might be able to play in its reconstruction. Plan on revisiting this link often as the content is updated regularly to recount the evolving story of John's Little House.

Many in the Hochstetler-Hostetler extended family carry a rather strong sense of identity and history. This is partly due to the thorough work of a remarkable pair of men, genealogist Harvey Hostetler and historian William F. Hochstetler, who teamed up to publish a 1000-page book *Descendants of Jacob Hochstetler in 1912* which chronicles the family history and lists the descendants of the three sons of the immigrant. In 1938 Rev. Hostetler published an even larger book *Descendants of Barbara Hochstetler* which lists the 15,000 families who descended from the daughter of Jacob. Thus most living descendants of Jacob Hochstetler who are interested can trace their connection back from seven to twelve generations. While many continue in the Amish and Mennonite faith of their ancestors, many more have merged into the larger American culture. NFL quarterback Jeff Hostetler and George Gallup, Jr. from the Gallup Polls are examples of descendants whose names are well known. The progeny of our devout ancestors represent a wide spectrum of achievements and careers.

If you are curious to connect yourself to Jacob, and his offspring, you can use Dan Hochstetler's simplified method of tracing your heritage or you can visit the James C. Hostetler's *Hostetler Ancestry Database*, which contains the largest collection of Hostetler genealogical traces available on the Internet. It is much

more complete for individuals born before 1875 and lists birthdates, parents, a 3-generation pedigree chart and the source of information.

Although online information on Hochstetler genealogy is limited, there is an interesting biography of the immigrant Jacob's great-grandson, Joseph Hostetler who was known as the "boy preacher" because he was ordained at a relatively young age. Reference made to Joseph's ancestry being from Germany refers to his maternal line, not the Hostetler line (his mother's father, Anthony Hardman, was German).

Of Joseph Hostetler's relatives who remained in Europe, we know of a few persons who came to the U.S. later in the 1800s and even in the past half century. These were predominantly persons who descended from Jacob's nephew Isaac Hochstetler who was an Amish Mennonite minister in Germany and in Alsace (France).

There are also some look-alike names that may have a common Swiss origin but represent different family lines here, in the USA. For example, there was formed in 1985 the Hostetler Family Association which publishes a quarterly newsletter called "Die Familie Hostetler". These Hostetlers were introduced to America by Jacob and Anna Hostetler who settled in Lancaster County, PA in 1712, by Oswald and Maria Hostetler who settled in Lancaster County, PA in 1732, and by three Hostetler brothers (Christian, Ulrich and Nicholas) who arrived in 1749. Although they were Mennonites, most of the name variants of their line of Hostetters end in TER versus the ending of LER which seems to identify most of the variant endings of the descendants of our Hochstetler line. More information on the Hostetters can be requested to David J. Bachman, 1409 Plaza Apartments, Lebanon, PA 17042-7348 (or phone 717-273-4377).

SIU adds online teaching degree program and more to address teacher shortage

by Christi Mathis

Southern Illinois University Carbondale is launching a new online undergraduate program in elementary education this fall for working professionals, as part of its efforts to do everything possible to address teacher shortages. Also new this fall is an online teaching degree program in organizational learning, innovation and development (formerly workforce education and development.)

Online programs are among many SIU initiatives to get qualified teachers, including nontraditional college students, into classrooms. In recent years, the university also has established online teaching degree programs in:

- Early childhood education (fall 2021).
- Special education (fall 2022).

"We met with school superintendents from throughout the region on several occasions and asked them what we can do to help alleviate the teacher shortage. They kept telling us prospective teachers need easier access to classes," said Christie McIntyre, director of Teacher Education Programs. "These programs are designed for working professionals as the classes are taught primarily during the evenings, with some on weekends. To address the teacher shortages, we want to provide as much flexibility as possible

while delivering a high-quality program. We try to make sure each of them has a pathway that works for them."

She said that while geared toward those planning to obtain teaching licenses in Illinois, the programs are open to anyone, and program officials have been contacted already by prospective students as far away as Texas.

How bad is the shortage?

McIntyre said the teacher shortage is a significant problem across the nation. For example, in the four-county Illinois State Board of Education Region 13 (including Washington, Marion, Jefferson and Clinton counties) eight early childhood and four high school teaching jobs could not be filled this spring, along with two social work positions, said Stacy Thompson, professor and coordinator of the early childhood programs and associate dean of undergraduate studies and curriculum in the the School of Education.

That's eight classrooms staffed by substitute teachers or in some other way. Many school districts throughout the state and beyond, particularly smaller ones, have had difficulty filling positions in recent years, according to Thompson and McIntyre.

Meanwhile, in school districts far and wide there are

many paraprofessionals, including teacher aides, and health aides, as well as librarians, who would love to become teachers. Completing their teaching degrees in the traditional way while working to support their families may prove difficult.

To enter the teacher education program, students must have completed an associate degree or the equivalent, including required prerequisites. While the coursework is totally online after students complete their prerequisites, clinical/student teaching assignments are in person, which can be accomplished in participating school districts throughout the state. The vast majority of classes are synchronous, meaning all students log on at the same time.

"Student surveys indicate that participants actually prefer learning this way and do better," McIntyre said.

In addition, SIU is working with community colleges and other universities to streamline the degree process for students with a variety of majors, including early childhood and elementary education. Saluki Step Ahead agreements with more than 40 community colleges in Illinois, Missouri and Texas allow a student to earn an associate degree at the community college and complete a bachelor's degree online through SIU.

The curriculum and transi-

tions are streamlined to help aspiring educators enter classrooms as teachers as quickly as possible with the best preparation. The School of Education also provides navigators to assist early childhood students at the community college level and mentors at SIU, thanks to state funding.

"The agreements with community colleges are very clear to provide a clean pathway to an SIU teaching degree," Thompson said.

McIntyre said one of the curriculum changes being implemented at the request of SIU in numerous community colleges is the addition of an introduction to education class, offering students practical classroom experience early.

"If you have practical experience working in a preschool, school or similar setting, we can also give you credit toward your degree," Thompson added.

Other options

SIU has also implemented other options for aspiring teachers, including:

Dual credit programs: Students earn dual college and high school credits by taking classes while in high school, thereby getting a jumpstart on their teaching credentials and possibly completing their degrees in as little as 36 months.

Grow Your Own Teachers: Geared toward preparing nontraditional students for

high-need positions in rural or minority classrooms, the program provides financial, academic and emotional support while allowing students to streamline their education and get college credit for experience working in paraprofessional or similar positions. Students typically complete this program in 2-2 ½ years while working full-time, usually in a school.

Saluki Teacher Residency Program: This condensed and more intensive pathway to a teaching degree places teacher candidates into the classroom sooner and allowing them to complete coursework online.

"We've listened to our students, and to the extent possible, are offering flexible options, customizable to some extent," Thompson said. "We want students to earn their degrees. Our students are doing very well on their content tests and exams for licensure, too."

In addition, McIntyre and Thompson noted that SIU and its School of Education offer numerous scholarships of up to \$42,000 or even more, many of which are never claimed. For instance, the university received a \$937,000 Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity (ECACE) grant that includes scholarships of up to \$31,000 annually for early childhood majors (birth through second grade).

"We are investing a lot into

helping prepare the teachers of tomorrow," McIntyre said. "The earlier we invest, the better."

Another piece of the grant, McIntyre said, is adding online coursework for other teaching programs.

SIU's online graduate programs include:

- Master of Education, which enables students to earn their degrees in as little as 12 months.
- Doctorate in educational administration and higher education.

SIU also offers options for teachers to add various subject endorsements by completing 18 hours of classes. Many of the endorsement classes are online. In addition, SIU offers off-campus teacher bachelor's degree programs.

Beneficial career

Thompson and McIntyre said SIU's efforts to fulfil the need for good, qualified teachers is a win-win situation for all involved. Teaching positions are filled, and children benefit from having a well-trained, competent leader in their classroom.

And those teachers have the satisfaction of knowing they are making a positive difference in the lives of young people, and the teachers enjoy careers with "good benefits, summers off and regular raises for additional experience and education," McIntyre said.