



News & Views *Newsletter*

www.tgstopeka.org

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From the President's Desk – Empty Seats & Quiet Screens: Why Our Society Needs You More Than Ever

Participation in our TGS fundraising dinners and SIG (Special Interest Group) Zoom classes has declined recently, and this trend is concerning to our leadership. We know everyone is juggling busy schedules, and it's easy to assume that skipping an event doesn't matter. Yet for a genealogical society, engagement is the lifeblood of everything we do. Our programs depend on shared curiosity, collaborative problem-solving, and the simple joy of learning together.



Our volunteers devote significant time and energy to offering educational and social opportunities for our members. Eight key volunteers serve as officers and committee chairs on our board. Others coordinate monthly fundraising dinners, secure meeting space and speakers, host a coffee klatch, and lead four SIG sessions each month. Additional volunteers manage our technology needs, produce the newsletter, send reminder emails, and maintain our two Facebook pages. When only a handful of members attend an event after hours of preparation, it is understandably disheartening.

Every member contributes something essential to TGS. Whether you attend a dinner, join a SIG session, or simply come to our monthly meeting at the public library, your presence sustains our educational programs, supports the financial health of our society, and keeps our mission—preserving and exploring family history—moving forward. Please check the “Coming Events” tab at tgstopeka.org and attend one or several of the many options available to you. Even better—Bring along a friend! Our events are free and open to the public.

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

2026 Annual Member Meeting – Coming Soon!



Our Annual Member Meeting will be held on Saturday morning, **September 19th, 2026 from 10:00-11:30 a.m.** We will be meeting at the Topeka Genealogical Society's building, 2717 SE Indiana Ave., in Topeka. TGS will provide a brunch, and we will have a short business meeting and program. If you are planning

to attend, we request that you **please register in advance** so that we will know how many people to purchase food and set up for. To register, see our website:

<https://tgstopeka.org/events/#!event/2026/9/19/annual-member-meeting> .

U.S. Historical Law Guides Available!

Understanding the historical laws that were applicable at the time that records were created is important in understanding and interpreting the records. Genealogists frequently need answers to questions such as *"How old did an individual need to be to marry without parental consent?"* or *"Who was subject to taxation in a given place and time period?"* LDS Genealogy has made it easy to find answers—they have created historical law guides for each state from the time of settlement to 1950.

To see the guides, go to: <https://ldsgenealogy.com/historical-laws/>

A screenshot of the 'Kansas Historical Law Guide' page on the LDS Genealogy website. The page title is 'Kansas Historical Law Guide' and it describes it as a 'genealogical research guide to Kansas historical statutes from 1855 to 1950.' It includes a 'Contents' section with links to 'Legal ages at a glance', 'The legal system', 'Legal age of adulthood', 'Marriage', 'Property ownership', 'Inheritance', 'Taxation', 'Courts', 'Sources and where to verify', and 'Citations'. Below the contents is a section titled 'Legal ages at a glance' which contains a table with columns for 'Legal milestone', 'Age', and 'Notes'.

Legal ages at a glance

Legal milestone	Age	Notes
Full majority	21 male, 18 female	Both sexes 21 from 1917. From 1919 a married person of 18 or over was treated as an adult for contracts and property, though full majority was unchanged
Marry without consent	21 male, 18 female	The rule from 1855
Marry with consent	14 to 20 male, 12 to 17 female	A parent or guardian consented, in person or in writing. From 1905 a male under 18 or female under 16 needed the probate judge's consent as well as a consent of the parent or guardian

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!

- Mimi _____ - Topeka, KS
- Kara Rise – Columbia, MO
- Jerry Huff – Topeka, KS

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!

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):
 - **From Records to Stories: How AI Supports My Genealogy Research**, by Marcia Philbrick
- **Resources & Records:**
 - None this month, but more are in the works!



There are now more than **80** recordings of past TGS programs and presentations available on our website! Access to most 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!

Are You Researching Shawnee County Ancestors? We're Here to Help!

Opportunities abound! We are fortunate to have so many great resources and repositories available. Here's a summary:

- Download our **Guide to Shawnee County Research**, which summarizes available records and where to find them (<https://tgstopeka.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Shawnee-Co-Research-Guide-2024-Update.pdf>).
- Check out our online, **searchable databases**, which include more than 365,000 records. (<https://tgstopeka.org/search-our-databases/#/search>)
- Check out our numerous **links to Shawnee County resources** found on other websites (https://tgstopeka.org/resources_links-to-sn-co-resources/)
- Visit the **Topeka Room and Baker Genealogy Center at the Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library**, 1515 SW 10th. Hours are M-F: 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Sat: 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sun: Noon to 9 p.m. (<https://tscpl.org/local-history-genealogy>)
- Visit the **Archives of the Kansas Historical Society**, 6425 SW 6th, or check out their online genealogy indexes (<https://www.kansashistory.gov/p/genealogy-indexes/18943>) Hours: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday - Friday; 9 a.m. to noon Saturday
- Check the online resources at **Kansas Memory** (<https://www.kansasmemory.gov/>), hosted by the Kansas Historical Society
- Visit the **Topeka FamilySearch Center** at 2401 SW Kingsrow. Hours are Sunday 1 to 4; Tuesday and Wednesday 9 to noon and 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

If you don't live nearby and need some assistance, we will be happy to help. See Research Assistance information on our website: <https://tgstopeka.org/research-assistance/>

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, 7 p.m., via Zoom).
 - o **September 8, 2026** – Military Bounty Land
 - o **October 13, 2026** – Finding the Parents
 - o **November 10, 2026** – Historical Laws
 - o **December 2026 – NO MEETING IN DECEMBER**
- **Brick Wall Problem-Solving SIG** – (3rd Tuesday morning, 9:30 a.m.). Odd months are virtual, via Zoom. Even months in person at a local research facility)
 - o **September 15, 2026** – Zoom Meeting – “Black and White and Read All Over! Tips For Newspaper Research”
 - o **October 20, 2026** – In person at the Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library
- **DNA/ Genetic Genealogy SIG** – Paula Smith has taken over as group leader, and the focus is shifting slightly to more intro-level topics. (1st Tuesday, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m., via Zoom)
 - o **No class in September**
- **TGS “Story Finders” Writing Group** - (3rd Friday, 10:00 a.m. to noon, in person at the Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library, Anton Room on the 2nd Floor)
 - o **September 18, 2026** – Add Interest – Play with Dialog

All times listed are Central Time zone.

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

Monday, September 7, 9:30 to 11:00 a.m.
Monday, October 5, 9:30-11:00 a.m.

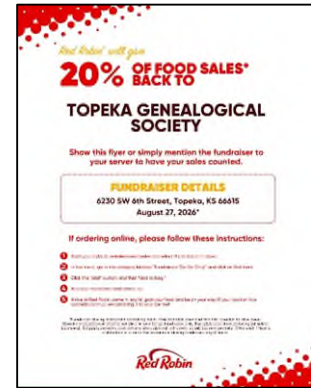
This is an informal opportunity for socializing and networking with other members. Meet us at **Perkins Restaurant, 1720 SW Wanamaker**, for some lively conversation while you enjoy a morning coffee, pastry, or breakfast. No need to register – just drop by to say hello!



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.)

August 27, 2026, 5:00 p.m. - Please join us at 5:00 p.m. on August 27th for our monthly fundraiser at **Red Robin**, 6230 SW 6th Street, for some good food and lively conversation. If you cannot join us then, you have the option of dining anytime between 11:00 a.m.- 10:00 p.m. or ordering online or in person for carryout. Mention this fundraiser or show them the attached flyer at the checkout register for TGS to receive 20% of sales benefit.

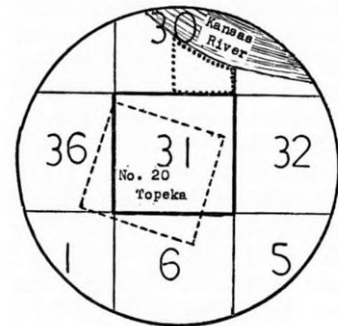


Following dinner, join us at TSCPL at 7:00 p.m. for our monthly program.

MONTHLY PROGRAMS – 4th Thursday of the month, 7:00 p.m. 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>).

August 27, 2026, 7:00 p.m. – The Native Origins of Shawnee County and Topeka, by Lisa LaRue Baker

Multi-media artist, Lisa LaRue Baker, will chronicle the fascinating Native origins and transfer of land ownership in the early days of our city and county. Join us and discover who owned your property in 1850!



September 24, 2026, 7:00 p.m. – “Civil War Medicine: Medical Treatments of the Mid-Nineteenth Century” by Sarah Bader-King

Sarah Bader-King, Executive Director of the Wornall/Majors House Museum in Kansas City, will discuss medicine during the Civil War and show some of the different types of medical equipment that surgeons used during the era.



October 22, 2026, 7:00 p.m. – Finding and Preserving Your Family's Historical Artifacts,
by Chad Sidesinger

Chad Sidesinger, a third-generation family historian and longtime Topeka Genealogical Society Member, will present an enlightening program on Finding and Preserving Your Family's Historical Artifacts. He will talk about using both simple and more advanced ways to find artifacts that relate directly to your family. He will demonstrate how to set up search terms on popular websites to automatically have hints get directly emailed to you! Several examples will also be shown of what can be found.



SPECIAL PROGRAM OFFERINGS:

Re-scheduled! August 30, 2026, 2:00 p.m. – Vicars, Villages and Vows, by Phyllis Ericson

Led by Phyllis Ericson, this group welcomes both beginners and experienced researchers. Join us for this Zoom-only session as we cover how to research with Parish Registers. We will see:

- How baptism, marriage, and burial records provide us with dates, places, and relationships for our ancestors.
- The five best websites for researching your English & Welsh records, and Scottish and Irish church records as well.

Register now and get the details for joining by clicking this link: [Register Here](#) or paste this link into your

browser: <https://us06web.zoom.us/join/register/Y9FQ2JRBO96P7wkxhK4WcA>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email and link to join the meeting. The handout is available for download from the upcoming events listing on the TGS website.



October 22, 2026, 10:00 a.m. – Nordic Interest Group: Using Artificial Intelligence for Genealogy, by Phyllis Ericson

TGS Member Phyllis Ericson is generously inviting TGS members to participate in this program that she has developed for the Lincoln-Lancaster (NE) Genealogical Society.

In this session you will be introduced to your new genealogy assistant - Artificial Intelligence (AI).



Our facilitator, Phyllis Ericson, will show you how AI can transcribe and translate handwritten and foreign-language documents! This is a beginner-level session.

This is a Zoom-only session. Register now by clicking this

link: https://us06web.zoom.us/join/register/x2ZPfxUMRgm-5I_195lkZQ#/registration

After registering, you will receive a link to join the meeting.

UPCOMING REGIONAL EVENTS

Saturday, September 12, 2026 - Generations in Conflict: Researching Ancestors from the Colonial Era to WWI, presented by Michael Strauss

This event is organized and hosted by the Midwest Genealogy Center in Independence, MO.

Military historian Michael Strauss will be presenting at an all-day, in-person seminar hosted by the Midwest Genealogy Center in Independence, Missouri. *Generations in Conflict: Researching Ancestors from the Colonial Era to WWI* will take attendees from the Colonial wars, through the Revolution, the Civil War and highlight how the Great War shaped the world in which we live today.



This is a free, in-person only seminar running from 9 a.m.- 4:15 p.m. Attendees are welcome to come for the entire seminar, or any portion they choose. Registration is required.

To Register: <https://www.mymcpl.org/events/120482/generations-conflict-researching-ancestors-colonial-era-wwi>

Saturday, October 10, 2026 – Wichita Genealogical Society Annual Conference, with featured speaker **Megan Clark Young**. Registration is now open. Details and registration information are available at: <https://wichitagensoc.org/2026-Conference>. *Reminder – TGS members may register at member-discounted rates for the Wichita Genealogical Society Conference!*



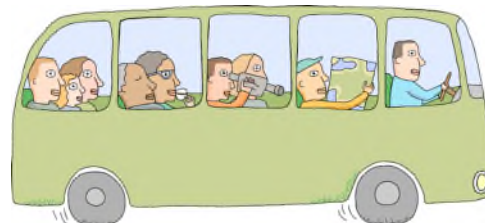
Take a Road Trip with the Topeka NuComers Group!

The Topeka NuComers group is a nonprofit social group for senior ladies. They meet and share lunch and a program each month, and they also plan several fun travel opportunities each year. The travel trips are open to others (male or female) who would like to join in the fun. Here are the highlights of upcoming plans:

Christmas Branson Trip – November 18-20. Cost \$560/person (single occupancy) and \$602 (double), including transportation, hotel and tickets for six shows. If interested, need to sign up ASAP.

New Theater Shows (Overland Park) – Register at least 30 days in advance:

- Wednesday, August 19, 2026 – *Legally Blonde*, \$76.00
- Wednesday, October 28, 2026 – *The Hallelujah Girls*, \$86.00
- Wednesday, January 13, 2027 – *Always...Patsy Cline*, \$86.00
- Wednesday, March 17, 2027 – *Boeing, Boeing*, \$86.00



To register or obtain additional information, contact **Betty Engle, (785) 220-0213**.