

The Powerful Return to an In-Person World

by *Mary Adcock*

President

There's nothing quite like the power of meeting someone in person. My sister, Judy, and I recently attended our first Christmas Con. It was an event filled with all things Christmas: holiday vendors, gatherings around the Christmas tree, endless yuletide tunes. The main attraction, of course, was the chance to meet-and-greet with a boundless list of stars from made-for-TV holiday movies.

The amazing result is that now — after chatting with these actors and actresses (and having my picture taken with them, of course) — I get the feeling that I'm seeing one of my friends whenever they are on TV. "Hey, there's my friend Tyler (or Victor or Andrew or Paul)," I say. Not sure if my husband appreciates it, but it's an interesting outcome. There's nothing quite like the power of meeting someone in person.

I was again reminded of that power when Multiples of America met a few weeks ago for our 62nd annual convention. It was our organization's first in-person gathering since the pandemic. Since 2020, our organization embraced the possibilities of the virtual world. We were able to continue to meet and conduct business, and we will continue to utilize those tools.

But meeting in person offered the opportunity to do more. To laugh, chat, learn and make connections. Sometimes, it was a planned connection at a workshop or networking luncheon. Other times, the connection was pure serendipity: a chat while walking down the hallway, a chance poolside meeting.

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Mary Adcock (right) and her sister, Judy Montgomery (left), met actor Victor Webster at Christmas Con.



Left to right: Actor Paul Campbell, Mary's sister Judy Montgomery, Mary Adcock and actress Kimberly Sustad.

Those happenstance connections allowed time for conversations on varying topics, and the building or strengthening of relationships. There's nothing quite like the power of meeting someone in person.



Mary Adcock (left) with Judy Goren of St. Louis MOMs (MO).

Local club members feel that same power as they get together. Online support through Facebook and other social media is a great resource that's available 24/7. But the chat box can't bring your family a meal when one of your twins has been in the hospital. A text doesn't reach out with a hug when you're having a difficult day. E-mail messages won't lead to the laughter and splashes that occur during a club family pool party. There's nothing quite like the power of meeting someone in person.

Yes, the pandemic opened the way to a lot of dynamic virtual tools. As the world continues opening up, we'll want to continue utilizing those in new ways. But let's also not forget about the power of meeting someone in person.