

*McHenry County Illinois Genealogical Society*

## *Connections Newsletter*

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PO Box 184, Crystal Lake, IL 60039



Volume 44, Issue 1

McHenry County Illinois Genealogical Society

January 2025



### *January 2025 Meeting*

**Thursday, 9 January 2025**

**7:00 PM**

**Via Zoom**

Register [HERE](#)

**Patti Todd Gillespie, speaker**

**“Birth to Death and In Between:  
Finding, Using, and Integrating Religious Records  
in the United States”**

Religious records are another document group that sometimes seems complicated to search out and access. This presentation includes an overview with specific examples of why we want to look for religious records, what sorts of records might be found, who might be included in them, and where to look on-line and off-line for these documents. This presentation hopes to simplify the religious records search experience.

An avid hobby genealogist for 30 years, Patti formed Family Lines & Stories, her own research company, 9 years ago. She stays busy researching for clients and speaking to groups, small and large, in and out of Texas. Patti has spoken at RootsTec, Utah Genealogical Association Virtual conference, Utah State Genealogy Society, virtually in Ohio, and over 20 times in Texas. She continues as 5th term president of Wise County Genealogical Society while waiting for a willing soul to step up. A former teacher of French & English, Patti very much enjoys presenting. She watches genealogy webinars and South Korean and Chinese television shows when not attending to her husband, children, grandchildren, landscaping, and rescue dog. Eventually Patti plans to continue her blog for the 25 avid readers she treasures.

**Index for this issue**

Of Interest	86
Upcoming Events	86
Merton Sarvay	87
Citing Those Sources	87
Officers and Directors	88

**MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL**

*If you have not renewed, this is your last newsletter.*

Our membership information can be found at <https://www.mcigs.org/become-a-member.html>.

Our members receive the monthly newsletter via email or have the option to pay extra for a printed copy.

Your dues help us pay for the monthly speakers, the venue (MCC) and for our Zoom format when we don't meet in person. We realize you have a choice about which societies you join, and we try to keep that in mind when we organize meetings and other activities. We hope our efforts are beneficial to you.

<https://www.mcigs.org/become-a-member.html>.

***Of Interest...***

Reclaim the Records has The Beneficiary Identification Records Locator Subsystem (BIRLS) database on their Website. You can search for deceased veterans from the Civil War to current. While there are over 18 million entries on this site, it represent only 5% of all the records. There are instructions on how to request someone you can't find in the index. Once you find your person, you can submit an FOIA. It's all free. <https://www.birls.org/>

FamilySearch Full-text Search has added over 80.5 million new "records" at the end of December in the over 3485 collections. That brings the total as of month end of over 5,572.9 million images. They propose to add as many records by end of 2025. If you are not using their [Full-text Search](#), you may be missing out.

***Upcoming Events...***

All meeting times are in Central Time Zone(CST). P- in person; H-hybrid and Z- via Zoom.

**4 January, Saturday, 1:30 PM (Z)** – Winnebago-Boone Genealogical Society. "11 Tips to Help You Transcribe German Church Records" by Theresa Berns. Register for Zoom event: [HERE](#)

**8 January, Wednesday, 11:00 AM (Z)** – Fountaindale Library Genealogy Club, "Evernote for Genealogy". Register for this event: <https://communico.fountaindale.org/event/12164508>

**18 January, Saturday, 10:30 AM (Z) -CAGGNI.** Thomas McEntee, presenter. "Genealogy from A to Z." Register for Zoom meeting: [Register](#).

**23 January, Thursday, 7:00 PM (H)** – Kane County Genealogical Society, Town & Country Public Library, 320 E North St., Elburn, IL "Comparing DNA Ethnicity Estimates" with presenter Richard Hill. To register for meeting, send name and contact info to [kcginfo@gmail.com](mailto:kcginfo@gmail.com).

*Continue on page 87*

**26 January, Sunday, 1:30 PM (P)** – Cary Public Library Genealogy Interest Group: Join with others who have an interest in genealogy. Here is an opportunity to ask questions, share your knowledge, find out what's new to enhance your research. Register for this event [here](#).

## *Merton Sarvay*

Long time member, Merton Sarvay passed away in Hamden, Connecticut, 4 September 2024 at the age of 95. If you've used any of our indexes, he probably had a hand in some of them. He took on the task to index the *Nunda Herald*, *Crystal Lake Herald*, and *Northwest Herald*, becoming a permanent fixture at Crystal Lake Public Library. The index is in paper form at Crystal Lake Public Library and is online through the Crystal Lake Historical Society. Other researchers picked up where Mert left off and the index is searchable at the historical [society site](#). Born and raised in New York, he, and his wife Donna, returned to Cortland, New York in 2003 and Donna died 2004. Mert moved to Connecticut to be with his daughter and spent his final years there. Our condolences to the Sarvay family.

## *Citing Those Sources*

Ann Wells

One quick way to get even genealogists to roll their eyes when the topic is mentioned is to talk about citing your sources. The mantra of some genealogists is "no sources noted, then it's just fiction." Many family historians often complain they're just in it for fun, or just for the family. Yes, professional genealogists cite their sources, but it isn't to announce they are professionals, but to keep track of what and where they've researched, and to give credit to those who produced the records. Knowing this can help you decide the value of the record and information.

Sources prove your claim to the information and showing what that source is will help you to not look again at the same document/book/record for the same

bit of information. While some sources weigh heavier than others, they should all be reviewed and weighed against each other. Citing the source will keep you focused. It will certainly save you time by not going back to the same record over and over again.

How to cite the source? There are a myriad of resources for doing this, but no matter what template you use – one in a genealogy program, or one you devise, be sure to be consistent and make the source citation make sense. Also, it will help someone else (and you) to get back to that record.

Elizabeth Shown Mills has been writing books on source citation since 1997, and updates have been ongoing into 2024. Many people look to her as the guru of citation. It isn't necessary to follow her exactly, but there are many helpful suggestions in each edition of her book that can help you to understand each type of record/information. When she published her first book, *Evidence! Citation Analysis for Family Historians*, the internet all but didn't exist for the general public and Google didn't come about until 1998.

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Today, Ms. Mills latest book, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, *Evidence Explained: Citing History Sources from Artifacts to Cyberspace* was published in 2024.

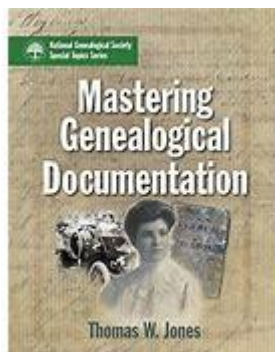
*Continued on page 88*



Continued from page 87



Thomas Jones' *Mastering Genealogical Documentation*, is another great book about sources and citations.



Cyndi's List, [cyndislist.com](http://cyndislist.com), has 123 items listed under the Citation category. Legacy Family Tree Webinars has one free presentation about citations and sources, *Sources and Citations Made Simple, Standard, and Powerful*. There are several others, if

you have a subscription and they might be worth a year's subscription to hear them.

No doubt you can find many other sources by doing a Google search and for each you find, there will no doubt be suggestions for further reading.

No matter what method you decide to follow, even your own, be sure to be consistent, including everything in citation that will allow you, or someone else to return to that item.

## McHenry County Illinois Genealogical Society

### 2025 Officers and Board Members

Term ending date in parentheses

PRESIDENT – Laurie Stage (2025)–  
[president@mcigs.org](mailto:president@mcigs.org)

1<sup>st</sup> VICE-PRESIDENT (Programs) 2026 –  
Vacant

2<sup>nd</sup> VICE-PRESIDENT (Membership) 2025 –  
Ann Wells [ann.wells@mcigs.org](mailto:ann.wells@mcigs.org)

SECRETARY – Sandra Braid (2026)  
[sandra.braid@mcigs.org](mailto:sandra.braid@mcigs.org)

TREASURER – Vacant

#### DIRECTORS:

Nancy Gaynor – (2026)–  
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Kathy Park (2025) – [kathy.park@mcigs.org](mailto:kathy.park@mcigs.org)

Jan Polep (2025) – [jan.polep@mcigs.org](mailto:jan.polep@mcigs.org)

Bill Wheeler – Web Master (2026)–  
[bill.wheeler@mcigs.org](mailto:bill.wheeler@mcigs.org)

#### COMMITTEES:

Early Settler Project– Claudia Conroy –  
[claudia.conroy@mcigs.org](mailto:claudia.conroy@mcigs.org)

Librarian – Nancy Gaynor –  
[nancy.gaynor@mcigs.org](mailto:nancy.gaynor@mcigs.org)

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