

Genealogy Gems: News from the Fort Wayne Library  
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Getting Out of Your Genealogy Rut  
by Curt B. Witcher

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Genealogists often joke about the many variations to the "file by pile" method they use to organize research notes, correspondence, photographs and other family documents. Whether it's a virtual pile characterized by numerous poorly labeled and inconsistently used folders found on various drives and USB devices, or an actual pile of papers across the dining room table, we are pretty confident that this is not a best practice. The challenges of deploying such a practice are many. Key among those challenges is that "file by pile" tends to put us in a rut.

Last month, we discussed benchmarking our family history activities in 2015 as a way of making more progress on our research. Those techniques can help one get out of a "genealogical rut." There are a few more activities that you might want to consider. First, commit to being more of an investigator than a stuff-gatherer. If someone came to your home or office, would the evidence found convict you of being a genealogical investigator or a person who simply collects stuff? Tending toward being more of an investigator would mean that one had a consistent routine that is followed in research activities: gathering evidence, properly and completely recording that evidence with all appropriate sourcing, and analyzing that evidence to uncover new research leads. All three activities (gather, record, analyze) can help one get out of the rut of not finding as much data and not remembering whether a particular hypothesis about who our ancestors are has been examined.

Recently I had the great benefit of hearing Thomas MacEntee talk about "genealogy do-overs." What a great strategy to get one out of a rut! As I understand the concept, one picks an ancestor and starts over by examining every document gathered about that person as well as all the conclusions that were drawn from the data in those documents. We know how easy it is to make assumptions and fall into comfortable ruts by looking for the same kinds of records and

interpreting different pieces of data in the same manner. Thomas offers a free, online, self-paced thirteen week course on sound genealogical research practices. One can find it at [www.genealogydo-over.com](http://www.genealogydo-over.com). This assuredly would be a great way to break out of a research rut.

I have a presentation I give at genealogy conferences and seminars titled, "Doing the History Eliminates the Mystery." In it, I emphasize how enlightening, and really critically important, it is to not focus so narrowly on gathering expected or typical documents, but rather, to take appropriate time to explore the history of both the geographic location and time period in which one finds one's ancestors living. Knowing why an area was settled and the reasons for towns being established is vital in knowing what records were kept and during what time periods, where individuals sold their wares, and where ancestors may have found spouses, or escaped from the brutalities of life in a particular region. Knowing if there was "gold fever," a war being waged, a depression impacting abilities to provide the most basic food and shelter—all and more are critical in setting one's ancestors in the proper context and in setting-up the most research success. *Get out of your genealogical rut by doing a little history!*

Still another rut-buster is to treat yourself to more genealogical education. It's easy to say you only have enough time and resources to gather records. The truth is one can't afford not to engage in lifelong learning in the genealogy space. There are engaging learning opportunities in nearly every corner of the country. Take advantage of the offerings of The Genealogy Center. This ezine is packed with opportunities. In just over a week, the Federation of Genealogical Societies and RootsTech are sponsoring a huge genealogical and technological education event in Salt Lake City. More than fifteen thousand are already registered. Too late for you to attend in person? No problem—numerous sessions are being streamed live with more being available for online viewing shortly after the conference. You really don't have an excuse not to participate.

In addition, you could plan to attend The New York State Family History Conference, a Federation of Genealogical Societies Regional Conference being held September 17-19, 2015 in Syracuse, New York. Offerings are truly everywhere. Finally, take full advantage of technology by challenging yourself to sign up this year for a genealogy webinar on a topic you know nothing about—that, too, will get you out of your genealogical rut. I know you will be surprised at what you learn, and very glad you did.

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Honoring Western Women Editors

by Delia Bourne

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Before news websites, before 24-hour news television stations and before radio, newspapers were the method of sharing national, regional and local news. Newspapers of the nineteenth century contained celebrity (and local) gossip, advertisements and court happenings, humor, birth announcements, wedding descriptions and obituaries. Like most professionals of that era, most reporters and editors were men, but a few places in the frontier West boasted newspapers run by women and Sherilyn Cox Bennion's book, "Equal to the Occasion: Women Editors of the Nineteenth-Century West" (978 B439e), provides information on these newspapers and the pioneering women who led them.

Bennion gathered data from all of the far western states of Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming, from the appearance of the first woman editor in 1854 to 1900. Bennion discovered that there was no one type of woman who became an editor. They ranged in age from teenagers to octogenarians, were married or any variation of single, and the newspapers' and journals' focuses ranged from homemaking crafts to women's suffrage, and from religion to literature.

This volume describes the lives and tribulations of some of these women editors, such as Ada Chase Merritt, who became an editor and small business woman in Idaho after the death of her mining superintendent husband, Henry. For the next eighteen years, she dealt with local politics, a partner who turned on her, and she married and divorced her assistant, who had hidden his criminal record. She was later elected county treasurer, and at her death, she was described as a "remarkably brilliant woman." Like many of the women profiled in the work, editing was just a small part of Merritt's life, and while Merritt denied being a suffragist, her life and successes represented the future of women in the West.

The Appendix lists, by state, all women editors by name, the names of the newspaper and publishing dates and locations, and where any copies might be available. The notation "No copies located" appears on many of the entries. Completing the volume are extensive notes on sources and a bibliography on journalism and women in the West.

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Mapping the Freedmen's Bureau  
by Melissa C. Tennant

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In 1865, Congress created the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands for the purpose of assisting displaced Southerners and newly freed slaves. The Bureau managed school and hospital registers, marriage records, labor contracts, land disputes, and much more as the people in the South acclimated to life following the Civil War. Similar agencies, such as the Freedman's Savings Bank, were created in order to help Freedmen establish themselves.

These records can be viewed on microfilm at The Genealogy Center. Unfortunately, free online access to the entirety of the Freedmen's Records is not comprehensive, yet some of these materials are available on a variety of websites. Determining the best way to access this material, much less to understand the scope of what is available, is not always easy. The newly launched "Mapping the Freedmen's Bureau" website, <http://mappingthefreedmensbureau.com/>, maps the locations of the Freedmen's Bureau Offices, Freedmen Schools, contraband camps, Freedman's Savings Bank branches, and US Colored Troops (USCT) battle sites.

These interactive maps allow the user to select the site of each individual office, branch, school, etc., and gain more detail about these sites and the availability of the individual records. Details such as Bluffton, Alabama, "is now a ghost town of Cherokee County" help researchers understand the geographical region, but the notation of the availability of the individual records is the true gem of this site. For example, when a researcher selects the Ocala, Florida, Field Office, the website states that the records can be found on NARA microfilm series M1869 only. Other record sets can be accessed online, such as the Atlanta, Georgia, Freedman's Bank Branch images at

www.FamilySearch.org, and the Covington, Kentucky, Field Office materials at Internet Archive (www.Archive.org). Links from the "Mapping the Freedmen's Bureau" website provide direct access to these and other record sets.

Though these records have not been thoroughly indexed, there are a number of guides for using them, such as the National Archives (NARA) Descriptive Pamphlets for each of the microfilm series, which can be found on the "Mapping the Freedmen's Bureau" website under Research Guides. The Sample Documents section provides a wide array of documents ranging from labor contracts, complaint registers, school registers, marriage records, and hospital registers. Each of these sample documents features the document image and a transcription. Some of these transcriptions can be searched and the register transcriptions can be sorted.

For those researching individuals in the South and especially African Americans during the Reconstruction era, discover the resources available at the "Mapping the Freedmen's Bureau" website.

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Technology Tip of the Month--Continuing with Adobe Elements Changes and Additions  
by Kay Spears

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Sometime in your use of Adobe Elements, you may want to add a frame to one of your photographs. Located in the Quick tab of the latest Elements version is a variety of frames. Let's take a look at them and how we can manage them.

First, open up the photograph you want inside of a frame. In the bottom right corner of the Elements task pane are the words Adjustments, Effects, Textures and Frames. Click on Frames. Choose one of the frames and click on it. It may take a few seconds, but after a short time, your photograph should be inside that frame. You will notice that there is a bracket with corner anchors around the photograph edge. These particular brackets adjust the photograph only, so you can enlarge or shrink the photograph within the frame using these brackets. Try enlarging your photograph. You will notice that there is a green check mark and a red "no" symbol beside it. Once you have the photograph positioned in the frame where you want it, click on the green check mark. The green check mark and red "no" symbol appear in the top left of the image when the photo is selected.

Here's the tricky part: Instead of adjusting the photo, you also may select the frame to adjust. However some of the frames are easier to work with than others. The brackets and anchors are easier to spot on some, for instance the Movie Slide or the rather ugly Performance Stage. I found the plain Black frame harder to work with than others, and I could only edit the frame itself if I clicked on the anchor corners. You will know when you have successfully selected a frame because the green checkmark and red "no" symbol will appear in the right lower corner. If you have selected the photograph to adjust, those symbols are in the upper left corner. Both of these options are available by double-clicking on the image. If you don't see the green check mark and red "no" symbol, click on the bracket a couple of times.

You can also redo the size of the photograph by double clicking on the photograph. If you enlarged

the photograph earlier, your brackets and anchor may be outside of the frame. In that case, you will have to move the photograph to work with them.

I suggest you play with the different styles to see what each one does, and have fun.

Next month: Adobe Elements 12 Guided Tab.

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Quick-Tip of the Month for Preservation--Donate Your Materials to Preserve Them - to The Genealogy Center or Elsewhere!

by Dawne Slater, CG(SM)\*

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We hear the question from our genealogy friends, at local society meetings, and see it in threads on Facebook special interest groups for genealogy - "What can be done with my genealogy files to preserve them if I have no descendants or my family isn't interested in my work?" No one wants to think of his or her lifetime's gathering of family information, expensive documents, hard-to-find and hard-to-prove connections thrown in a dumpster.

When those of us who work at The Genealogy Center read this or a similar question in a Facebook group, or hear someone ask it, we are quick to say, "We'll take it at The Genealogy Center!" And that's true. The Genealogy Center accepts family papers, documents, photos and files, and there are many things that can be done with these materials to preserve them. Small collections might be scanned and uploaded onto The Genealogy Center's website in the Family Resources, Family Bibles or Our Military Heritage areas, as appropriate. Larger collections might be bound as-is, or preservation photocopied and bound.

But The Genealogy Center isn't the only facility that accepts family papers and there might be a more appropriate place for your files. Check with the local public library, historical society, genealogical society and/or county archives in the area where the research is centered, for example. Just be sure that the facility you choose DOES accept this kind of material before you send it or drop it off. Not all do. It's no good to save your hard work from being trashed by your relatives only to have an institution do it instead!

If you decide to give your material to The Genealogy Center, the more organized it is, the better. Organized files are easier to prepare and catalog, and the material will be available for use by the public much more quickly if it is easy to process. You might consider a title page, a table of contents, an index, pages that are uniform in size, dividers by family, geographic area, or record type, or other ways of organizing the material. Also, you could type a page of explanation telling what families, geographic areas and time periods the material covers, as well as a description of its organization.

If you have written a family history, The Genealogy Center would be glad to accept a copy of the bound book, a set of loose manuscript pages (please be sure there is an edge of an inch for binding), or a digital file.

Consider donating your family files to The Genealogy Center or another library or institution to

preserve them for future researchers!

\*"CG" & "Certified Genealogist" are service marks of the Board for Certification of Genealogists®, and are used by authorized associates following periodic, peer-reviewed competency evaluations. Certificate No. 386 awarded 4 July 1996; expires 4 July 2016.

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#### WinterTech Time!

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We come to the last of our WinterTech programs for this year with "Linkpendium & Mocavo: Using Free Genealogy-Specific Search Engines." Are you looking for new paths to search? Try using a search engine specific to genealogy! In this one hour presentation, Delia Bourne will introduce you to two sites which may aid you in finding more about your ancestors.

This free class will be Wednesday, 11 February 2015, from 3 to 4 p.m. in Meeting Room A. To register, call 260-421-1225 or email [Genealogy@ACPL.Info](mailto:Genealogy@ACPL.Info). After the program, network and research in The Genealogy Center until 6:30 p.m., when you can come back to Meeting Room A for the Allen County Genealogical Society of Indiana's monthly meeting, during which The Genealogy Center's Sara Allen will present "Introduction to DNA for Genealogy."

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#### Celebrate Black History Month!

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Commemorate Black History Month in Fort Wayne by attending these great sessions:

Sunday, February 1, 2015, 2 p.m., at The History Center, 302 East Berry Street, Fort Wayne, Indiana, "William Warfield — Renaissance Man of Color, 1868-1936." Dr. John Aden, Director of the African/African American Historical Society and Museum here in Fort Wayne, Indiana, will present this engaging program as part of the George R. Mather Sunday Lecture Series.

Thursday, February 12, 2015, 6 p.m., Access Fort Wayne, Allen County Public Library, "Ancestors and Answers Live TV Broadcast." Roberta Ridley, Chair of the African American Genealogical Society of Fort Wayne, will moderate a panel consisting of Condra Ridley on "Genealogy and Storytelling," Adrian Wells on "Networking with Facebook and Genealogy," and Dr. John Aden on "African American History and Genealogy."

Monday, February 23, 2015, 6:30 p.m., Meeting Room C, Allen County Public Library, "Exploring Some Unique African American Resources in The Genealogy Center." Curt Witcher, The Genealogy Center's manager, will offer a look at The Center's "African American Gateway," the online collection of "African American Historical Newspapers," the growing collection of home-going programs online, and the "Slavery and Anti-Slavery: A Transnational Archive" database.

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#### March Madness, Genealogy Style

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Score some new ways of improving your family history research, and join us for March Madness,

Genealogy Style! After a historical look at the life of basketball great, John Wooden, the remaining six free sessions the first week in March will focus on some back-to-basics essentials.

Sunday, March 1, 2015, 2 p.m., The History Center, 302 East Berry Street, Ft. Wayne, Indiana - "Hardwood Glory: A Life of John Wooden."

Monday, March 2, 2015, 2 p.m., Allen County Public Library, Meeting Room A - "Colonial Southern Overview: What You Need to Know Before You Start Your Research."

Tuesday, March 3, 2015, 2 p.m., Allen County Public Library, Meeting Room A - "Genealogical Research in Colonial New England."

Wednesday, March 4, 2015, 2 p.m., Allen County Public Library, Meeting Room A - "Using Clues in the 1880 Census to Solve Earlier Research Challenges."

Thursday, March 5, 2015, 10 a.m., Allen County Public Library, Meeting Room A - "Finding Family in Pre-1850 Census Records and Census Substitutes."

Friday, March 6, 2015, 10 a.m., Allen County Public Library, Meeting Room A - "We All Deserve a Second Chance! Taking another Look at the Early Records in Our Files."

Saturday, March 7, 2015, 10 a.m., Allen County Public Library, Meeting Room A - "History and Records of Indiana's 'Gore.'"

To register for any of these free programs, call 260-421-1225 or send an email to [Genealogy@ACPL.Info](mailto:Genealogy@ACPL.Info). For more information, see the March Madness, Genealogy Style brochure at <http://www.genealogycenter.org/docs/MarchMadness2015>.

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March Is Women's History Month!

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Female ancestors are difficult to uncover because they are "hidden" within records. Understanding the laws and situations that affected women helps us locate them. Join Melissa Tennant to gain new insight into locating your female ancestors on Tuesday, March 17, 2015, at 3 p.m., in Meeting Room A. To register for this free session, call 260-421-1225 or email [Genealogy@ACPL.Info](mailto:Genealogy@ACPL.Info).

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Out and About

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Curt Witcher:

February 10, 2015 - Federation of Genealogical Societies 2015 Annual Conference, Salt Palace Convention Center, Salt Lake City, UT, Librarians' Day, 9:30-10:30 a.m. Presentation: "Buildings, Books, Bodies, and Bytes—The Best of Times for Genealogy Librarians."

February 10, 2015 - BYU Family History Technology Workshop, Provo, UT, 1:00 p.m. Presentation:

"The Future of Family History: What We Really Want."

February 11, 2015 - Federation of Genealogical Societies 2015 Annual Conference, Salt Palace Convention Center, Salt Lake City, UT, Focus on Societies Day Opening Session Panel, 8:00 a.m. Presentation: "...Courage to Change the Things I Can . . .: Being a Successful Change Agent." 9:30-10:30 a.m. Presentation: "Connecting, Exploring, Refreshing: Marshalling Change in Your Society." 1:30-2:30 p.m. Presentation: "Being the Outstanding Leader Your Society Needs."

February 12, 2015 - Federation of Genealogical Societies 2015 Annual Conference, Salt Palace Convention Center, Salt Lake City, UT, 3-4 p.m. Panel presentation: "What Can Public Libraries Offer Genealogists?"

February 13, 2015 - Federation of Genealogical Societies 2015 Annual Conference, Salt Palace Convention Center, Salt Lake City, UT, 1-2 p.m. Presentation: "Doing the History Eliminates the Mystery."

Melissa Tennant:

February 13, 2015 - Federation of Genealogical Societies 2015 Annual Conference, Salt Palace Convention Center, Salt Lake City, UT, 1-2 p.m. Presentation: "City Directories: More than Basic Facts."

February 14, 2015 - Federation of Genealogical Societies 2015 Annual Conference, Salt Palace Convention Center, Salt Lake City, UT, 1-2 p.m. Presentation: "Hurdling the Census Chasm."

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Area Calendar of Events

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George Mather Lecture Series

1 February 2015 - The History Center, 302 East Berry, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 2 p.m. Dr. John Alden will present "William Warfield: Renaissance Man of Color, 1868-1936."

ACGSI Meeting

11 February 2015 - Allen County Public Library, 900 Library Plaza, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 7 p.m. Sara Allen will present "Introduction to DNA for Genealogy."

DAR Research Help

14 February 2015 - Allen County Public Library Genealogy Center, 900 Library Plaza, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 9 a.m.-noon. The Mary Penrose Wayne Chapter of the National Society of Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) is available to help prospective DAR members research their lineage to prove ancestry to an American Revolutionary Patriot.

ACGSI Genealogy Technology Group

18 February 2015 - Allen County Public Library, 900 Library Plaza, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 7 p.m.

A Winter Garrison, 1775-1781



21-22 February 2015 - The Old Fort, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday & 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Sunday.

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#### Driving Directions to the Library

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Wondering how to get to the library? Our location is 900 Library Plaza, Fort Wayne, Indiana, in the block bordered on the south by Washington Boulevard, the west by Ewing Street, the north by Wayne Street, and the east by the Library Plaza, formerly Webster Street. We would enjoy having you visit the *Genealogy Center*.

To get directions from your exact location to 900 Library Plaza, Fort Wayne, Indiana, visit this link at MapQuest:

<http://www.mapquest.com/maps/map.adp?formtype=address&addtohistory=&address=900%20Webster%20St&city=Fort%20Wayne&state=IN&zipcode=46802%2d3602&country=US&geodiff=1>

#### ›From the South

Exit Interstate 69 at exit 102. Drive east on Jefferson Boulevard into downtown. Turn left on Ewing Street. The Library is one block north, at Ewing Street and Washington Boulevard.

#### Using US 27:

US 27 turns into Lafayette Street. Drive north into downtown. Turn left at Washington Boulevard and go five blocks. The Library will be on the right.

#### ›From the North

Exit Interstate 69 at exit 112. Drive south on Coldwater Road, which merges into Clinton Street. Continue south on Clinton to Washington Boulevard. Turn right on Washington and go three blocks. The Library will be on the right.

#### ›From the West

##### Using US 30:

Drive into town on US 30. US 30 turns into Goshen Ave. which dead-ends at West State Blvd. Make an angled left turn onto West State Blvd. Turn right on Wells Street. Go south on Wells to Wayne Street. Turn left on Wayne Street. The Library will be in the second block on the right.

##### Using US 24:

After crossing under Interstate 69, follow the same directions as from the South.

#### ›From the East

Follow US 30/then 930 into and through New Haven, under an overpass into downtown Fort Wayne. You will be on Washington Blvd. when you get into downtown. Library Plaza will be on the right.

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#### Parking at the Library

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At the Library, underground parking can be accessed from Wayne Street. Other library parking lots are at Washington and Webster, and Wayne and Webster. Hourly parking is \$1 per hour with a

\$7 maximum. ACPL library card holders may use their cards to validate the parking ticket at the west end of the Great Hall of the Library. Out of county residents may purchase a subscription card with proof of identification and residence. The current fee for an Individual Subscription Card is \$70.

Public lots are located at the corner of Ewing and Wayne Streets (\$1 each for the first two half-hours, \$1 per hour after, with a \$4 per day maximum) and the corner of Jefferson Boulevard and Harrison Street (\$3 per day).

Street (metered) parking on Ewing and Wayne Streets. On the street you plug the meters 8am - 5pm, weekdays only. It is free to park on the street after 5pm and on the weekends.

Visitor center/Grand Wayne Center garage at Washington and Clinton Streets. This is the Hilton Hotel parking lot that also serves as a day parking garage. For hourly parking, 7am - 11 pm, charges are .50 for the first 45 minutes, then \$1.00 per hour. There is a flat \$2.00 fee between 5pm and 11pm.

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#### Genealogy Center Queries

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The Genealogy Center hopes you find this newsletter interesting. Thank you for subscribing. We cannot, however, answer personal research emails written to the e-zine address. The department houses a Research Center that makes photocopies and conducts research for a fee.

If you have a general question about our collection, or are interested in the Research Center, please telephone the library and speak to a librarian who will be glad to answer your general questions or send you a research center form. Our telephone number is 260-421-1225. If you'd like to email a general information question about the department, please email: [Genealogy@ACPL.Info](mailto:Genealogy@ACPL.Info).

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#### Publishing Note:

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This electronic newsletter is published by the Allen County Public Library's Genealogy Center, and is intended to enlighten readers about genealogical research methods as well as inform them about the vast resources of the Allen County Public Library. We welcome the wide distribution of this newsletter and encourage readers to forward it to their friends and societies. All precautions have been made to avoid errors. However, the publisher does not assume any liability to any party for any loss or damage caused by errors or omissions, no matter the cause.

To subscribe to "Genealogy Gems," simply use your browser to go to the website: [www.GenealogyCenter.org](http://www.GenealogyCenter.org). Scroll to the bottom, click on E-zine, and fill out the form. You will be notified with a confirmation email.

If you do not want to receive this e-zine, please follow the link at the very bottom of the issue of Genealogy Gems you just received or send an email to [kspears@acpl.lib.in.us](mailto:kspears@acpl.lib.in.us) with "unsubscribe e-zine" in the subject line.

Dawne Slater, *CG* & Curt Witcher, co-editors