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October Meeting Cancelled

CAGG-NI to Present a Track at the ISGS Fall Conference

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July 16, 2005

Open Forum Discussion

Moderated by Carolyn Meeker



Carolyn is working on an analysis of attendance at the meetings, based on the attendance sheets. We will review the results of the analysis in the meeting and explore some ideas about "What we can do to improve attendance at the meetings"..

An analysis of the topics presented over the years and how often some topics have been covered, based on the schedule of meetings from our website was performed. We will review the results of this analysis and talk about:

What topics you would like to see covered in a future meeting?

Who can give a presentation on those topics?

August 20, 2005

21st Century Census Tools

Presented by Beverly Levine
Smallwood and Weldon Johnson

Several online sources can be used to find census records, but are you getting your money's worth out of each entry? What does the census say about your family? What is implied? What clues can direct your future research?

September 17, 2005

Video/Digital Conversion

Presented by Ed Rosenthal
and Everett Butler

Converting you photos and videos to digital files for preservation.

Links Around the World

Column Submitted by: Frank McGovern & Dan Wertz

About.com Genealogy

Has tips, discussion groups, and weekly articles on genealogy.

<http://genealogy.about.com/>

Branching Out Online

A good tutorial web site to learn about online genealogy techniques for beginning genealogists.

<http://www.didian.com/branch/>

Calendars

An interesting history of how calendars came to be and how we tried to organize our lives in accordance with the movement of the sun, moon and stars.

<http://webexhibits.org/calendars/>

Daughters of the American Revolution

July is the month we celebrate our country's independence. A fitting web site to look at this month is that of the DAR. A free lookup in the DAR Patriot Index is just one of the site's many features. Learn about it's excellent library in Washington DC.

<http://www.dar.org/>

DistantCousin Genealogy

DistantCousin is an online archive of genealogy records and scanned images of historical documents from a wide variety of sources, such as newspaper obituaries, city directories, census records, ship lists, school yearbooks, military records, and more.

In all there are more than 6 million genealogy records from over 1,500 sources online. There are no fees or memberships required to use the records at DistantCousin.

<http://distantcousin.com/>

Notable Women Ancestors

The lives of ALL women are "notable" - at least in the eyes of the genealogists who research them, and that is the ONLY criteria necessary for a woman to be included at this web site. Some are famous, others are not. Those who are famous have, until recently, often been overlooked by mainstream historians. The extent to which our schoolbooks and popular folk collections have largely ignored the most vivid, powerful women is simply astounding. An interesting site for you gals - guys too!


<http://www.rootsweb.com/~nwa/>

GENUKI

A large collection of genealogical information pages for England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, The Channel Islands, and the Isle of Man.

<http://www.genuki.org.uk/>

Join CAGG-NI at the



STATE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

2005 Fall Conference
"Building Family Bridges: Linking the Past to the Present"

October 15th 2005 8:00 am at the Holiday Inn, Itasca

President's Letter

The Executive Committee had a planning meeting after the June Meeting.

We have decided to cancel the October meeting as it is on the same day as the ISGS (Illinois State Genealogical Society) Annual Conference. CAGGNI has a technology track on the conference agenda, with the presentations by our members. Everett Butler was the scheduled speaker for the October Meeting. We will reschedule Everett's presentation for early 2006.

We discussed the roles and responsibilities of the various members of the organization. A new matrix of Roles and Responsibilities has been developed, which we will post on the website soon.

The next planning meeting will be scheduled in conjunction with the September meeting.

We will discuss the slate of candidates for next year's executive committee. If you are interested in participating in the organization on that level, you should attend the next meeting.

We have been contacted by a consortium of Genealogy Societies about participating in some local host responsibilities for the 2006 National Genealogical Society Conference, which will be held in Rosemont Illinois on June 7 – 10, 2006. We are discussing what role we might play in helping with the host activities. I was unable to attend the meeting on June 25. My thanks to Beverly Smallwood for attending the meeting and representing CAGGNI. We will keep you posted on what happens.

Here is the agenda for the July Meeting.

10:30 Greeting
10:40 Show & Tell

- Larry Olson has agreed to tell us about the TMG SIG (Special Interest Group).
- Someone will update the group on our planned involvement for the Annual Conference of the National Genealogical Society, which will be in Chicago, June 7 – 10, 2006.

10:50 Program Presentation

I am working on an analysis of attendance at the meetings, based on the attendance sheets that Larry Olson passes around at each meeting. We will review the results of the analysis in the meeting and explore some ideas about "What we can do to improve attendance at the meetings".

I have done an analysis of the topics presented over the years and how often some topics have been covered, based on the schedule of meetings from our website. We will review the results of this analysis and talk about:

What topics you would like to see covered in a future meeting?

Who can give a presentation on those topics?

The Executive Committee recently reviewed the roles and responsibilities of the committee members. We will post

the Roles and Responsibilities Matrix on the website. Two new roles have been defined, we will discuss these and ask for volunteers to help with some of the work that needs to be done to support our organization.

11:20 Break
11:30 Open Discussion.

To liven up the proceeding we will review the top ten signs that you may be addicted to genealogy. If time permits, I have developed a Genealogy Jeopardy Game which we can play, that may spark some conversation.

See you at the meeting on July 16.

Carolyn Meeker



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Creating A Census Research Aid (A Spreadsheet)

By Anne Jacobs

Computer software provides many tools to assist in your research. One great tool is a spreadsheet program. This is usually thought of as financial software, however, it is also a “list keeper”. Once data is in this format, it can easily be sorted and manipulated.

Spreadsheets are a great way to keep track of your research. One recent idea given in the Ancestry News Daily e-zine was to keep track of census research using a spreadsheet. The idea was to create a spreadsheet of every ancestor of interest and all the possible censuses needed for each one.

The details of this research-aid spreadsheet are as follows:

- Column 1 Ancestor surname
- Column 2 Ancestor given name
- Column 3 Birth date
- Column 4 Death date

This is all that is necessary.

However, additional information may be desirable. Adding birth and death locations would provide clues of what state(s) to look in. If your software contains numbers to identify people, that might also be helpful to include those as well.

Columns 5 through 19 would be each census year. After all this is available in the spreadsheet, marking each year for each ancestor for which an census extract is needed can be indicated. Using an “X” for “I need it” and a “Y” for “I got it” will indicate easily the scope of your research (done and needed). A more visual indicator would be to color code the ancestor/census year intersections with different colors. Your choice.

All this sounds like a lot of work, but it does not have to be. TMG, my genealogy software, will create a spreadsheet containing any data

requested. So, I set up a report containing the data listed above. I could obtain a list of my entire database (one line for each person entered), but many people are of no interest when doing census research. Luckily, I can add filters which cut down on the number of people to be included in my list. Some possible filters might be:

- Ancestors only
- Eliminate everyone who never lived in the United States
- Eliminate everyone who is missing a first or last name
- Eliminate everyone who is missing a birth or death date
- Eliminate everyone who died before 1790.
- Eliminate everyone who was born after 1930.

After these filters are applied, the results contain a more realistic list of who I would be interested in researching. My report includes 158 people instead of the thousands in my database. I direct the output to a spreadsheet file rather than to the screen or a printer. My data in the spreadsheet looks like Figure 1.

It isn't pretty. The columns need to be adjusted to accommodate the data overflow. This can be accomplished by selecting all the columns and double clicking on the rightmost column boundary. Now the spreadsheet looks more workable, Figure 2.

To this data, you can now add the census years. ID number, birth and death locations are research hints and not necessary so I would include it to the right of all the other columns (after all the census years). Insert the “census columns” between death date and birthplace. Use the Insert>Columns selection to provide room for the census years, 15 column inserts. Highlight “birthplace” column to indicate where the inserted

columns should be. Figures 3 and 4 depict before and after. Insert the other 14 columns. (Hint: In Excel, after the first insert, the “hot key combination” of CTRL-Y, acts like a repeat key.)

We are now ready to add the census years. This can quickly be done by entering the first two census years (1790 and 1800). Figure 5. This establishes a pattern which the spreadsheet software can replicate. Drag these 2 cells across the other 13 rows which will cause each succeeding cell to be filled with the next census year. Figure 6. We now have ancestor names and census years in the spreadsheet.

Now you can mark the census years needed for each person which is the most time-consuming operation in this process. You must determine which censuses are needed for each person in the list and only indicate the ones needed. Figure 7 shows using “Xs” for indicators. Figures 8 and 9 shows using color highlight to indicate needed research. Using the same “pattern drag” technique saves you from having to enter each indicator and works with either indication method. Of course, marking those already obtained, gives you an immediate sense of accomplishment. Figure 10.

This aid can be used to for other country's census research. It can also be adopted to keep track of other research. Of course, there are other tools which may work better (such as GenSmart software, demonstrated by its developer at a CAGG-NI meeting); this is just an alternative suggestion. If you were unfamiliar with this use of spreadsheets, I hope you look at them in a different way finding them of more interest than before.

Illustrations Follow on Next Page

Creating A Census Research Aid (Continued)

Figure 1

	A	B	C	D	E
1	surname	given	birthdate	deathdate	birthplace
2	Besch	Anna Mari	1923	1987	DuPage Co
3	Besch	Marion Ani	08 Aug 19	02 Jun 19	Illinois, US St.
4	Bores	William S	08 Mar 19	29 Nov 19	Aurora, Ka Me

Figure 3

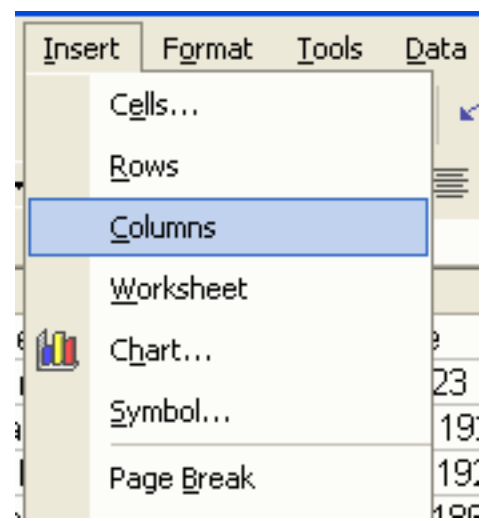


Figure 2

	A	B	C
1	surname	given	birthdate
2	Besch	Anna Marie	1923
3	Besch	Marion Anna	08 Aug 1925
4	Bores	William S	08 Mar 1925

Figure 4

D	E
deathdate	
1987	
02 Jun 1930	
29 Nov 1994	

Figure 7

D	L	M	N
deathdate	1860	1870	1880
1987			
02 Jun 1930			
29 Nov 1994			
18 Sep 1931		X	X
27 Dec 1976			

Figure 5

E	F
1790	1800

Figure 8



Figure 6

F	G
1790	1810

D	L	M	N
deathdate	1860	1870	1880
1987			
02 Jun 1930			

Figure 9

D	L	M
deathdate	1860	1870
1987		
02 Jun 1930		
29 Nov 1994		
18 Sep 1931		
27 Dec 1976		
27 Dec 1976		

Figure 10

D	L	M
deathdate	1860	1870
1987		
02 Jun 1930		
29 Nov 1994		
18 Sep 1931	Y	N
27 Dec 1976		
27 Dec 1976		

Other Group Events *compiled by Beverly Levine Smallwood*

28 JUL 2005 - GENEVA

Russell Lewis - Genealogical Research at the Chicago Historical Society
Kane County Genealogical Society
<http://www.rootsweb.com/~ilkcgs/>

31 JUL 2005 - CHICAGO 1-3 P.M.

Irish American Heritage Center
Genealogy Committee Meeting
<http://www.irishamhc.com/programs.asp#history>

09 AUG 2005 - MUNDELEIN, IL

PAUL VALASEK

Tracing the 20th Century Immigrant
Lake County Genealogical Society
<http://www.rootsweb.com/~illcgs/meetings.htm>

11 AUG 2005 - McHENRY

Finding Your Ancestors in NARA Pension Records by Jill Martin
McHenry County Genealogical Society
<http://www.mcigs.org/>

14 AUG 2005 - CHICAGO

Author Victoria Granacki
Polish Genealogical Society of America
<http://www.pgsa.org/meetings.htm>

15 AUG 2005 - BEACH PARK, IL

LINDA COFFELT

Everyday Life During the Civil War
Zion Genealogical Society
<http://wkkhome.northstarnet.org/zion/zgsmeeting.html>

25 AUG 2005 - GENEVA

Member's Night: Records of the Kane County Recorder's Office
Kane County Genealogical Society
<http://www.rootsweb.com/~ilkcgs/>

28 AUG 2005 - CHICAGO 1-3 P.M.

Irish American Heritage Center
Genealogy Committee Meeting
<http://www.irishamhc.com/programs.asp#history>

Workshops & Conferences

19-20 AUG 2005 - INDIANAPOLIS

Midwestern Roots

FEATURING ELIZABETH SHOWN MILLS, TONY BURROUGHS,
DIANE GAGEL AND PROFESSOR JAMES H. MADISON
The Indiana Genealogical Society and the Indiana
Historical Society
<http://www.indgensoc.org/MR2005brochure.pdf>

19-21 AUG 2005 - ST. PAUL, MN

Dare to Discover: Exploring Central & Eastern European Ancestry
<http://www.rootsweb.com/~mnggs/FEFFHS.html>

07-10 SEP 2005 - SALT LAKE CITY

FGS/UGA Conference
<http://www.fgs.org/2005conf/FGS-2005.htm>

16-18 SEP 2005 - SCHAUMBURG, IL

Polish Genealogical Society of America Conference
<http://www.pgsa.org/>

17 SEP 2005 - STONE PARK, IL

Italian Genealogy Conference
<http://italianancestry.com/conference/>

24 SEP 2005 - NAPERVILLE, IL

JOHN PHILIP COLLETTA, PH.D.

More Excellent Adventures in Genealogy
Fox Valley Genealogical Society
<http://www.rootsweb.com/~ilfvgs/worksh05.htm>

05-09 OCT 2005 - JOHNSON, IOWA

IGS Annual Fall Conference
FEATURING MEGAN SMOLENYAK SMOLENYAK AND JIM BEIDLER
<http://www.iowagenealogy.org/>

15 OCT 2005 - ITASCA, IL

Illinois State Genealogy Society Fall Conference
Featuring a CAGGNI technology track
<http://www.rootsweb.com/~ilsgs/fallconf/2005falconf.html>

05 Nov 2005 - CLC

Annual Workshop
FEATURING PAULA STUART-WARREN, DAVID McDONALD, AND BOB HECK
Lake County Genealogical Society
<http://www.rootsweb.com/~illcgs/index.htm>

22 APR 2006 - QUAD CITIES

32nd Annual Quad Cities Genealogical Conference
JAMES L. HANSON, REFERENCE LIBRARIAN, WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
<http://www.rootsweb.com/~ilbgsrim/news/2006GenConference.html>

CAGG-NI October Meeting Cancelled

The Regular meeting for October has been cancelled because the Illinois State Genealogical Conference is scheduled for the same day.

CAGG-NI members will be presenting one of the tracks at the Conference.

CAGG-NI members who register for the conference will be getting a discount on the registration fee.

See the column at the right for more details.

Other Group Events

Summer Festivals

General information on the Milwaukee Lakefront Festival grounds
<http://milwaukee.citysearch.com/profile/11358265/>

21-24 JULY 2005
Milwaukee, WI
Festa Italiana

<http://www.festaitaliana.com/>

28-31 JULY 2005
Milwaukee, WI
German Fest

<http://www.germanfest.com/>

18-21 AUG 2005
Milwaukee, WI
Irish Fest

<http://www.irishfest.com/>

26 AUG 2005
Milwaukee, WI
Mexican Fiesta

<http://www.mexicanfiesta.org/>

Illinois State Genealogical Society Presents Fall Conference 2005

Building Family Bridges: Linking the Present to the Past

Saturday, October 15, 2005

Holiday Inn
860 W. Irving Park Rd
Itasca, Illinois
630-773-2340

The regular CAGG-NI Meeting for October has been **cancelled** because CAGG-NI has a technology track on the conference agenda for the Fall Conference of the Illinois State Genealogy Society, with the presentations by our members. Following is the track being presented by our CAGG-NI Member.

For more info on the Conference, visit <http://www.rootsweb.com/~ilsgs/fallconf/newregis.pdf>

9:30 FTM/TMG Genealogy Software Duel - Phase One - Input-Collection of Data Carolyn Meeker/Bev Smallwood 1A

Two leading software packages will be compared and contrasted: Family Tree Maker (FTM) and The Master Genealogist (TMG). While FTM has the broadest ownership with the most copies sold, TMG is considered the Cadillac software available in the genealogy field. The side by side demonstrations of the two packages may assist you in determining which suits you best, whether you want to switch packages or upgrade. This is the first of two sessions presented by CAGG-NI expertise.

11:00 FTM/TMG Genealogy Software Duel - Phase Two - Output - How to Publish CAGG-NI 2A

The second session will highlight how to publish your story using the software. The side by side demonstrations of the two packages may assist you in determining which suits you best, whether you want to switch packages or upgrade. This is the second of the two sessions presented by CAGG-NI which compare the FTM and TMG packages.

1:30 What's New in Technology for Genealogy in 2005? Ed Rosenthal (CAGG-NI) 3A

Questions about what computer equipment is needed to assist you in publishing your "story" on DVD? This presentation will focus on what a genealogist should look for in purchasing the right "tools" for the right job. Three major affordable technologies will be reviewed that will cut your family archiving easily in half! You'll know what to look for in your quest without breaking the bank.

3:00 Preparing Your Home Movies for Future Generations Everett Butler (CAGG-NI) 4A

This presentation will focus on video genealogy. Topics covered will be digital solutions and getting the most for your money in transferring from one media to another. Using what "Hollywood" has learned to better your end-product will be discussed with examples of "The Good, The Bad and the Ugly". Tools which make your job easier and a result you can be proud of will be discussed.

June Meeting Notes

INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

Presented by Byron Atkinson on June 18th, 2005

(Reported by Eleanor and Joe Feitler)

This presentation focused on the basics of digital cameras, as well as on the differences between the “high-end” and the more basic digital cameras. There seems to be no “truly perfect” digital camera to satisfy everybody, but there are many cameras that will provide good to great results for most of us. And of course, various new models reach the market place as often as on a monthly basis. At the same time, last year’s most popular 2.0 Megapixel cameras seem to have disappeared; the 5 Megapixel (and even better) models have just “drowned them out”. Some of the more expensive cameras even feature interchangeable lenses.

Key Questions to ask at first:

- Why switch from a film-based camera to a digital camera?
- What kind would be best?
- What should I look for?
- What does a digital camera promise to do for me? Buy no more film! Share pictures immediately! Get instant feedback on picture quality via the LCD viewer!
- What are the main differences between digital cameras and “classical” cameras (~ 100 years old)? Shutter speeds, aperture settings, “white balance” are still essential elements for photographs — BUT digital cameras are far more complicated; furthermore, they have buttons, menus, cables, and more.

Key Questions that a prospective buyer should ask (if technology doesn't scare you too much)

- What are the key differences between film-based and digital cameras?

Powering the camera:
disposable film batteries vs
rechargeable or disposable ones

Recording the pictures:
photographic film vs a fixed and light-sensitive silicon chip (CCD or CMOS);

The chip controls frame size and light sensitivity; you can simulate various film types via camera menu settings.

- Framing the shots:

The film camera uses an optical viewfinder to show 97 – 100 % of a scene;

The digital camera’s optical viewfinder and the LCD display 100% of the scene

(Note: The LCD is hard to view in bright sunlight and really “eats battery power”.)

- Snapping the shots:

A film camera takes a picture instantaneously and then needs extra time between shots so the film can be repositioned after taking a picture.

This time interval varies widely and depends on a variety of factors such as image size, the selected file format, the type of storage medium, the size of memory available for temporary storage, the sensor type, the speed of the auto-focusing function, and whether the user hesitates between focusing and then depressing the button further to take the picture.

- Storing the pictures:

Film-based picture images are stored on a single-use basis on photographically sensitive medium; a roll of film allows for a maximum (or predetermined) number of pictures.

Digital images are stored as files on re-usable memory cards or discs; both types are available in various capacities and can hold very large number images (The exact number depends on the number of pixels per image selected as a camera menu option; furthermore, this also depends on the file format chosen such as JPEG, RAW, and TIFF, also a camera menu option)

- Displaying the pictures:

A film-based camera (except for a few APS models) cannot display any image until after developing. But then you can scan these images (or negatives) to display them on a TV or

PC monitor. You can also request that a roll of film be converted into a CD-ROM as part of the development process. The latter then can be transferred to a PC as a set of digital images.

Your digital camera can display (“play-back”) your image directly on its LCD, or with a simple cable connection onto a PC Monitor or onto a TV screen. You can also upload this image to a PC and then send it to an online photo album site to share with remote users.

- Showing the pictures: First we should point out the obvious fact that film-based cameras produce photographic negatives; in turn, they can be converted into (color or black-and-white) pictures by another – and separate — development process. Very few users tend to look at most negatives unless they will be projected visually.

However, digital camera users may view their images in a PC monitor or on a TV screen, without ever producing photographs on a suitable printer. Therefore, the user needs to consider the personal goal of only viewing images taken on a digital camera, but intending to print a few of them on a selective basis, or perhaps distributing images via the Internet, or usually a combination of all three of these goals. These choices may change over time since digital camera users tend to take many more pictures with the aim of selecting only a few at a later time, and as they gain experience with using their camera. Therefore the intended purpose for getting a new digital camera will tend to affect the choice of camera.

- What kind of digital camera is best for me?

About two years ago popular digital cameras with 2 or 3 Megapixels were readily available. Now these cameras seem to have disappeared in favor of 5 to 8 Megapixels covering about the same price range. Most of them should cover your typical needs for the reasons cited next. But as pointed out

June Meeting Notes (Continued)

earlier, the prospective camera buyer needs to clarify the intended use, as well as the potential for expanding (or modifying) the user's horizon.

- How many Megapixels do I need?

A Megapixel corresponds to 1 million pixels (short for "picture elements") spread across a defined rectangular area. Pixels are a set of colored dots so that a rectangular picture containing 640 by 480 pixel positions is composed of 307,200 pixels. Similarly, a 2048 by 1536 pixel rectangle takes 3,145,728 pixels (or about 3 Megapixels). When viewing either of these images on a PC monitor, the naked human eye will see very little difference. But a computer needs more than ten times the disc storage for the larger resolution picture than for the smaller one. Similarly, downloading the 3 Megapixel picture over the Internet would take about ten times longer than for the smaller one.

For any images that you want to print as 4 by 6 inch pictures (or email) you should plan for at least 3 Megapixels; use at least 4 to 5 Megapixels for 8 by 10 inch pictures. So far there have been no recommendations about the number of Megapixels needed for a large TV screen (say 30 inches or larger.)

Hint: If you plan to display or print pictures at a smaller than the actual Megapixel size, you may want to choose a camera with better color capability. But note that the quality of a printed picture also depends on the printer model and on the choice of paper recommended for this printer.

- What kind of lens do I need?

With both camera types, look for excellent quality lenses and zoom capability (the more, the better!)

Digital cameras usually offer both optical and digital zoom functions, but do look for optical zoom mainly. (Byron suggested 3X as a minimum, but perhaps look for up to 10X,

Byron: Digital zooming actually "crops the scene", but then expands the resulting image to its full size – this will compromise image clarity.

The most popular digital camera models feature retractable lenses. For example, the user can select one of three available settings. But now some recent cameras in the highest price range offer interchangeable lenses for sophisticated users; normally, these lenses are not retractable and may offer a limited mechanically operated optical zoom capability.

- What are my image storage options?

Before buying your new camera, carefully consider the exact type of storage medium so that it will match your current repertoire of electronic gadgets (i.e., an MP3 Player, a PDA, a printer with slots for storage media, your PC and/or laptop, etc). Otherwise, you may have worry about special interface cables and gadgets, or do only certain groups of vendors share this storage medium.

Here is a list of recent storage media offerings: CompactFlash Type I and II, Floppy Disks (almost obsolete now), Hitachi Microdrive, Mini CD-R/RW (CD-ROM), SD/MMC, SmartMedia, Memory Stick Duo, Memory Stick Pro, xD-Picture Card, (perhaps even more?) (Byron cited pros and cons for most of these media types.

- What kind of battery is best?

Usually, digital cameras use rechargeable batteries of different chemical composition. Some will recharge relatively slowly while others can do so quickly. The type also determines how many times this battery can be recharged successfully. Furthermore, some batteries will lose their power gradually; others will maintain their charge steadily, but then their output will drop precipitously. Please note that most cameras will use that vendor's preferred battery type that will fit only few other vendors' product. Therefore be aware that cameras with a singular rechargeable battery type produced by only a few vendors (or just a single one) may lead to a replenishment problem, perhaps even for the necessary charger.

Therefore the available choice of battery may lead to potential future problems, but not necessarily so.

Conclusions and Recommendations:

- Obviously, there are no simple answers to the cited questions. The specific choices seem to depend on the purchaser's immediate and future goals, a sense of adventure, a familiarity with basic computer technologies, some eagerness to read printed specifications and ratings, — and a willingness to pose good questions to friends, relatives, and knowledgeable sales people, and listening to their answers.
- So good luck in your search for a new digital camera. And learn to enjoy it after "buying it intelligently"!

Reporters' Acknowledgement: Byron provided us with his slides; that endeavor resulted in a lot of extra personal effort on his part due to the very large PowerPoint file. Many thanks again, Byron!