

Notebook

support education research

Winter 2020

www.multiplesofamerica.org

Volume MMXXI No. 1 ISSN 8756 9965



multiples
OF AMERICA

CONNECTING + SUPPORTING MULTIPLE BIRTH FAMILIES
(Also known as the National Organization of Mothers of Twins Clubs)

- The Yay's and Nay's of Social Media
- Member Spotlight: Lauren Mancke, A Halloween Costume Creative Genius
- Why Join the Multiples of America Executive Board?

Multiples of America 60th Annual Convention

Join us as we remember the past, celebrate the present and plan for the future in San Antonio, Texas for the 60th annual convention of Multiples of America aka The National Organization of Mothers of Twins Clubs, Inc.



AT A GLANCE

Dates: July 22 – 25, 2020

Location: The St. Anthony Hotel, San Antonio, Texas, 300 East Travis Street, San Antonio, TX 78205

Room Rate: \$169 per night flat rate (prior to taxes or any other service charges)

Travel: The St. Anthony in San Antonio is just 8.5 miles from the San Antonio International Airport.

Parking: We have negotiated a \$31.50 daily rate for overnight valet with in and out privileges. Or a \$15.75 event parking rate for a single day of parking.



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Published Quarterly by
Multiples of America also known as
National Organization of Mothers of Twins Clubs, Inc.
A Support Group for Parents of Twins and
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CONNECTING + SUPPORTING MULTIPLE BIRTH FAMILIES
(Also known as the National Organization of Mothers of Twins Clubs)

The purpose of Multiples of America is to cooperate with medical and educational professionals engaged in multiple birth research, increase the understanding of child development and rearing especially relating to multiple births, and to increase the awareness of the individuality of each child. Founded in 1960, this organization is nonprofit and all donations are tax deductible.

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Circulation: 12,500.

Rates: \$25.00 per year for nonmembers in the U.S.A. and \$30.00 per year for nonmembers outside the U.S.A. Multiples of America reserves the right to revise, edit or reject any advertisement not meeting the standards of acceptance of Multiples of America.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL NOTEBOOK RECIPIENTS:

Notebook magazine is distributed in electronic format only. Therefore, it is crucial that Multiples of America have current email addresses for all members. Be sure your club leaders have your current email address, which they will provide to the Executive Office during renewals and at other times throughout the year. If you have any questions, please contact the Executive Office.

A special thank you to Windy Seale with Amplify Design Studio and National Wholesale Printing Corporation (www.NationalPrintingMI.com) for the design and printing of the *Notebook*.

COVER PHOTO: Roser sisters enjoying the dockside view in Alexandria, VA. during the 59th Multiples of America Convention.



RIDING FOR THE BRAND

● ● ● *with Brenda Roser*

Changes in Technology

On a ranch, as in any business, it's important to constantly assess the work produced, how things are moving forward, and what practices can assist your operation in becoming better and more efficient. This morning, as I write this overlooking a piece of prairie from my porch, I am reminded of how many of our forefathers pioneered our country, overcoming obstacles, sacrificing comforts and finding new ways to approach issues in their areas. They worked together in community. Our organization was equally pioneered by forward-thinking women who organized and produced a cohesive group of clubs from across the nation, working in community to make the lives of families with multiple birth children better! These mothers of multiples made sacrifices, they searched for answers, and they provided support even though miles separated them. We admire their courage and perseverance in laying the groundwork before some of us were even born. As Multiples of America approaches our 60th anniversary, we are grateful and enjoy reflecting on the many changes we have seen over the years.

The continuous change in technology over the last couple decades has probably been one of the areas of most impact on our organization. No longer do we need to use carbon paper to make copies for fellow board members or our clubs. Those black, carbon-infused papers were placed between pieces of blank paper so whatever was written on the top piece of paper would be rubbed off, or transferred, to the page underneath. One had to be careful to place the carbon sheet the correct way to ensure the transfer, and it always seemed to rub off on everything it touched causing a smudged appearance. (Okay, I have to admit the latter was possibly more of a user problem rather than a product issue.)

Nor, does the Executive Director need to use a mimeograph machine these days. This machine forced ink through a stencil-type set up to produce copies for newsletters or other publications. It had a very distinct smell, and early forms of

the machine required the user to turn a crank on the side of the machine by hand to produce copies. Who needed an upper body workout when you had to mimeograph?!

Many of those early mothers of multiples used typewriters and made copies, both of which are almost obsolete today. They would then send their copies to department personnel and the Executive Office to inform them of business handled or of information needed. Replies would be dispatched but often would take days to arrive and if additional questions needed answers, the process could take a few weeks. Thankfully, we no longer send a letter, or a carbon copy, through snail mail and wait days or weeks for a response before business can be handled.

Instead, today we do much of our business through computers, electronic transmission and various social media means. We can receive answers to questions and provide support in a matter of hours as opposed to days. Research and information are at our fingertips and quickly shared. In addition, no longer do we merely support mothers, but we provide support inclusively for all caregivers and families of multiple birth children.

While technology has continued to evolve and change, one thing has not: the desire of our leadership to continue to support our clubs and their members. Your leaders are passionate about this organization! We continue to look for innovative ways to provide support to our clubs and their members. We continue to reach out to researchers and facilities to learn the latest information being gained. We continue to seek ways to partner with like organizations to provide our members with additional means of assistance and support.

Much as on a ranch, to grow and thrive we must look to innovation, diversity and "promoting the brand" in a positive manner. It requires a cohesive team working together.

How can you help?

SHARE YOUR STORY:

How has your family life been improved by your local club? How has your multiples club supported you during various stages of your multiple's growth? How are your fellow parents of multiple birth children your biggest cheerleaders and encouragers? Your community and your fellow parents need to hear your story! They need to hear how important this component is in the lives of multiple birth children and their families. They need to hear how this connection makes you a better parent or helps you be a better person!

As I can well attest, ranching and raising multiples can be equally challenging in different ways, yet every day is an opportunity to improve and grow, to implement new technology and ideas. Some days this may seem more difficult than others, but we simply need to look to our rich history and the vision of those who went before, look to their successes and realize when we ride together for the Multiples of America brand, we are stronger. Couple that strength with determination and deliberate strides forward, and we can provide an organization on the cutting edge of information and support.

Let's ride! ●

“

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WE WANT
YOUR GRANT
APPLICATION!

Is your club planning a project to either benefit your club, or your community?

Are you in need of some extra funds to help you achieve your goal?

Then we want YOUR grant application!

The EDGE (Enrichment Development and Growth Endowment) Fund is now taking applications for grants. Please see the Multiples of America website for guidelines and application and apply today!

The Yay's and Nay's of Social Media

By Cara Kusnic
Feature Writer 2

In today's society, social media is beloved by many. It is a way to keep in touch with family, old friends, new friends and even celebrities. It gives us the opportunity to share ideas, dreams, and vent when needed. However, social media is also a way to expose someone's flaws, cyber bully and gossip. Being a mom of teenagers myself, I see both sides.

The yay's of social media are blessings. Don't you just love being able to communicate with people around the world? Being able to see pictures of places that friends and family get to visit is a blessing. It allows us to travel to a place where we have never been and live vicariously through someone else. Wasn't the last baby photo that you saw adorable? Kids grow so fast, and being able to watch your friend's and extended family's kids grow is astounding. Have you seen what your cousin is wearing? Ah! Do not forget to share the recipe with the world, because it tasted amazing.

Social media is a gateway. More often than not, today's teenagers are glued to their phones. For our kids, this is an outlet for them. They no longer have to listen to what their parents say. They get to watch all their friends, post selfies, and gawk over the person that they like. Following celebrities is a huge deal. Even adults try to figure out who is dating whom, where they travel and what their homes look like. Social media also provides our sporty kiddos the opportunity to check in on the sports world. Some even use it as a tool to scout out their favorite colleges and try to follow in the footsteps of players they watch. Of course, this is all typical behavior; however, instead of doing it in person, they turn to social media.

On the other hand, social media is also full of nay's. It's the place where many seek affirmation of themselves and their

actions. It is a place to boast and brag. More often than not, self-image becomes a target. Kids and adults lie about their appearances, and predators lurk posing to be someone they are not. It is also somewhere that you can shatter someone's world in just a few seconds with a brief post. Kids today want to know and genuinely care about what others think of them.

Do our children know their worth and the extent of it? We may think so, or even know so, but until your child actually has something life altering occur to them, it is really hard to understand what they feel about themselves. Students in middle school are finding ways to see nude pictures as well as ask for them. Where are the parents? Some are just being parents. We trust our children and believe that they are doing their best, but how often do we actually log onto our accounts or monitor our children's accounts?

How do we keep our children safe? I can tell you to have open communication with your children, but I am sure you already do that. We all come from different backgrounds, situations and experiences. I have personally found cyber bullying on the phones of children who I care about. We all want what is best for our children. Here is one website that may help: <https://www.safesearchkids.com/parents-guide-to-protecting-teens-on-social-media>. This website provides tips on how to keep your children safe regarding social media. You can also always have your children speak to their school guidance counselor, or another trusted adult.

Just remember, you are not the first parent with concerns, and you surely won't be the last. Keep your chin up, keep an eye on how your children are using social media, and smile on!





Photo 1: Lauren (34), Will (44), Fox (5), Lera and Marigold (2) Mancke as the cast of Toy Story 4. Photo 2: Lera and Marigold (1.5 years) as characters from Clueless. Photo 3: Lera and Marigold (9 months) as Madeline. Photo 4: Fox (16 months) as Elliot from E.T. The Extra Terrestrial. Photo 5: Fox (4), Lera and Marigold (1.5) as Rock, Paper and Scissors. Photo 6: Lera and Marigold (9 months) from Alice in Wonderland.

Member Spotlight: Lauren Mancke, A Halloween Costume Creative Genius

By Kionna-Alycia Keels

Lauren Mancke of **Multiples of the Midlands (SC)** has been wowing parents all over the country for the last few Octobers with her family's creative and fascinating Halloween costumes. Lauren and her husband Will head a family of five, and Lauren designs different costumes for every single day of October! I was fortunate to have the opportunity to get details from Lauren about this unique, artistic family tradition.

KK: What inspired this idea?

LM: Back in 2015, I created a Halloween costume every single day during the month of October for my then 16-month-old son Fox. I knew my time was limited before Fox would get bigger and inevitably want to choose his own costumes. I felt I just had too much Halloween craftiness bursting inside for just one costume. So I basically had to get it all out while he was still little. During that year, I kept the costumes pretty simple, mostly using items we already had around the house. Since our twins, Lera and Marigold, have come along, the costumes have gotten a bit more elaborate.

KK: What challenges, if any, have you faced in this journey? How has it been fun for your family?

LM: Taking photos of children isn't always easy. That's always the hardest part, making sure it's quick and filled with fun. I like people to see that DIY costumes aren't

difficult. When we started, most of these are made with clothing that we already had or borrowed, a few craft supplies, and colored duct tape. Now, we have partnered with Primary, a kid's clothing company, to provide the base clothing.

KK: What have been your family's favorite costumes so far?

LM: My favorite is usually the one I'm working on at the time! We just posted Toy Story 4 to kick off this year's #manckemonthofcostumes, and it has been my favorite to date. My son enjoys adding his ideas and details to the costumes, so his favorites always come from his most loved shows and characters.

Follow Lauren on Instagram ([@laurenmancke](https://www.instagram.com/laurenmancke)) to see how the October 2019 costuming shaped up for the Mancke crew. Lauren's Mancke Month of Costumes has been featured on a number of popular websites, so you may already have seen the family's creativity.

Here are links to some of the features:

[people.com](https://www.people.com)
[insideedition.com](https://www.insideedition.com)
[insideedition.com](https://www.insideedition.com)
[usmagazine.com](https://www.usmagazine.com)

[huffpost.com](https://www.huffpost.com)
[huffingtonpost.ca](https://www.huffingtonpost.ca)
[babble.com](https://www.babble.com)

www.multiplesofamerica.org

Why Join the Multiples of America Executive Board?

By Kelly Heslip
Nominating Committee

We have all been there: a mother of multiples in the throes of work, school and extracurricular activities, and someone asks you to join the board of an organization. Our first reaction may be, “No way! I’m too busy.” But somewhere in the back of your mind, you have always wondered what the experience would be like. Now is the time to take a chance on your wonderings and see for yourself just where this journey can lead.

I attended my first Multiples of America, aka NOMOTC, convention in Boston in 2008. My twins were one year old, and I was pregnant with my singleton. During the first year of having twins, I became involved in my local club and caught the fever to help other mothers of multiples. Sure, my twins were young, but I could see this as a great opportunity to grow myself and to help others grow. When I was recruited to join the Education department in Boston, my eyes were opened to so many wonderful possibilities.

For five years, I wrote articles and had communications with clubs across the nation, for half a year I served as National Rep Liaison, and then I had the opportunity to serve as Secretary on the board for two years. Although I’ve had to take a leave of absence due to a new job, I attended the convention in Alexandria this past summer, and jumped back into the group by joining the Nominating Committee.

As a board member, you get to know the inner workings of the organization. It is not something to take lightly, but it can be done by anyone willing to give a little time to such a worthy endeavor. Just think of all the opportunities that are available to multiple birth families through Multiples of America:

- Support for numerous things such as placement in schools
- Research conducted internationally
- Scholarships available for multiples
- And so much more!

By joining the Board, you will have the unique ability to reach thousands of families in a way no one has before, and you will have the ability to create new possibilities for these families.

If you have ideas, a passion to offer support, and want to connect differing generations of multiple birth families, then this is the right organization for you! Ponder over all the positions. Carefully consider how your skills can benefit and help evolve the services of Multiples of America for generations to come. It will be a rewarding experience ... and maybe not just for yourself. ●





Step Forward

To Help Multiples of America
As a Member of the Board of Directors

If you have served as a National Worker or on the Board of Directors within the last three years, we need your expertise and ideas on the Multiples of America Board of Directors.

To apply: Find the link to the Officer Candidate Application (OCA) in the Members' Only section of our website. Complete the application, then send a letter of intent and photo to the Nominating Chair. Due date for the application is January 15, 2020. Contact the Nominating Chair, Shenen Dietrich, at volunteer@multiplesofamerica.org for more information about any National Worker and/or Elected Officer/Board of Directors' position.

Take action
Learn Try something new
Hobby Meet people Help people Passion
Give something back
Make a difference

IT IS NOT TOO EARLY TO FILL OUT AN APPLICATION FOR THE MARGE AINSWORTH SCHOLARSHIP FOR THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL TERM

Are you, your spouse or your multiples continuing your education?

If you answered **yes**, then you should apply for the Marge Ainsworth Scholarship.

All members of Multiples of America and their spouses and multiple children are eligible for the scholarship. To be eligible, an applicant must fill out an application form which can be found on the website.

Multiples Scholarship: A multiple birth child of a member in good standing of a member club or Affiliate of Multiples of America for at least three (3) years preceding submission of application.

Parent of Multiples Scholarship: A member in good standing of a member club or Affiliate of Multiples of America for at least three (3) years preceding submission of application.

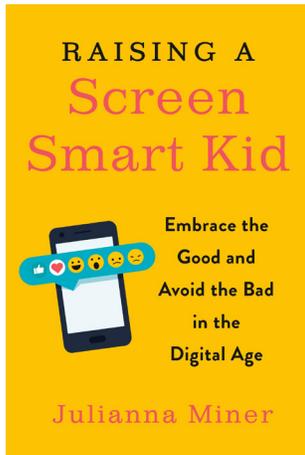
Applicant must be enrolled, or plan to enroll, in an accredited educational institution or program of training and may be a university, college, junior college, trade or vocational school.

Recipients will be announced at the 2020 Multiples of America 60th convention. Any questions, should be sent to scholarship@multiplesofamerica.org.

What do you need to do?

1. Click on the link: <http://www.multiplesofamerica.org/members-only-page>
2. Sign into the Member's Only Section. Scroll down to the Document section and you will find all the information for the scholarship.
3. Download all the applications and guidelines.
4. Complete and email before the February 1, 2020, deadline.
5. Consider donating to the scholarship fund. Complete the form located on the website.

It's that simple!



Raising a Screen Smart Kid - Embrace the Good and Avoid the Bad in the Digital Age by Julianna Miner

Raising a Screen Smart Kid - Embrace the Good and Avoid the Bad in the Digital Age is an excellent resource for parents raising children in today's social media environment. Each chapter consists of a personal narrative, discussion of the issues involved, review of the existing data and research, and advice from

professionals. At the end of each chapter, the author lists takeaways with action steps to help parents work with their kids.

The author states that most youth in the United States get access to their first smartphone between the ages of 10 and 12, which is the same time that their brains and bodies hit puberty. At this stage of development, kids are prone to make impulsive and risky choices. Risk factors, problems and possible solutions are discussed in the book. She explains social media and the Imaginary Audience, self-esteem, and how social media affects teen friendships. Other chapters include digital dating and online relationships, social culture

of video games, digital addiction and risky behavior online. The author also discusses growing up online with anxiety, depression, ADHD or autism. There are recommendations for handling online safety, predators, harassment and bullying. The final chapter suggests how parents can hope for the best and avoid the worst.

The book contains two very useful appendixes. The first is regarding a cell phone contract or agreement, similar to one that parents make with their children when they begin to drive. It explains why contracts or agreements are useful, and lists questions for discussion as to what should be included in the contract or agreement. The second appendix lists sexuality and sex education online resources for teens. The author suggests that parents preview the sites to be sure they are appropriate for their family.

Julianna Miner has three kids and is an adjunct professor of global and community health at George Mason University. She has 20 years of experience in the field of public health and created the parenting blog Rants from Mommyland. *Raising a Screen Smart Kid - Embrace the Good and Avoid the Bad in the Digital Age* is available from Amazon and on Kindle. ●

Member Club Spotlights

By Meredith Fitzgerald
District Reporter

Fall is time for lots of fun activities. Here are what some of our local clubs across America are doing:

Tri-City Mothers of Multiples (CA) asked members join in on a Ghost House Meetup in October. There was a kid-friendly Haunted House and Carnival Games. And for their November mixer, they met for a fun Craft Night where they caught up with other moms of multiples and had a brief board meeting.

Parents of Multiples in Sacramento (CA) recently held their semi-annual Children's Equipment and Clothing Sale. Their September meeting included a Swap night, Pictionary and Potluck! Along with the games, members were able to give or take items they were not able to sell during the tag sale. As for anything leftover, the club arranged a pick up for these donations to the Veterans of America. In November, they hosted a Fall Fair. This event included vendors, lunch,

activities for kids and free photos with Santa. This event serves as their big fundraiser of the year. Also, the club's Philanthropy Chairs Kate Patterson, Deanna Vargas and Heather Vierra organized Thanksgiving dinners provided to families in need.

Metrowest Parents of Multiples (MA) opened their club year with an annual Ice Cream Social. The club's Social Chair, Monicky Marcellino, set up and organized donations of German Chocolate Cake and Cookie Dough ice cream. She also coordinated the annual Fall Fest at Honey Pot Orchards in September. Families gathered at the pavilion for cider and the Honey Pot's delicious apple cider donuts. Kids enjoyed crafts, and families could purchase bags for apple picking. Soon after, MetroWest held its twice yearly tag sale. Members of the club and expectant mothers were able to shop ahead of the general public. There were 51 sellers in the fall, along with a variety of vendors who participated. ●

Multiples of America, a.k.a. NOMOTC, strives to provide a small amount of comfort to families during the difficult times that follow the loss of a loved one. The effect on each family member regarding the loss of each and every loved one varies widely. Our bereavement materials have suggestions on how each individual can work through the grieving process. With the addition of social media, more information on passings have come to light, so if you hear of someone who has suffered a loss, please contact us.

Frank Cimildoro, husband of Judi Cimildoro, passed away September 28, 2019. Judi is a member of Mountain States Mothers of Adult Multiples (AZ), OOMPA, and the Dedham Regional Chapter of the Massachusetts Mothers of Twins Association. Frank had received a multi-visceral transplant in August in New York City and passed away from complications from the transplant. His children, JulieAnn (Patrick), Joseph, and twins Jacquelyn and Steven (Stephanie) also survive him. He was the rock of the family and his passing has been especially difficult due to the fact that he had waited so long for his transplant. Friends and family have helped Judi through this ordeal.

Emily Schibig Witty, twin daughter of Colline Shibig Hise [formerly of POTATO/Music City Multiples (TN)], passed away on September 1, 2019, at the age of 37 from injuries sustained in a motor vehicle accident. Her twin brother Jay (Melissa) and her children, Morgan and Cameron, as well as her father Joe Schibig, are all mourning the loss of this very special young lady. Visits, cards and phone calls have helped the family deal with this tragic accident.



Reminder: Remember to submit change of email address information immediately! Multiples of America's Notebook will not be delivered without accurate email!



Mark Your Calendars!

Convention 2020 will be held in San Antonio, TX, July 22-25

January

- Read *Multiple Messages*
- Look for more information on Convention 2020
- Send in National Worker Volunteer Forms
- Send in Scholarship Applications

February

- Review *Multiple Messages*
- Encourage club members to turn in volunteer forms for a national worker position
- Last chance for Scholarship Applications
- Look for more information about Convention 2020

March

- Read *Multiple Messages*
- Encourage club members to turn in volunteer forms for a national worker position
- Look for more information about Convention 2020

Stay Connected!

- Multiples of America Page: www.facebook.com/NOMOTC
- Multiples of America on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/MultiplesofAmericaMembersOnly/>
- Special Needs Support of Multiples of America: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/MultiplesofAmericaSpecialNeeds/>
- Single Parent Support with Multiples of Multiples of America: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/MultiplesofAmericaSingleParents/>
- Higher Order Multiples of Multiples of America: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/MultiplesofAmericaHigherOrder/>
- Multiples of America's convention: <https://www.facebook.com/MultiplesofAmericaConvention>
- Multiples of America on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/MultiplesUSA>