IN THIS ISSUE:
Calendar of Events
News from the Prez
Twilight Talk at Historic Topeka Cemetery
Reminder- Voting & Ballots
Thank You to Our Volunteers
Invited- Open House
Volunteer Opportunities
Ask Gen-I
Prep. for Heartland Family History Conf. 2020
Call for Presenters
Other Area Events
Come Join TGS or Renew
Donations

Volume 27  Number 10  Oct. 2019

COMING UP AT TGS
Thursday, September 26
Breaking Down Brick Walls (Monthly Programs)
7:00 pm to 8:30 pm
Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library
In this program, members of the Topeka Genealogical Society will share breakthroughs that they have experienced in their family history research, and provide tips to help you break through your Brick Walls.
Program is free, and open to the Public. No registration required.

Oct. 6, 1:00 PM - (Class/Workshop) "Lineage Societies Workshop", FREE workshop register HERE, at TGS Lib.
Oct. 8, 6:30-8:00 PM - "Twilight Talk at Historic Topeka Cemetery", at Topeka Cemetery Office (the office is easily accessed off of SE 10th St. by turning south at the first gate into the cemetery, located immediately east of Lafayette St.)
Oct. 10, 9:30 AM - Computer Genealogy & Software SIG Group, topic - "review/demo Family Tree Maker software (both current/new version, if released)", at TGS Lib.
Oct. 10, 1:00 PM - TGS Board Meeting
Oct. 13, 1:00-4:00 PM - TGS Open House, at TGS Lib.
Oct. 14, 1:00 PM - Brick Wall SIG Group, topic - "Pennsylvania genealogy", at TGS Lib.
Oct. 24, 7:00 PM - (Monthly Program) "If the Building Could Talk, What Stories Might It Tell?", at TSCPL

NEWS FROM THE PREZ
TGS has many activities planned in the next month. I hope to see you all there. I think you will find it fun, entertaining, and educational. First, please come to TSCPL on September 26, 2019 at 7:00 PM. Why should you come? It is the final opportunity for you to vote for your officers for the next two years. Secondly, the program will provide examples how to break through your Brick Walls. These are tried and true examples from TGS members who have been successful.

Next on the fun agenda of October - on Oct. 6th at 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM, TGS will sponsor a first ever workshop with Ten Lineage Societies to explain the “Why’s and How’s” to join their group. TGS will have Library staff to help people use the resources at our library and to answer questions. Bring your information and primary resources to see what you
Did you know that TGS has hundreds of publications of Shawnee County records, other Kansas records, and records from across the country? Click [here](#) to see what we have to offer.

TGS Library Hours:
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday
1:00 - 4:00 p.m. &
Saturday 10:00 - 3:00 p.m.

CALL FIRST IN BAD WEATHER -- CHECK FOR HOLIDAYS & CLOSINGS

TGS Library Hours:
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday
1:00 - 4:00 p.m. &
Saturday 10:00 - 3:00 p.m.

CALL FIRST IN BAD WEATHER -- CHECK FOR HOLIDAYS & CLOSINGS

qualify for. It is a wonderful opportunity to have these groups in one place. This is the first time this has been offered in Topeka and TGS is excited to sponsor this event. Be sure to invite friends, family and neighbors.

Then on Tuesday, October 8 from 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM at our very own Historic Topeka Cemetery located at 10th and California. The program is in the office building which was the former home of the cemetery founder, Dr. Franklin Crane. Refreshments and a social time for TGS members but it is a great time to invite a friend or neighbor. Bring a smartphone and you will learn how to use GPS grave locator. Lisa Sandmeyer will lead the “buried treasure” hidden in this historic place.

October 12, at 9:30 AM come to TGS at 2717 Indiana. This is the Computer Genealogy & Software group. The subject is on the expected update for Family Tree Maker. If you have this software, this would be a good time to attend.

We are not over yet. Please come to our Open House on Sunday October 13, 2019 at 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM. Enjoy fellow members, ask questions, but help us celebrate Family History Month. Oh, there will be refreshments!

October 14, at 9:30 AM the DNA group will be reviewing segment matching and what it means for your research, bring a sack lunch or go out to eat, because in the afternoon we will put our skills together to work on brick walls.

Please come and enjoy this mad cycle of activities before the snow flies. See you soon!

- Marty Flanagan, President

**TWILIGHT TALK AT HISTORIC TOPEKA CEMETERY - A SOCIAL & SKILLBUILDER EVENT FOR TGS MEMBERS!**

Tuesday, October 8, 2019 from 6:30- 8:00 PM
Topeka Cemetery Office

If you haven’t heard Superintendent, Lisa Sandmeyer, speak about the “buried treasure” hidden in the Historic Topeka Cemetery, you are in for a lovely treat! Lisa will provide instructions for using the 160 years of burial records located at the cemetery and offer search tips for using the website database and smartphone GPS grave locator. Her vast knowledge of interesting tidbits of Topeka history will bring the residents of the cemetery “to life.” The program will be held in the comfort of the cemetery office building which was the former home of the cemetery founder, Dr. Franklin Crane. The evening will include refreshments, social time, and an opportunity to enjoy a self-guided stroll on the grounds.
at sunset.
The office is most easily accessed off of SE 10th Street by turning south at the first gate into the cemetery, located immediately east of Lafayette Street. Please join us!

**REMINIDER – VOTING & BALLOTS FOR 2020-2022 TGS OFFICERS**

Three TGS Board positions are up for election for the 2020-2022 calendar year. They are President, Director at Large, and Recording Secretary. Ballots were sent out by blast email or postal mail. The ballots need to be returned by September 26th. Please return them to the TGS Library or bring them to our meeting at the Shawnee County Public Library on September 26th. The mail in date has expired so ballots not postmarked by September 15 will not be accepted. Ballots will be counted on the 26th and announced at the meeting that night. Thank you for participating in the election process.

**THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS!**

We want to thank all of our volunteers for giving of their time and talents. As an all-volunteer organization, we could not exist without you! During the month of August, 45 TGS volunteers reported a total of 516 hours worked. At the going valuation of $24 per hour for volunteer time, that amounts to more than $12,000 worth of donated time in August! And, we know that we are still not capturing everyone’s volunteer efforts, so this is a conservative estimate!

If you are volunteering in any way for TGS and have not been reporting your time, we encourage you to do so. Please see the TGS website, under “Volunteer with Us” to find easy options for reporting your time.

**YOU ARE INVITED!**

October is Family History Month, and we are celebrating! TGS will be hosting our Annual Open House on Sunday, October 13th, from 1-4pm at the TGS Library (2717 SE Indiana). Please put the date on your calendars and plan to stop by and meet fellow members and family history enthusiasts. We will have light refreshments, library tours, “experts” on hand to answer questions, and more. Bring your friends, and show them our amazing library!
VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Have you been wanting to get more involved in our local genealogy society but didn't know where you might fit? We have several options you might consider:

- **EDUCATION COMMITTEE** - We are always looking for new ideas for genealogy workshop topics that would be of broad interest. Help us continue to build and strengthen our educational offerings. Time requirement is variable.
- **FINANCE COMMITTEE** - If you have a business or banking background and are familiar with forecasting budgets and revenues, or worked in insurance or real estate or have a bookkeeping background, then you might be a good fit for this committee.
- **PUBLICITY COMMITTEE** - This group makes and puts out brochures in the Topeka area for our classes and for membership. The group posts what is going on at TGS in our outreach media and manages our Facebook page. We would like to have more exposure on Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest. We are looking to expand our online presence. So if you are knowledgeable about this online world, we are looking for you.
- **RESEARCH AND RECORDS PRESERVATION** - Oversee, direct and perform duties related to research services and record preservation projects.
- **BUILDING COMMITTEE** - Oversee the maintenance of the building to see that the building is kept in good repair and systems are in working order.

These are Board level positions requiring attending Board meetings once a month. If you are interested in any of these opportunities or have any questions, please contact Janice at janiceashby3131@yahoo.com.

ASK GEN-I

Q. What are Vital Records? Why do I need them? Where do I find them?

A. Excellent questions! We hear the term “Vital Records” often in genealogical research circles.

The definition of Vital Records when documenting a pedigree (lineage or ancestry) in genealogy includes birth, marriage, divorce and death records. Some would include adoption, naturalization, or even wills in that definition. While those are all valuable records to obtain for your family history research, they are not part of the widely accepted set of Vital Records. According to FamilySearch Wiki:

“Vital records are birth, marriage, divorce, and death records kept by the government. These records provide names, dates, places, and relationships—information that uniquely identifies a person. Vital records are primary sources (created at the time of an event by a reliable witness) and the information on them is usually correct. Vital records provide a strong foundation for building a true and valid pedigree.”


Where these records are kept and how you can locate them for your ancestors depends on where and when they lived. Generally speaking, **birth and death records** are held at the state government level since the early 1900’s but you will need to look at each
location specifically, since they didn’t all implement central records at the same time. Some states phased in the transition of records to the state level and many left records at the city or county level prior to a particular date.

**Marriage records** were centralized at the state level a bit later than birth and death records. States may hold copies of marriage records, or indexes, but the counties or cities still hold original records.

A very helpful quick reference tool is available at https://www.familytreemagazine.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/vitalrecords.pdf. This chart gives you at a glance the dates each state implemented centralized records for birth, marriage and death.

Another very useful reference is https://www.usgenweb.org. This website is maintained by local volunteers from all over the country and allows you to start with a map of the states and use the links to drill down to the county level, with useful information at each level. For example, from the state map, click on Kansas. Using the sidebar links, go to counties. This sample shows you when the county was created, if it was original or derived from another county, the county seat, and a “hot” link for the county to go deeper into what records are held at the county level.

**Divorce records** were recorded at the state level even later than marriage records, and most states only have an index of divorces. The judicial district maintains the actual documents. There are several helpful third-party websites that help you locate where their records are held and how to obtain copies. One of them is http://vitalrec.com/divorce.html. Be aware that these sites will charge a fee.

The National Archives website has a good discussion of vital records with links to various sources as well as suggestions for alternative documentation when the vital records don’t exist. https://www.archives.gov/research/vital-records

If you are using online tools such as Ancestry, MyHeritage, FamilySearch, and others, they have digitized vital records that can be attached to your online tree. If you are applying for a lineage society, or want to have a full set of certified vital records for your own family records then you will still want to write or request online to get those paper copies. Obtaining these records will cost you some money and time so be sure and properly protect your originals, as well as maintain complete backups!

All of the above references contain more comprehensive discussions of vital records. If
you need to obtain a number of vital records, it might make sense to group them by area of the country. So, for example, if I have a number of ancestors from South Carolina, I will figure out what records I need from South Carolina, do my research on where and how I obtain them, then make a request for several at a time. This saves you time and will make it easier for the people pulling the records as well.

Happy hunting!

To submit your questions - contact Jenny Coss

**PREPARATIONS FOR HEARTLAND FAMILY HISTORY CONFERENCE 2020 GATHERS STEAM**

When the Board decided to rebrand the annual conference, giving it a new name “Heartland Family History Conference” hosted by the Topeka Genealogical Society, it opened up all kinds of possibilities to grow the conference into the new decade. With a new venue, lots of new and exciting features are on the drawing board for the 2020 conference. Participants are invited to immerse themselves into two full days of sessions exploring our “Passport to the Past: Discovering our Diverse Ancestries”.

The results of the recent interest survey will guide the direction for the topics and types of breakout sessions. We hear you and appreciate your input!

Over 70 people responded to the survey and included recommendations for speakers and sponsors. The results show the topics of highest interest are:

- Preservation of documents and photos
- Telling the family history stories
- Less used records
- Immigration and Naturalization records
- Racial/Ethnic/Religious migration and settlements
- Workshops on DNA and digitizing records and photos.

The conference team is working on plans for these as well as many others so that there will be something for everyone, beginner to advanced researchers alike.

The month of September we launch our “Call for Proposals” with these topic areas in mind. By mid October the proposals will be in and we can begin to craft a unique and diverse schedule including over 20 breakouts and workshops.

Stay tuned for more information about the breakout sessions tracks and the lecture topics for our featured speaker, Dr. John P. Colletta.

**2020 HEARTLAND FAMILY HISTORY CONFERENCE - CALL FOR PRESENTERS**

Topeka Genealogical Society is excited to announce the upcoming, expanded, regional conference to be held in Topeka, Kansas April 3-4, 2020 at The Capital Plaza Hotel/Maner Conference Center, 1717 SW Topeka Blvd. Our Keynote Speaker for the Conference is John Colletta.
Although TGS has sponsored Annual Conferences for nearly 50 years, 2020 will be the inaugural year for the newly-branded Heartland Family History Conference. This event will have an expanded 2-day format and substantially larger venue space and options, and will target a larger regional audience. Our aim is to offer a culturally-diverse program that provides varied learning opportunities and inspiration for all levels of genealogy experience, drawing participation from across our Central Plains region.

We are looking for dynamic, enthusiastic presenters. If you are passionate about your area of expertise and would like to share your love and knowledge with fellow genealogists and family historians, we would be pleased to hear from you and welcome your submission for presentations! Please go to the TGS website to see under the Annual Conference tab to see the guidelines for submission.

OTHER AREA EVENTS

- Topeka Shawnee County Public Library - click HERE for their upcoming events/calendar for computer & genealogy classes
- Midwest Genealogy Center - click HERE for their upcoming genealogy classes/workshops
- Spring Seminar at Midwest Genealogy Center - March 28, 2020; 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM; featuring George G. Morgan & Drew Smith

RENEW MEMBERSHIP & ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO JOIN TGS !!!

Thank you to all of you who have renewed your membership to TGS. If you haven't renewed yet, or you're not a TGS member yet, please do so. Please also encourage your family, friends, and neighbors to join - the more, the merrier! click HERE to join or renew.

MONETARY DONATIONS TO TGS GREATLY APPRECIATED

Please remember TGS when making end of the year monetary donations.