

# You Go, Girlfriends!

In honor of National Women's Friendship Day on September 21, we asked about getaways with your girlfriends.

Whether it's for an evening, a weekend or more, readers really make their "together time" special. (For more on National Women's Friendship Day, visit our Web site and click on "Links.")

## Monthly Meetings

My three church friends and I decided not to wait to enjoy each other's company—we make it a monthly priority!

We might share a picnic and a walk, or a more elaborately themed party, like the one where we made lavender oil, pot-pourri and sachets, and ate cookies made with edible lavender. We might go shopping or to a museum, and sometimes we make a special meal and watch a movie. Having friends is one of the most rewarding things in life, so we celebrate as often as possible!

—SHARON MILLETTE  
*Bennington, Vermont*

## Crafty Shoppers

For almost 20 years, I've hosted our Ladies-Only Craft Fair Weekend for 12 to 25 friends and relatives—temporarily banishing my husband and sons for some male bonding time and adventures of their own.

On Friday, we visit quaint stores around the area, then eat an early dinner and visit a nearby outlet mall. Bright and early Saturday morning, we're at a huge local craft fair when it opens. Afterward, we relax with a late lunch in Greendale and tour the Reiman Publications Visitor Center. Then, back at my house, we haul our treasures inside for "show-and-tell."

We end on Sunday by attending church, having brunch and packing up. We don't get a lot of sleep—but there's plenty of laughter. —MARY JO ROMPORTL  
*Hartland, Wisconsin*

## Go, Go, GNO!

Our Girls Night Out, affectionately known as GNO, gives 11 of us young moms a chance to catch up with each other at a real restaurant—no fast food. We've expanded GNO to other adventures, too—we've golfed, had a getaway shopping trip and even enjoyed some pampering at a spa (Trischa is second from right in the photo at left).

GNO events require advance planning, so we put our names in a

hat to determine who will pick the date and place. Once everyone's arrived, we each give the planner \$10, with strict instructions that she spend it all on herself—and we follow up to make sure she does!

—TRISCHA TAKVAM  
*Carman, Manitoba*

## Amish Adventures

My husband's sister, a teacher in Florida, spends summers here, and she, my brother's wife and I always take a long weekend in Holmes County, Ohio.

This is Amish Country, and we stay in a wonderful bed-and-breakfast, an old farm-style house with a wraparound porch. Evenings, from the porch swings and rocking chairs, we watch the horses and buggies go by.

During the day, we hit every fabric and quilt shop in the county! We buy the fabric for the quilts we've spent the year planning to make. Driving from shop to shop, we gaze at the scenic countryside, and stop for scrumptious breakfasts and lunches in Amish restaurants serving homemade breads and pies. (We stick to raw veggies and sandwiches for supper).

By Sunday, we're ready to head back and start sewing. But before summer's end, we're planning our return the next year.

—LINDA HOFFMAN  
*Rochester, Indiana*

**Editor's Note:** Like to take a similar trip? CW sponsors a Holmes County getaway. See page 53 for details.



ILLUSTRATION: TRAVIS FOSTER



Go, Go, GNO!

## The B&B Girls

For 15 years, six of us have taken a trip nearby to enjoy a full weekend of each other's company.

We call ourselves the B&B Girls, and we've traveled from Redwing, Minnesota to Galena, Illinois, rotating the responsibility of choosing the destination, itinerary and bed-and-breakfast for our stay. The weekend always includes an educational event, church, entertainment, eating, shopping and enjoyment—plus the special lace button pin we all wear on these trips. You can see mine in the photo (below); I'm third from the right.

We've tasted teas and wines, and marveled at natural beauty and wonders. The planner puts together a scrapbook so

and our lifestyles were all very different, we hit it off so well that we soon began arranging monthly dinners. There, we'd share the events of our lives and puzzle over solutions to perplexing problems.

Those dinners grew into an overnight shopping trip, which has since become a fall tradition. We pile into a minivan, check in at a hotel and go for a nice dinner, gabbing the whole time. Later, some of us will stay up half the night giggling and talking, while the rest of us drift off to sleep. Just like a slumber party!

The next day, we'll shop and shop before heading for home, talking the entire way about the ups and downs in our lives, from families to jobs to new homes and more. I can't imagine my life without these four friends.

Our annual overnight shopping trip probably won't solve the world's problems—but it certainly gives us a much-needed time-out from daily life to comfort, support and love each other.

—KIM SUHAN

*Kittanning, Pennsylvania*

## Those Scamps!

We call our September girls' getaway Scampin' because we camp, scrapbook and stamp!

It's usually my daughter, her friend, her friend's mother and me, though others have joined us. We rent a cabin in advance and decide what foods we'll eat. Mocha pie (the recipe's available via "Recipe Search" on CW's Web site) and shrimp are always on the menu.

Amid much laughter, we'll work on scrapbooks, greeting cards and other projects. We insist on a campfire at least one night—if we can tear ourselves away from our projects. It's a beautiful setting and fun to work uninterrupted. But the best part is always just being with each other.

—SANDRA PANIPINTO

*Bloomfield, New York*

## Fish Tale

My husband doesn't fish, but 2 years ago, when some buddies persuaded him to go fishing with them in Canada, I saw a great opportunity—for a group of us gals! We all live more than 50 miles from each other, and time has always been too short when we all get together, so this was our chance.

My best buddies all arrived early in the day for a slumber party. We ate, laughed, vented, grilled steaks, drank wine and enjoyed popcorn and a movie. In the morning, we each made our specialty for breakfast, which we enjoyed on the patio.

Before everyone left, we decided we'd need to send my husband on another trip the next year!

—LYNDA DIESSNER  
*Primrose, Nebraska*

## A Cool Tradition

Each year in mid-January, my girlfriends and I celebrate our friendship with an unusual cookie exchange at one friend's rural home. We each arrive carrying cookies, muffins or bread. But before we dig in, we earn the indulgence by spending an hour snowshoeing along a riverbank and through her woods and fields. It can be tough breaking a trail in new snow. One year, we went out in a sleet storm! We take turns breaking the trail, and we enjoy watching for wildlife and identifying animal tracks.

We work up an appetite, so after an hour, we head back to the house for a steaming mug of coffee and a bite to eat. Over treats, we spend another hour or so catching up on each other's lives. Then we'll each carry out a bag of cookies to go with the new memories we've created.

—ELAINE ARCHER  
*Edwards, New York*



The B&B Girls

we can reminisce and recall all the details and milestones throughout the years. It's a wonderful reminder of those good times.

—JANEAN MORROW  
*Spencer, Wisconsin*

## Telling Friendships

Five of us met as bank tellers in 1989. Though we ranged in age from 24 to 47,

**“Some of us will stay up half the night giggling and talking, while the rest of us drift off to sleep. Just like a slumber party!”**