



News & Views Newsletter

www.tgstopeka.org

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From the President's Desk – TGS Classes and Events are Vital to Your Health!

Social interaction is a core determinant of both mental and physical health in older adults. Research shows it is as essential as nutrition, exercise, and medical care for healthy aging. Attending in-person TGS events or Zoom meetings provides regular interaction with people who have similar interests and protects our well-being in powerful ways!

- Isolation can trigger or worsen mood disorders, while staying connected boosts belonging and emotional stability.
- Conversations, shared activities, and community involvement stimulate memory, attention, and problem-solving.
- Socializing helps regulate stress hormones and improves sleep, both of which protect long-term mental health.
- Relationships and community roles reinforce identity and meaning, which are especially important after retirement or major life changes.



Meeting with friends isn't just about mental health, either. The physical benefits of socializing are surprisingly strong—sometimes stronger than traditional health predictors.

- Strong social ties are linked to healthier blood pressure and heart function.
- Staying socially engaged supports the body's ability to fight illness.
- People with strong social networks tend to stay more active, eat better, and maintain medical routines.

TGS to the rescue! We offer monthly in-person coffee and dinner gatherings, program meetings at the library, and a writing group for members and guests. There are also three special interest groups on Zoom every month for those who cannot attend in-person functions. Schedule your "wellness visits" on the TGS website under the "Upcoming Events" tab!

--- **Cindy Cruz, President** , tgstopeka.president@gmail.com

Welcome, New Members!



We want to extend a warm welcome to new members who have recently joined our organization. We hope that you will take full advantage of everything that we have to offer, and don't hesitate to let us know if we can assist you in your family history quest!

- Joe Lowry – Sterling, VA

Help us continue to grow our membership by telling your friends about us, and inviting them to check us out. Word of Mouth is the best advertising!

Story Finders – Join Our New Writers' Group

Friday, March 20, 10-11:45 a.m., Anton Room, 2nd Floor
Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library

Our topic this month is:

Your Memory Has a Story: A Picture is Worth 1,000 Words

Find a family photo and write a short (1-page) story. Or, you can write a story about any family memory, your ancestors, or any topic you choose. Bring your story to share with the group.



AMERICA



A National Archives traveling exhibition is bringing seven original Founding-era documents to eight U.S. cities in commemoration of America's 250th anniversary in 2026, and they will be just down the road from us at the WWI Museum in **Kansas City, MO, March 6-22!** Inspired by the Bicentennial Freedom Train, the Freedom Plane National Tour will make documents fundamental to America's founding accessible to Americans across the country. Visitors will have the opportunity to view seven original historic documents related to the founding of our Nation, from the holdings of the National Archives. For more details or to get tickets, see:

<https://www.theworldwar.org/exhibitions/freedom-plane-national-tour-documents-forged-nation>



Support the Kansas Save the Flags Project

During the Civil War, each regiment or artillery battery had a unique set of flags that they carried with them into battle. The flags were not only symbols of pride and useful for identifying which units were participating on the battlefield, but were also important communication tools. Where the flag went, the soldiers of the regiment followed.

At our February Monthly Program, Tom Schmidt told the audience that the Kansas Historical Society currently has a collection of more than 75 of these historical flags, but many are in very poor condition. Conservation and restoration of the flags is tedious and very costly, ranging from \$20,000 to \$40,000 per flag. To date, 10 of the flags in the Kansas collection have been restored.

The Kansas Historical Society is seeking public financial support for additional restorations. To learn more about the Save the Flags Project or how you can support it, see the Kansas Historical Society's website, at <https://www.kansashistory.gov/p/save-the-flags-fund/12268> .



If you missed this program and would like to view a recording of it, it is available to current TGS members in the Past Programs section of our website (<https://tgstopeka.org/past-programs/>).

Visit the Topeka FamilySearch Center



If you live in or near Topeka, are you taking full advantage of the free genealogy resources available to you? Don't overlook the local FamilySearch Center. It's located at **2401 SW Kingsrow Rd**, in Topeka, and is free and open to the public. Currently, the hours are Sunday, 1:00-4:00pm; Monday 11:00am-2:00pm (thru the end of March only); Tuesday 9:00-11:00am and 6:30-8:30pm; and Wednesday 9:00am-noon and 6:30-8:30pm.

Why should you visit the center? In addition to personalized assistance by experienced volunteers, the Center offers complimentary access to computers, Internet, and 17 subscription family history websites. Although resources vary by location, all FamilySearch Centers provide free access to Ancestry.com, MyHeritage, FindMyPast, American Ancestors, Geneanet, and FamilySearch. Visitors to FamilySearch Centers get special access on FamilySearch to images of historical records that are only available in centers.

If you do not live in or near Topeka, there's probably another FamilySearch Center located close to you. Search for other locations on the FamilySearch website, <https://www.familysearch.org/en/locations/about> .

New on Our Website: <https://tgstopeka.org>

Updates and new content are added to our website on an ongoing basis. So that you don't miss anything, here are highlights of changes and new additions in the past month.

- **New program recordings** added (in the Past Programs section):
 - o February 2026 Monthly Program – the Kansas Save the Flags project, by Tom Schmidt
 - o March 2026 DNA SIG – Getting Your DNA Results
 - o March 2026 Foundations of Family History SIG – Finding Their Stories, by Barb LaClair
- **Resources** – none added this month, but we're working on some cool ones!



There are now more than 50 recordings of past TGS programs and presentations available on our website! Access to some recorded content is restricted to members. To gain full access, we invite you to visit the membership page on our website and become a member today!

UPCOMING TGS EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

There is always something happening at TGS. Check the events calendar on our website (<https://tgstopeka.org/events/#!event-list>) frequently to get more details on what's coming up and how you can participate!



SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGs):

These informal groups meet on a monthly basis for information sharing and learning around a topic or area of shared interest. Participation is free and open to the public. Refer to the events listings on our website for information about how to register and participate in each group.

(Some of the upcoming programs are still in the planning stage - check the events calendar on our website for more details as they become available)

- **Foundations of Family History SIG** (2nd Tuesday evening, 7pm (Central Time), via Zoom).
 - o **April 14** – Probate Records – More than Just a Will
 - o **May 12** – Making the Most of Your Cemetery Visits
- **Brick Wall Problem-Solving SIG** – (3rd Tuesday morning, 9:30am). Odd months are virtual, via Zoom. Even months in person at a local research facility)
 - o **March 17, 2026** – Zoom meeting – An Overview of the Free Online Resources at the Topeka FamilySearch Center
 - o **April 21, 2026** - Research on-site at the Topeka FamilySearch Center

- **DNA/ Genetic Genealogy SIG** – Paula Smith is taking over as group leader, and the focus will be shifting slightly to more intro-level topics. (1st Tuesday, 10:30-11:30am, via Zoom)
 - o **April 7, 2026** – Tips & Tricks for Using Ancestry's ThruLines
- **New for 2026! TGS "Story Finders" Writing Group** - (3rd Friday, 10:00am – noon, in person at the Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library, Anton Room on the 2nd Floor)
 - o **March 20, 2026** – Your Memory Has a Story: A Picture is Worth 1,000 Words
 - o **April 17, 2026** – Discover What You Forgot: Make a Map of a place that mattered
 - o **May 15, 2026** – Discover What You Forgot: Find a Story Within a Timeline

MORNING JOE & JAW – (1st Monday morning each month, 9:30am at Perkins Restaurant, Topeka)

Monday, April 6, 9:30-11:00am

Monday, May 4, 9:30-11:00am

Monday, June 1, 2026, 9:30-11:00am

This is an informal opportunity for socializing and networking with other members. Meet us at **Perkins Restaurant, 1720 SW Wanamaker**, for some lively conversation while you enjoy a morning coffee, pastry, or breakfast. No need to register – just drop by to say hello!



MONTHLY DINNER GATHERING/ FUNDRAISER

(We gather informally at a designated local restaurant prior to the monthly program for an opportunity to socialize. A percentage of total sales at the restaurant will be donated to TGS.)

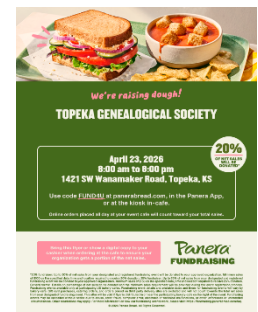
March 26, 2026, 5:00pm - Our March 2026 dining out/fundraiser will be at **Jason's Deli, 6121 SW 12th St.** TGS will receive 20% of total sales to our group. Order online, for takeout or in-person dining any time between 10:00am and 8:00pm. For those who would like to join us in person, we will plan to gather at 5:00pm. Following dinner, please join us at 7:00pm at the TSCPL for our monthly program presentation by Brian Vazquez, "Patriots Remembered: Tracing Legacy with the Sons of the American Revolution"

Download the Flyer: <https://tgstopeka.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/Jasons-Deli-Fundraiser-Flyer.png>



April 23, 2026, 5:00pm - Our April 2026 dining out/fundraiser will be at **Panera, 1421 SW Wanamaker Rd.** TGS will receive 20% of total sales to our group. Order online, for takeout or in-person dining any time between 8:00am and 8:00pm. For those who would like to join us in person, we will plan to gather at 5:00pm. Following dinner, please join us at 7:00 pm at the Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library for our monthly program presentation, "Topeka's Constitution Hall."

Download the Flyer: <https://tgstopeka.org/events/#!event/2026/4/23/monthly-dining-out-fundraiser>



MONTHLY PROGRAMS – 4th Thursday of the month, 7:00pm at the Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library. Attend in person, or watch online via Zoom. Participation is free, and open to the public. To obtain the Zoom link to watch online, see the event listing on our website (<https://tgstopeka.org>).

March 26, 2026 – “**Patriots Remembered: Tracing Their Legacy with the Sons of the American Revolution,**” presented by Brian Vazquez

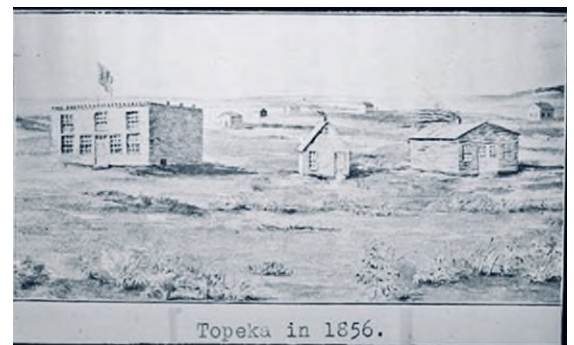


AMERICA Brian Vazquez, President of the Topeka Thomas Jefferson Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution, will present an enlightening program about the SAR lineage society. He will talk about the SAR mission to honor Revolutionary War ancestors, preserve historical records, promote civic education, and demonstrate how the society website can be used to find information about patriots and descendants. Members of the Topeka Thomas Jefferson Chapter of SAR will be on hand to answer your questions.



April 23, 2026 – “**Topeka’s Constitution Hall**”

Kansas was first envisioned as a free state in the fall of 1855 when the Topeka Constitutional Convention met in Constitution Hall. Renovation of the historic building was recently completed, and it now serves as a reminder of important role Kansas played in the antislavery movement leading to the Civil War. Join us to learn more about the fascinating history of this Topeka treasure.



May 21, 2026 – “**TSCPL Technology Resources for Genealogy**” by Liz Frazier

Public Services Specialist, Liz Frazier, will talk about the many types of free technology tools and services in the Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library which can be used for genealogy. She will cover digitizing photographs, video, and audio recordings, recording oral histories, recording in the second-floor studio, and other services available to the public.



“Every man is a quotation from all his ancestors.” — Ralph Waldo Emerson



UPCOMING REGIONAL EVENTS

Saturday, March 28 – Genealogy Open House and Resource Fair, presented by the Johnson County Genealogical Society and the Johnson County Library.

Connect to your past and drop in for a day of discovery to begin your family research journey. Tour the genealogy area, learn about the Library and Society resources, pick up forms and information, and get one-on-one help from Society members. Attend sessions on Getting Started in Genealogy, Ancestry.com, FamilySearch.org, and Military Research. Learn about software to keep your research organized. See the Memory Lab in action for digitizing pictures, documents, etc. Visit genealogy-themed group exhibits in between these wonderful sessions! Detailed Schedule is attached. To see details and the full schedule:



<https://jcgsks.org/upload/files/SCHEDULE OF EVENTS Mar 28%2C 2026 v1.19.2026.pdf>

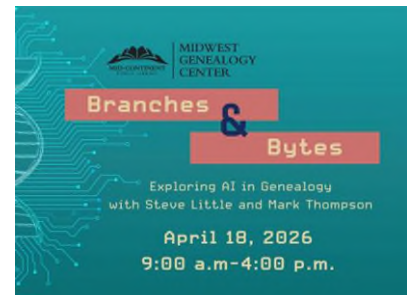
Saturday, April 18 - Midwest Genealogy Center's Spring Seminar: Branches and Bytes, with Steve Little & Mark Thompson

AI tools are transforming genealogy, but where do you start?

Join Mark Thompson and Steve Little, co-hosts of the *Family History AI Show* podcast, for an engaging seminar that cuts through the confusion and shows you how to use AI tools to become a better researcher and storyteller.

Registration fee: \$40

For details or registration link: <https://www.mymcpl.org/genealogy/programs/spring-seminar> .



Friday-Saturday, August 7-8, 2026 - MOSGA (Missouri State Genealogical Association) Annual Conference, Jefferson City, Missouri

SAVE THE DATE! For more details as they become available, check the MOSGA website: <https://mosga.org/eventListings.php?nm=67>



Saturday, August 15, 2026 – Genealogy KC

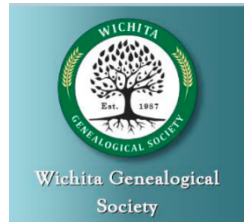
SAVE THE DATE! A free, full-day genealogy event, hosted by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Registration is set to open March 1st.

For details and registration info as they become available: <https://genealogykc.org/genealogy-kc-2026-1>



Saturday, October 10, 2026 – Wichita Genealogical Society Annual Conference

SAVE THE DATE! For more details as they become available, check the WGS website: <https://wichitagensoc.org/>



UPCOMING NATIONAL EVENTS

May 27-30, 2026 - NGS (National Genealogical Society) 2026 Family History Conference, in Fort Wayne, Indiana

The National Genealogical Society's annual conference—a pinnacle of the genealogical calendar—will take place May 27-30, 2026 in Fort Wayne, Indiana, home to the renowned Genealogy Center at the Allen County Public Library.

In recognition of the Semiquincentennial Anniversary of the signing of United States Declaration of Independence on 4 July 1776, our theme is **America at 250**. The conference will shine a light on the stories, communities, and research strategies that help us understand the nation's past. It also will focus on how genealogists can preserve our family histories for the future.

There are options to attend in person, or virtually. For details and registration information: <https://conference.ngsgenealogy.org/>

