

Moostash Joe Tours *By Shawnelle Alley*

Joe Spellerberg, known as Moostash Joe and owner of Moostash Joe Tours, said, "The world is a wonderful place and we've scouted out some amazing destinations. Every tour we offer was personally developed by us; we got in the car with a yellow pad and pen and mapped out routes, hotels, scenic locations, etc., and we are proud of what we offer our customers."

Joey Spellerberg, president of Moostash Joe Tours and Moostash's son, added, "We package travel and sell it. Some of our customers join tours with friends, go on personal adventures or might even be a part of a large group, such as a family reunion or an association we've made arrangements for. We've created travel packages for banks and schools, too. There are so many options available and people love to have all of their plans made for them in advance: travel, tickets, meals, entertainment and hotels."

Moostash Joe Tours will celebrate 40 years in business in 2015. Moostash explained: "In February of 1975 a friend referred me to David House, president and owner of Intertrav, Corp., to take a group,



didn't try, and I knew he was right.

"So, I made brochures and used the band to promote the tour and that's how we began doing all of our tours overseas in Europe. The first year we had approximately 175 people within a hundred mile radius of Fremont on tour with us. David House was impressed and

we did it again and again," Moostash stated.



"European tours include round-trip tickets, sight-seeing, hotels and some meals," he said. "The first tour was \$565. In 1976, it was \$575 and we had 275 people on the trip. Our biggest group abroad was in 1977 with 377 people; the cost for that tour was \$595. Now, European tours have between 40-50 people and cost somewhere in the neighborhood of \$3,165."

Spellerberg added, "In 1990, Dad started domestic motor-coach tours. The costs of our tours vary but are inclusive: transportation, lodging, attractions and some meals are covered in the cost. All tours have a tour escort, one of 10

employed, and leave from Omaha, Lincoln, Norfolk or Fremont. Not only does Moostash Joe Tours make travel convenient, we work hard to keep the price of travel down. We can offer lower prices because we obtain group rates – less cost than individual bookings."

Moostash said the tours cater to seniors who are 55 and older and retirees. "But, we will take anybody," he added. "We give seniors up to a \$200 coupon discount and offer 90 tours a year. We remain economically competitive because we have fewer staff. Approximately 95 percent of our tours we are able to give full refunds for cancellations up to the day prior to departure. There are a few exceptions, but these are listed on the trip's travel brochure. We recommend people buy travel insurance for cruises and overseas tours."

Spellerberg added, "Our motto is More for Less because we want our customers to get more for their money; we work very hard and we feel our return policy is the best around. Sometimes people cannot foresee emergencies that require them to cancel the day before a tour departure."

"The best way to see the United States and Canada is by bus," Spellerberg stated. "People just take it in and eat up the scenery. And they come as strangers and leave as friends. Our 26 days to Alaska in the only motor-coach tour we know of in the area. We do cruise the inside passage. The trip is \$4,699, which breaks down to \$180.75 daily per person. My motivation and purpose every day is to take people to the most beautiful and scenic places in the world, and to see the joy and excitement on their faces when they return grateful for their experience. Some of the travelers might be getting out for the first time after a trauma or illness. Many of them tell us their trip was the best thing they could've done for themselves."

Moostash added, "If we do our job well, we get to see satisfied people. I love that."

The Moostash Joe Polka Band played such an important role in establishing his business. However, upon the recommendation of his wife, Jan, Moostash disbanded the band three years ago for health reasons. "My business has grown so much and the polka band was

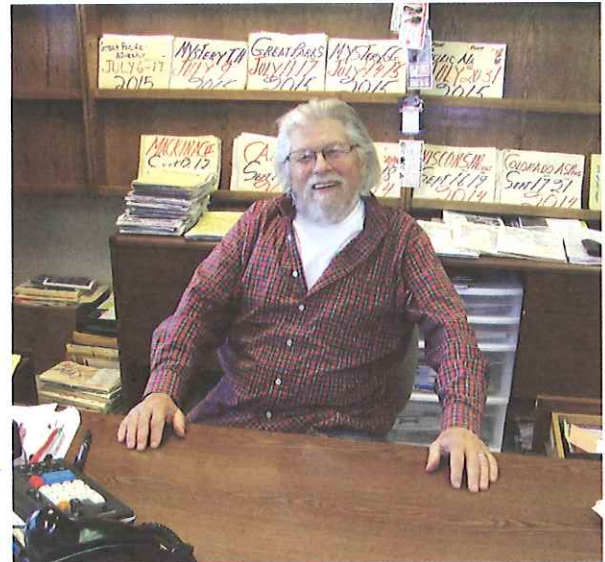


very successful – I am a trumpet player – it just got to be too much.”

Moostash has The Moostash Joe Polka and Big Band Show, which began under former station manager, Vern Stedery, on KHUB (1340 FM) every Sunday from 1-5 p.m. He has walked up the 26 steps to broadcast for 58 years and said the station has gone through many changes, but he has been there longer than anyone. “I have a good following: Fremonters have been supportive, listening and advertising on my show.”

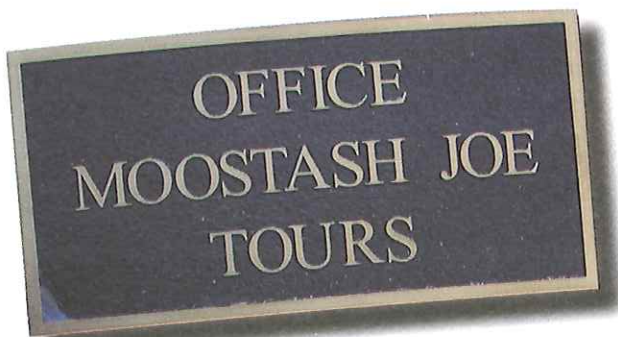
Moostash and Jan have been married six years. He has 11 children: Cynthia, Theresa, Beverly, Michael, Patty, Mark, Susan, Jackie, Joey, Johnny and Jenna. He has 27 grandchildren and five great grandchildren. Slowly, Moostash is turning over the day-to-day operation of the business to son Joey and his detail oriented, former first grade teacher, wife, Ashley. She handles administrative duties for the family business. Joey and Ashley are expecting their first child in November, a girl.

Spellerberg, a graduate of Bergan High School and the University of Alabama at Birmingham has a degree in marketing and sales. He said he enjoys golf, family dinners and travel, especially to Alabama to visit Ashley’s family. “My fondest memories growing up were traveling with Dad and our family to places like D.C. and New York. It opened my world-view. I remember standing in Yosemite National Park and looking out onto the iconic Yosemite Valley. The view alone made me speechless and I knew there has to be a God – a creator. I was in awe. I want to help other people discover that same wonder. We help people see majesty in the world,” he stated.



“I see so much possibility where I am, working with Dad,” Spellerberg said. He admitted he has a lot to learn and said he enjoys working with his Dad and wife every day. “Ashley, who we couldn’t do this without, does so much of the billing and processing and very detail-oriented work. I am blessed. I want to carry Dad’s legacy forward.”

Moostash said, “My favorite place in the world for entertainment is Oktoberfest in Munich. Anyone who has been there is just doggone lucky. There is something wonderful about each place we have scouted. I love the entertainment, culture and diversity of New York City. And Crater Lake in Washington has the bluest water I’ve ever seen. The satisfaction we get from seeing people who might not have had those opportunities to go to these places at least once in their life is incredible. We have a great country, full of amazing things.” He added, “We scout places and listen to other travelers. About 75 percent of the experiences are scenic. Of course, we have Branson Tours, which are mainly shows.”



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