

Chicago

OCTFamily.com

OCTEDF@gmail.com

Hello Owens Cook Thomas Family!

(PLEASE READ THIS LETTER IN FULL)

We are officially in the year 2026 and the family reunion is just around the corner. This letter contains **important** information about planned programming, family reunion fees, tee shirts, the Eddie Bruce Cook Scholarship and travel accommodations.

PROGRAMS

Our intention is to host you for three wonderful days in Chicago from Friday June 19 to Sunday June 21. Our programs are:

FRIDAY:

- **Juneteenth Picnic & Family Celebration** on Friday from 12PM-7PM
 - Chicago Women's Park and Gardens (1801 S. Indiana Avenue)
- Family Picture in T-Shirts at or around **5pm**

SATURDAY:

- Your choice of Saturday morning/midday family outings (suggestions will be provided)
- **Scholarship and Unity Banquet on Saturday** from **6pm-11pm**
 - Row24 (2411 S. Michigan Ave)

SUNDAY

- **Prayer and Farewell Brunch** on Sunday from approximately **8am-10am**
 - Location TBA

For those traveling early, there may be an option for a Thursday event, but that will be addressed and handled separately from the general family reunion plans. Please contact OCTEDF@gmail.com or Erice by phone at (773) 577-3716 if you are traveling and will be staying Thursday night.

FEES

For us to have the best time possible, it requires us to make a financial commitment. Engaging in activities in Chicago and due to the rising costs under this economy means the fees will be higher than previous years. We hope this does not prevent you from attending and our planning has been focused on the most economically reasonable options while still having a good experience. For this reunion, **the fee will be \$150 per person age ten (10) and above. All fees are due by May 15, 2026.**

If you would like to attend but cannot afford the fees due to a personal hardship, please contact OCTEDF@gmail.com directly to discuss options. If you are in a financial position to *donate extra fees for people who might be facing hardship*, also reach out to us. We are also open to *partial payments* for the reunion in April, May, and June to allow financial flexibility. **Later in the letter is a form for you to fill out regarding the name of each attendee, their age (with birthday), family tree branch, dietary restrictions, T-shirt size and payment method.** This information will also be used to UPDATE OUR FAMILY TREE!

♥♥♥♥ with love, the Smith Family, your 2026 hosts ♥♥♥♥♥

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PLEASE MAIL YOUR FORM TO

OCTEDF

PO BOX 1131

OAK PARK, IL 60304

For the tech savvy people, save a stamp! Fill out the form, take a picture and email it to OCTEDF@gmail.com and use digital payment!

TEE SHIRTS & WHITE PANTS

While we know *everyone* wants to know what style or color the T-shirt will be, that is still being decided. However, you should expect it will include the colors of the Chicago Flag, which are **red**, **white** and a **baby blue**. **Regardless of the T-Shirt color, please keep to the family tradition of wearing WHITE pants/skirts/dresses/bottoms along with your T-Shirt.**

EDDIE BRUCE COOK SCHOLARSHIP

The 2026 Eddie Bruce Cook Scholarship application is included with this letter. If you are entering college or any post-secondary education in 2026, PLEASE APPLY! Applications must follow the scholarship rules and be submitted before the deadline to be considered. **Also, PREVIOUS AWARDEES MAY APPLY AGAIN!** Please apply if you are eligible.

TRAVEL ACCOMODATIONS

Although many of you will drive to the city of Chicago, if you plan to fly, United Airlines is a “hub” for Chicago, and many flights are reduced price to O’Hare airport. If you have a large group of family members in your area, please consider a group rate (by calling United directly) or carpooling! For the drivers, parking at the hotel is *expensive* and we could not get a group rate. However, there is paid and free street parking with ¼ miles from the hotel that may be available. Please consider this option if you want to avoid valet costs. As of the time of this letter, ALL ROOMS ARE BOOKED IN OUR BLOCK but please contact us ASAP if you have not booked a room and want to get on a waitlist. Also, please also let us know if you booked OUTSIDE of our hotel block. ***PLEASE NOTE* room rental rates may be higher now due to nearby Chicago events.** As far as check-in at the hotel & luggage, we are addressing this with the staff of the hotel and will share information as we get it. We may have a luggage storage area if rooms are not ready at 12pm. More information will be circulated as we get it. **If you didn’t receive or lost your hotel letter, please go to OCTFamily.com or contact us via phone (773) 577-3716 so we can send that letter to you.**

We know this is a LOT of information to absorb, but this is one of the last (if not *the* last) letters we will send out this year. We’re almost to June, so hang in there! Thank you for reading everything and for attending the reunion this year. It’s going to be a blast. See you soon!

♥♥♥♥ with love, the Smith Family, your 2026 hosts ♥♥♥♥♥