

FGS Voice

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The monthly newsletter of the
Federation of Genealogical Societies
“Linking the Genealogical Community”

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FROM THE EDITOR

This issue of the *FGS Voice* is being sent to you shortly after your editor has returned from a highly successful conference put on in Toledo, Ohio, by one of our FGS member societies, the Ohio Genealogical Society. Friendly volunteers made it all work like clockwork, and attendees kept learning all the way through to those 4pm Saturday presentations.

In a few hours, I head to an exciting week in Salt Lake City, featuring the annual conference of the National Genealogical Society, another of our FGS member societies. The publicity for this event has been superb, and I fully expect to see huge crowds in the Salt Palace Convention Center and the Family History Library.

Certainly, societies are more than merely their conferences, but a conference is one of the best ways that a society can make a public splash. It's a way to pull volunteers together for a common goal, a way to attract new members, and a way to provide the education that is a major part of why genealogy societies exist.

Let me make a suggestion: The next time that you attend a conference hosted by a society other than your own, take notes. Look at the ways that the conference is publicized. Look at how volunteers are

organized. Look at the kinds of materials given to attendees. Look at the awards programs, the lineage societies, and the special events.

After you've visited another society's conference, come back to your own with some fresh ideas, borrow what looks good, and put your own special spin on it. Survey all of your members, and ask them what conferences they've attended in the past few years, and what things they've enjoyed the most. And if you like what you hear, ask that member if they'd be willing to be one of the volunteers to put that idea into practice at your society's next conference.

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Send name and e-mail address to the *FGS Voice* editor at fgsvoice@fgs.org.

SUBMIT CONTENT FOR THE VOICE:

Send all correspondence, announcements, and other newsletter items directly to the *FGS Voice* editor at fgsvoice@fgs.org. Deadlines for submission of content for inclusion in upcoming issues of the *FGS Voice* are the 10th day of each month for that month's issue.

FGS Awards - Call for Submissions (deadline - June 1)

Do you know a person in your genealogical or historical society or library who has gone above and beyond to benefit the genealogical community with local, state, or national activities? Is there or are there a volunteer or volunteers you feel need special recognition? Has your society or a society produced a publication, done indexing, or cleaned up a cemetery or maybe even more?

Awards presented by the Federation of Genealogical Societies are intended to serve two purposes. First, they recognize and thank individuals and organizations who make significant contributions. Second, they illustrate the many things that can, and need, to be done, and provide examples and ideas on how we can accomplish similar goals.

Each year at the Federation of Genealogical Societies annual conference banquet, awards are given to societies and members of societies for outstanding or notable service to the genealogical community.



The Federation looks to you to nominate individuals or societies to receive these awards of recognition. You know the societies and the people who make up those societies. You know the activities/projects that an individual or society has successfully undertaken. These are the people, the societies, and the activities FGS is looking to offer gratitude to with these awards.

Please consider those that you know for an FGS award. Deadline for submission of awards for 2010 is 1 June 2010.

Following is a short description of the awards:

Certificate of Appreciation: Individual or organization in thanks for duty in exemplary or outstanding manner.

Award of Merit: Individual or organization for meritorious service or distinguished work in genealogy and family history.

President's Citation: Individual or organization to whose contributions or service to FGS or the genealogical community are singled out for recognition by the FGS President.

Delegate Award: Individual Delegate of an FGS member society in recognition of exemplary service to FGS as a member of an FGS standing committee or as an active participant in an FGS project.

Distinguished Service Award: Individual or organizational recognition of outstanding service to FGS or to a member society. The organization must be a member of FGS, and the individual must be a member of an FGS member society.

Director's Award: Individual or organizational recognition of both exceptional contributions to the field of genealogy and family history, and extra-mile efforts to promote good will and improve services.

George E. Williams Award: Individual with outstanding contributions within a single year to FGS, a member organization, or both.

David S. Vogels Award: Individual for recognition of outstanding career contributions to FGS.

Rabbi Malcolm H. Stern Humanitarian Award: To a rare individual for lifetime contributions and whose positive personal influence and example have fostered unity in the genealogical community, provided leadership to its individual members, and helped make family history a vital force in the community at large.

Archives Award: Individual or organizational recognition of exceptional contributions in the area of archival access, preservation, or services.

More information about the awards and a link to a submission form can be found at the FGS website fgs.org/awards/awards_form.php.

Awards deadline is **1 June 2010**.

As Delegates we hope to hear from you! Thank you very much for your submissions.

The FGS Awards Committee:
Susan Kaufman
Bobbi King
Sandra Luebking
Gary Mokotoff



FGS Nominating Committee Seeks Nominees (deadline – June 15)

The FGS Nominating Committee is looking for a few good society members. The following positions will be filled in this year's election:

- President
- Vice-President of Administration
- Secretary
- 4 Directors

The officer terms run 2 years while the Director posts are 3-year terms.

According to our FGS Bylaws, member societies can propose nominees in one of two ways:

1. Member Societies may simply suggest nominees to be considered as potential candidates by the Nominating Committee.
2. If a nominee whose nomination has been submitted by a Member Society in good standing is accompanied by the signed endorsement of five other delegates, along with the written consent of the nominee and a biographical sketch, that person shall be automatically included as a candidate on the ballot.

All nominations for the Board should be postmarked by an extended deadline of 15 June to be considered. Please direct all such nominations by postal mail to the FGS office; or by e-mail to Jana Broglin, nominating committee chair, at jana@janabroglin.com.



2011 FGS/ISGS National Conference - Call for Lecture Proposals

The Federation of Genealogical Societies and the Illinois State Genealogical Society are pleased to announce the official call for lecture proposals for our 2011 national conference, "Pathways to the Heartland," to be held in Springfield, Illinois, 7-10 September 2011. The conference will explore the resources of America's Heartland through a variety of regional and national topics aimed at engaging genealogists and family historians of all levels and experience. Topics relating to the Midwest, migration patterns, and religious and ethnic groups are encouraged. Wednesday, 7 September 2011, will include "Focus on Societies," with lectures, focus groups, and other special events devoted to assisting genealogical societies, lineage societies, historical societies, and family associations succeed and thrive in their activities.

The program committee is specifically seeking new and dynamic proposals that will provide exceptional and unique educational experiences for conference attendees.

Potential categories for submissions include:

- Focus on Societies
- Methodologies and Strategies
- Migration/Immigration
- Regions
- Repositories
- Record Types
- Technology
- Religious and Ethnic Groups
- Midwestern Records

Speakers are strongly encouraged to submit multiple proposals (more than four) as most speakers, if selected, will provide a minimum of three lectures at the conference. There is no limit to the number of proposals a speaker may submit. **Submission Requirements** Submissions should be sent in PDF, Microsoft Word, or RTF format. File names should include your last name, first initial, and proposal topic (ex: SmithJ - Organization). Each submission must include:

- Speaker(s) name
- Speaker(s) contact information (including mailing address, phone, fax, e-mail).
- Please add your website, if applicable.
- Prior speaking experience (speakers who have not spoken at a national conference are encouraged to submit a video, audiotape, or CD recording of a recent lecture by mail).
- Speaker(s) biography
- Speaker(s) brief brochure biography (50 word maximum)
- Lecture title (titles should not exceed 10 words: title your presentations *carefully*, as the title that is submitted is the title that will be used in the conference program).
- Lecture brochure description (40 word maximum)
- Lecture outline/summary
- Lecture audio-visual requirements (FGS does NOT provide LCD/digital projectors, computers, or Internet access for speakers).
- Intended audience level

Proposals must be sent electronically to program2011@fgs.org no later than 15 May 2010.

Additional Information

Speakers will receive compensation according to the FGS Conference Speaker Policy at <http://www.fgs.org/conferences/speakerpolicy.php>. Camera-ready handouts are required for each lecture or workshop presentation and will be compiled in a syllabus distributed to conference participants. The deadline for submissions of syllabus materials is 1 April 2011. Guidelines for the formatting of the syllabus content will be sent to speakers. Invitations to speak will be issued in October 2010 and the deadline for acceptance and submission of a signed contract will be 1 November 2010.

If you are interested in more information about how to respond to this Call for Lecture Proposals, see the article in the *Association of Professional Genealogists Quarterly* (APGQ) titled "Making Your Mark: Responding to Calls for Lecture Proposals", by George G. Morgan, in the March 2010 issue, Vol. XXV, Number 1.

Great Lectures on the Cheap Using GoToWebinar.com

Travel costs keep rising, but you'd still like to be able to host great programs at your local society's meetings by using the best speaker talent in the world. So how do you do it without breaking the bank?

The Southern California Genealogical Society is sponsoring a free webinar, presented by DearMYRTLE, on June 12. In this webinar, you'll learn how your society can use GoToWebinar at an inexpensive rate. Want to know more? You'll find details at the following address:
<http://genealogyjamboree.blogspot.com/2010/04/genealogy-societies-join-our-free.html>

Get Ready for the Holidays!

It's not too soon to start planning for the December holidays! They'll be here before you know it.

Consider promoting within your society the idea of giving a society membership as a holiday gift. We all know people who are thinking about getting involved with genealogy. Now is the time to consider helping those people to get started. Those people who are just thinking about genealogy or who may have attended one of your society's meetings may be ready to start the process!

Talk to your society's treasurer about buying a gift membership to your society for a year. You can purchase an annual membership and enclose the new membership card in a holiday card or a gift box. It's a tremendously thoughtful gift, and it also helps to draw you and your friend closer together.

Is Your Society Right with the IRS?

This is a reminder that EVERY non-profit society needs to file an information return with IRS no matter how small your budget is.

If your income is less than \$25000 a year it is very easy to file a 990N. Go to the IRS website's Charities and non-profits page <http://www.irs.gov/charities/index.html?navmenu=menu1>, for information on filing the different 990 returns.

To actually file a 990N return go to <http://epostcard.form990.org/>. If you haven't filed a return before you will have to register. Have your FEIN in hand as well as current contact information. It's quick, easy and painless.

The consequences of not filing are not painless, however. This is the third year of the requirement. If a society does not file for three years they can lose their non-profit status. This might result in having to reapply for that status.

So, please take the time to file your return.

If you are not the person responsible for filing the return, but would like to make sure that it has been done, you can search on this page <http://www.irs.gov/app/ePostcard/>

New FGS FORUM is Available

The new Spring issue of the *FORUM*, the online magazine of the Federation of Genealogical Societies, is now available! There is always something for everyone in *FORUM*, written by experts from the genealogical community.

In this issue you will find details about the 2010 Federation of Genealogical Societies Conference in Knoxville, Tennessee, on August 18-21, 2010. You'll also learn about an exciting initiative between FGS and NARA to digitize the War of 1812 Pension Files.

"A Census Challenge: Two Questions" is a great article by Sandra Hargraves Luebking about why someone might or might not have included in the U.S. federal censuses.

George G. Morgan, the VP of Membership Services, talks about the Federation's new "Focus on Societies" approach to providing great presentations and focus groups for societies' members and officers at the annual FGS conferences.

Randy Seaver's Genealogy 2.0 column describes wikis and their role in your genealogy, while Paul Milner and his expert team of reviewers give you the scoop on the latest genealogy books and software products. Genealogy news and events are shared in the magazine, including news about family associations from expert Christine Rose!

FGS Member societies receive two complimentary subscriptions to *FORUM* as a member benefit. Individuals may also subscribe. The annual subscription rate for four quarterly issues is \$15. For a limited time, you can subscribe for two years for \$25! You can click here to subscribe online or print out an order form in PDF format and subscribe by mail.

In these days of diminishing numbers of genealogy magazines, it's great to know that the *FGS FORUM* is here to stay with great articles for every level of genealogist!

Creating a Member Handbook

Your genealogical society is a business and it has a service to sell. It has a story to tell about its purpose, projects, programs, and plans. That story can best be told through a Member Handbook given to all new members and to prospective members who express serious interest. It also can be posted on your society's website for anyone to access to learn more about your organization.

The preparation of a member handout benefits the reader and the society. A handbook educates new members about how your society works and can motivate prospective members to join. It's easier to be involved in an organization when you understand its goals.

Your by-laws represent the operations of the organization, and they can be placed on your society's website, but a friendly handbook can be written to more easily engage the interest of the reader.

What should be included in a member handbook? A welcome letter from the group's leadership is a great start, followed with a list of current officers, their positions, and contact information. A compelling mission statement and clearly stated goals help people understand your society's purpose. A list of accomplishments can illustrate your society's productivity and successes.

Membership benefits are an important feature of every society's story. Share a full list of benefits. Discuss the types of programs and field trips that are offered and describe the educational and recreational benefits. Help readers also know what special interest groups exist, and describe the opportunities to volunteer.

Your Internet resources, such as web page, blog, and other online facilities, can help communicate your message to the reader. Share links with other genealogical resources in your area such as libraries and archives.

Your member handbook can be published online to save money associated with printing, storage, and mailing. It also allows you to keep the publication up to date, and eliminates production and maintenance of a stockpile of quickly outdated materials.

Learn more about other best practices from the FGS Society Strategy Series papers. The papers are free to FGS Members in the Members Only area of the FGS Web site, or printed copies can be ordered using the order form at the FGS Store on the FGS web site at fgs.org.

War of 1812 Pensions - Help FGS Preserve Them!

The Federation of Genealogical Societies, the National Archives, and the genealogical community have started a project to digitize the War of 1812 pension files—a fitting beginning to the bicentennial commemoration of this important war. Many know how information-rich military pension files can be, with comrades and family members providing service, family, and personal data. A sample of a War of 1812 widow's pension file can be viewed on [an FGS associate member website](#).

With 7.2 million images in 180,000 files, there is much digitization to do. A donation of \$25 will digitize 50 images—a donation of \$500 will digitize 1000 images.

A Tribute to Marsha Hoffman Rising

As a past president of the Federation, Marsha Hoffman Rising had long supported the preservation of these documents. When informed of the pension digitization project, she remarked on how helpful the pensions had been when she was compiling her book, *Opening the Ozarks: First Families of Southwest Missouri* (4 volumes published by the American Society of Genealogists). The information in the pension and bounty land files helped her add much family detail and identify places of origin for the settlers.

Friends and colleagues have established a special category of contributions to *Preserve the Pensions Fund*, titled *A Tribute to Marsha Hoffman Rising*. Donations received in Marsha's name will go towards making these records available online for interested researchers. The names of donors will appear in *FORUM* magazine and a notice will be sent to Marsha's family.

To donate to the fund, please go to [this page](#) and click the green Donate Now button.



CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS FOR MEMBER SOCIETIES

If your FGS member society would like to have one of its major events (annual seminar, conference, etc.) listed on this calendar, please send the following information to fgsvoice@fgs.org: date, state/province, city, name of sponsoring society, additional details (such as speakers and topics), contact information, and a URL for more details. To ensure that the information will appear in multiple issues, please submit information several months in advance of the event. For additional events, check the online FGS Calendar at fgs.org/calendar

2010 May

May 14-15, Minnesota, St. Paul, Germanic Genealogy Society

The Germanic Genealogy Society's Spring Conference will be held May 14-15, 2010, at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota. The featured speaker is **Stephen Barthel**, well-known author and professional researcher. Sessions include Where Are We Headed? (Family History Library News) Plus: Bizarre Stories in Genealogy on Friday evening, and Breaking the 'Sound' Barrier: Working with Phonetics, Passenger Lists, Police Records, and Unreadable Localities, The Gazetteer Goldmine: Finding Localities in Germany, Publishing Your Family History? Yes, You Can! on Saturday. For information, see the GGS website, www.ggsminn.org.

May 15, Missouri, St. Louis, St. Louis Genealogical Society

The St. Louis Genealogical Society presents its 40th Annual Family History Conference, "Gems of Genealogical Wisdom", on Saturday, May 15 at the Maryland Heights Centre, 2344 McKelvey Road, St. Louis, MO, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Featured speaker **Mark Lowe** will focus on Southern research in North Carolina, Kentucky, and Tennessee, which were migration paths for Missouri and Illinois settlers. John Dougan and Patsy Luebbert from the Missouri State Archives will cover some interesting Missouri facts. For those interested in technology, Bruce Buzbee founder and president of RootsMagic, Inc., along with Russ Wilding, CEO, and his colleague, Eric Keith, from Footnote.com, will share new innovations. Interested in ethnic research? Professor Steven Rowan will discuss Why Send Germans to Missouri, plus there will be sessions on Irish, Czech, and German Bohemian research.

Need some help jump-starting your research? A beginning lecture is available, along with a session on using various types of directories. A lecture on exploring church records should also be of interest. Too many choices! JAMB will record many lectures, so just place your order and walk out the door with your audio CDs that same day. What is any conference without vendors? There will be books, supplies, and informational booths from across the Midwest. Shopping begins when the doors open at 7:30 a.m. and concludes at 3:00 p.m.

For more information, visit www.stlgs.org.

May 15, Tennessee, Johnson City, Watauga Association of Genealogists

The Watauga Association of Genealogists of NE TN and the Johnson City Public Library will host a workshop, "Beginning Genealogy for Ages 14 to 94." The classes will begin at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, May 15, 2010 at the Johnson City Public Library Conference Room. Lunch is on your own and the classes will end at 4:00 p.m. There is no charge to attend the workshop, but pre-registration will aid in planning for the number of handouts. Call 283-0318 or email **WAGSGenealogy@gmail.com** with your name and contact information (phone number &/or email address).