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Karen Pattee David

SCGS NEWS

“Helping You Connect with Your Heritage”

Story County Genealogical Society

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President's Message



It doesn't seem to want to stop raining in our part of the country while other parts are very dry. Wish we could share with those people. At least it isn't snow.

September was off to a good start. Doug and Gwenna Jacobson got us going on AI and Genealogy. Very interesting and confusing to me, but then still willing to try it. Teresa Liewer gave us an excellent tour of Iowa Genealogy Society building and what they have to offer.

For our October Society meeting we have our own Mary Lohr telling us about Keeping Genealogy Affordable. And for Genealogy Plus - John Liepa will be presenting- Iowa Ethnic Heritage.

We still need a Vice President and looking *for* someone to take over the Newsletter Editor position. Please consider helping the Board out on these positions. THANKS.

Nancy

Daylight Saving Time

Although the House has approved the Daylight Savings Time (DST) bill, the Senate is still pondering it over. As it looks right now, DST will be in effect on November 1, 2026; which means that those effected will “fall back” their clocks, etc. 1 (one) hour.

Story County Genealogical Society

October 12, 2026 - 6:30 PM – page 3
Ames Public Library
And Zoom members
2nd Monday each month

“Keeping Genealogy Affordable”

Presenter: Mary Lohr

Genealogy Plus!

October 21, 2026 – Page 3
Ames Public Library – 10 AM – Noon
3rd Wednesday each month

“Iowa’s Ethnic Heritage: A Short History”

Presenter: John Liepa

Regular Meeting Program Reminder

November 9, 2026 – 6:30 pm
Ames Public Library
And Members

Election of Officers and Sharing

The SCGS Board of Directors has some Genealogy Plus presentations scheduled for the Ames Public Library – Auditorium. Regular meetings are scheduled for the Danfoss Room.

Please look at the new website for more details

**Story County Genealogical Society
Meeting Minutes**

**September 14, 2026 at the Ames Public Library and
via Zoom**

Present: 7 in person, 6 online

President Nancy Long called the meeting to order at 6:29 p.m.

Treasurer Pete Peterson gave the monthly report to board members. Pete just paid the annual rent of \$236 for the post office box.

Malvina Lutz, Vice President Membership, reported there are currently 65 members. As Librarian, Malvina has found one new research book to recommend to the Ames Public Library for purchase.

The May society meeting minutes as printed in the newsletter were approved.

Technology Director Gwenna Jacobson said she is waiting for the website to be updated which is supposed to be by the end of September and then will add all the programs for this upcoming year.

Nancy announced Dick Cooper will continue as newsletter editor through the November issue. That position is appointed. She asked for volunteers for that position as well as the Vice President for programs. Nancy will work on getting a nominating committee appointed.

Genealogy+ on September 16 will have a virtual speaker Theresa Liewer talking about Gems from the Iowa Genealogical Society. People can attend at the library or via Zoom.

The program was Doug and Gwenna Jacobson -- Using AI in Genealogy. Gwenna focused on AI programs ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Copilot, Perplexity and Meta AI (now renamed Muse). These programs all have free versions. There are paid versions that can provide more storage.

Five most important rules for using AI in genealogy

Continued in next column (**Minutes**)

Continued in from previous column (**Minutes**)

1. Treat AI as an assistant, not an authority.
2. Guard private and living data.
3. Verify every fact independently.
4. Document and disclose AI usage.
5. Retain ultimate human control.

Use “prompts” to converse with AI programs. Don’t be vague when writing prompts. Write them like you are talking to someone, perhaps a youngster.

Google Gemini will give you sources you may use, for example if you ask what a foreign word means as an occupation. Notebook Gemini will upload from your own sources. You can upload books or portions of them.

Example –

Gwenna took a photo of a Swedish estate record and had it translated side by side into an English Word document. Translation prompt— Can you put the Swedish text beside the translation in a Word document? Translate line by line and preserve the original spelling, line breaks, capitalization and abbreviation.

If you want to publish some of this work, do note it was AI generated.

Doug explained the process he uses --
Workflow

1. Digitization – scan original family book
2. Gemini processing – extract and transcribe text to Markdown, a formatting program
3. Iterative refinement – correct misprints, dates, and names
4. Knowledge base – load Markdown + farm descriptions into Notebook
5. Research outputs – synthesize data into creative deliverables such as a pedigree chart

Example -- Doug had the annual yield and size of a Norwegian family farm. He entered that information into ChatGP (Gemini would probably work).

Prompt -- Draw a picture of the farm as an aerial view.
Next prompt – I like that image, convert the Norwegian to English.

Continued to page 3, column 1 (**Minutes**)

Continued from page 2, 2nd column (Minutes)

AI applications in major genealogy programs --
FamilySearch – AI Research Assistant. Gwenna uses full text search.

Ancestry – Watch YouTube video ‘Ancestry’s Biggest 2026 Updates So Far!’

MyHeritage – Transcribes, translates and interprets.

Findmypast – Uses other AI programs. Has good newspaper section.

Good resource is Best AI Genealogy Tools 2026,
<https://www.aitoolgiant.com/reviews>

Meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Lynette Spicer, Secretary

New SCGS Newsletter Editor Needed

Although the November issue will be the last issue before I give up the newsletter editing, I would hope that someone will step forward and become the new editor for this newsletter.

Editing the newsletter has been both a challenge (at times) but also enjoyable (most of the time).

I think that it is a vital connection between SCGS and many members and friends of SCGS who rely on the information found in the newsletter. It also provides a platform for members to send their articles on things that they do, etc.

Be assured that although the information in the issues may not be all genealogy, it will lead you to genealogical finds and tasks, such as family and friend interviews, cemetery trips, military, recollecting memories, etc.

Please note that I will be willing to assist anyone who may have questions about the newsletter editing or may have ideas about setting up the newsletter themselves. It is entirely up to the new person how the newsletter will be set up. Everyone has their own preferences.

Upcoming Events At SCGS

Monday October 12, 2026

**In-Person Meeting at the APL and Zoom
Meeting via Zoom to be sent to members**

6:30 pm to 8:30 pm

“Keeping Genealogy Affordable”

Presenter: Mary Lohr

Wednesday October 21, 2026

In-Person Meeting at Library and Zoom.

10:00 am to Noon pm

Presenter: John Liepa

Iowa’s Ethnic Heritage: A Short History

Join the Story County Genealogical Society at the Ames Public Library on October 21 for the presentation “Iowa’s Ethnic Heritage: A Short History” by John Liepa. Enjoy the unfolding and changing adventure of Iowa’s immigration history. Beginning with the Ioway, one of 17 distinctive indigenous tribal groups, we’ll trace chronologically who we are as Iowans. From Spanish explorers and French trappers, traders and priests; to the dominant English, Germans and Irish; to Scandinavians, Dutch and Czechs, we’ll explore why these groups chose to leave their homelands and how they eventually ended up in Iowa. African-Americans, Eastern Europeans and Hispanics have different stories to share along with other “newer” Iowans.

John is a Professor Emeritus of History and Political Science at Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC.) He taught courses in Political Science, U.S., and Iowa History from 1972-2010.

**Check the website for John Liepa’s further
Achievements in his career.**

Dates Worth Remembering

October 5 – Frances Xavier Cabrini Day (CO)
October 5 – Child Health Day
October 6 – German American Day
October 9 – Leif Erikson Day (CO)
October 9 - Birthday
October 10 – Robert E. Lee's Birthday (AR)
October 11 – Casimir Pulaski Day (MA, MI, RI)
October 11 – Chicago Marathon
October 12 – Columbus Day (22 states)
October 12 – Fraternal Day (AL)
October 12 – Yorktown Victory Day (Virginia)
October 12 – Discoverers' Day (Hawaii)
October 12 – Native American Day (SD, Oklahoma)
October 12 – Indigenous People's Day (Tentative)
October 12 – American Indian Heritage Day (AL)
October 13 – Navy Birthday
October 15 – White Cane Safety Day
October 16 – Boss's Day
October 18 – Alaska Day (AK)
October 30 – Nevada Day (NV)
October 31 - HALLOWEEN

The dates and celebrations listed above were extracted from: [Holidays and Observances in the United States in 2026](#). If you want to find out about other holidays, just to the website above and click on the holiday.

The following fun holidays were taken from [Fun Holidays in October](#).

October 1 – International Coffee Day
 October 2 – World Smile Day
 October 2 – Phileas Fogg Wager Day
 October 4 – Taco Day
 October 8 – Pierogi Day
 October 11 – It's My Party Day
 October 12 – Old Farmers Day
 October 13 – International Skeptics Day
 October 20 – International Sloth Day
 October 21 – Count your Buttons Day
 October 24 – Bologna Day
 October 26 – Howl at the Moon Day & Night
 October 29 – Internet Day
 October 30 – Candy Corn Day
 October 31 – Magic Day

Presenters and Speakers NEEDED

Story County Genealogical Society is in need of additional speakers for 2027 (see the list below). The Board of Directors hopes that you remember someone that you liked to hear or know a member that has an interesting genealogy interest.

2026 – 2027 Programs scheduled to date:

Society – second Monday

September 14 -- Doug and Gwenna Jacobson -- Using AI in Genealogy

October 12 – Mary Lohr -- Keeping Genealogy Affordable

November 9 -- Election of officers and sharing

January 11 –

February 8

March 8 – Doug and Gwenna Jacobson -- Writing Family History Using AI & Family TreeMaker

April 12 -- Bonnie Norman -- Bonnie's Autobiography Written Using Storyworth

May date to be determined – Road trip to Maxwell Museum

Genealogy+ -- third Wednesday

September 16 Theresa Liewer -- Gems from the Iowa Genealogical Society

October 21 John Liepa -- Iowa's Ethnic Heritage, or "Who Do You Think We Are?"

November 18

January 20 Jill Morelli -- Journey of the Forgotten - The Orphans of Hamilton County, Iowa

February 17 Kathy Meade -- Research Your Swedish Heritage in Living Color Using ArkivDigital

March 17 Daniel Horowitz -- MyHeritage

April 21 Jeremy Best – The Immigration of Germanic people to the US, 1700 to 1900

May 19 David Muhlena -- Czech and Slovak Genealogy and Czech immigration to Iowa

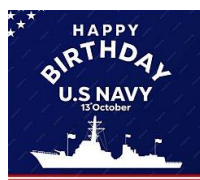
Editor's Desk**VOTE VOTE VOTE VOTE**

“NOTICE TO VOTERS - Your polling place may have changed. Please call a county office before each election to find if your polling place has changed and for updated information. County auditors must

finalize polling places by 20 days before the election, but polling place locations could change due to an emergency”. Also, when you call the county office, make sure that you are registered to vote.

No matter who you are going to vote for, please vote.

The United States Navy has a proud history. Several members of my family were in the Navy, which also created the Marine Corp. Type United States Navy in you browser for more info. Happy Birthday to the US Navy.



I'm sorry that I didn't make it to Doug and Gwenna's presentation on AI. Whether you like it or not, I think that it is the next big thing on the horizon. As a matter of fact, it's already in businesses and will probably expand. I know some other people who are using AI also. I 'm going to reread the minutes from the September meeting and maybe I can fit the pieces together, along with my friend/relative already using it.

I'll really miss writing the newsletter but it will give me a chance to concentrate on genealogy. BTW – I think I will read/listen to some of the YouTube videos made by Constance (Connie) Knox. She has many of them because I just searched YouTube and genealogy.

Speaking of finding genealogy information, I had already been told that the Internet was a good source but I found out for myself the other day. I ended up in Wikipedia and several links from that information.

Dick Cooper

Membership in SCGS

There are many good reasons why anyone with a computer and Internet access should visit the SCGS website.

- 1) Listing of current SCGS officers and links to email addresses
- 2) Meeting information
- 3) Location of Ames Public Library and resources
- 4) How to join Story County Genealogical Society
- 5) Listing of events with dates, speakers & details
- 6) Various SCGS newsletter issues
- 7) Many various handouts from presentations. Also helpful for genealogists to take home
- 8) Listing of members - for SCGS members only
- 9) Cemetery records – especially Story County
- 10) Research assistance in Story County, Iowa
- 11) Surname research
- 12) “Did You Know” facts page
- 13) Good website link page that you can share or use
- 14) Payment methods – the cost isn't that expensive.

NOTE: There are additional methods of payment if you don't want to pay online.

- Go to the NEWSLETTER page on the website (www.storygenes.com) and open any of the newsletters (except December 2017). Print the last page (page 8) for the membership application form.
- Or you can come to any of our meetings or seminars and ask an officer for a membership form and we'll make certain that you get it.

Ames Historical Meusum - October**Coffee Chat**

Friday, October 9, 2026 - 9:30am

Ames Pridefest

Saturday, October 10, 2026 - 10am to 6pm

History Talk: The Story County Courthouse Fight, 1864-1874

Tuesday, October 13, 2026 - 6:30pm

Ames: A Glimpse Inside

Saturday, October 17, 2026 - 10am to 3pm

History Happy Hour: Jack the Ripper

Friday, October 23, 2026 - 5:30pm to 8:30pm

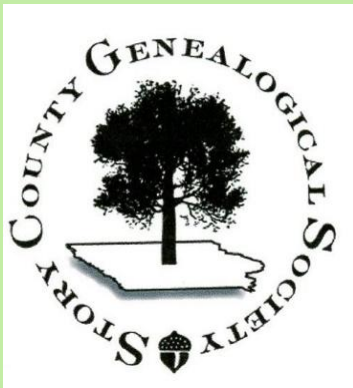
Automobiles - SCGS Word Search

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P	J	U	K	G	P	I	N	I	S	S	A	N	O	L	P	R	O	R
E	Z	I	X	D	C	N	X	U	N	M	F	V	Z	A	Z	D	F	Y
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D	E	S	O	T	O	A	S	U	B	A	R	U	P	T	R	I	R	Y

Words may be horizontal, vertical or diagonal and may be backward

Answers at [Word Search Answers](#) on the SCGS website

ACURA	CHRYSLER	IMPERIAL	MCLAREN	RIVIAN
AUDI	DESOTO	ISUZU	MERCURY	SATURN
BEETLE	DODGE	KAISER	MUSTANG	SUBARU
BENTLEY	FIAT	LEXUS	NISSAN	TOYOTA
BUICK	FORD	LINCOLN	PACKARD	TRIUMPH
CADILLAC	HONDA	LUCID	PONTIAC	VENTURI
CHEVY	HUNDAI	MAZDA	PORSCHE	VOLVO



Logo design by
Karen Pattee David

STORY COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Send dues and donations to P.O. Box 692, Ames, Iowa 50010

OR

Pay the Treasurer at a SCGS meeting

OR

Credit Cards are accepted also (www.storygenes.com)

Membership - Individual \$20 ____ or Family (2) \$25 ____

OR

Donations Voluntary

Make checks payable to Story County Genealogical Society

Membership Application

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

email: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Birthday: ____ / ____ / ____