



Colorado Genealogical Society

Newsletter

January 2026 Volume 51 Issue 01

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President's Message

Dear CGS Members,

One of the great pleasures of hosting CGS events recently has been the opportunity—at last—to meet members in person again. Shaking hands, seeing familiar smiling faces, and sharing animated conversations about genealogy is a joy that has been long overdue. Many of our best ideas, friendships, and volunteer efforts begin with simple face-to-face conversations.

At our DNA classes at the Hoffman Heights Library, I've enjoyed meeting several new members, and at our December holiday party it was especially rewarding to reconnect with longtime friends while also welcoming new faces.

Make no mistake—our online meetings have opened doors. They allow participation by members who live

farther away, have mobility challenges, or are balancing busy schedules. Zoom programs help us remain connected regardless of distance and make continued engagement possible when attending in person isn't practical.

What I've come to appreciate is how well these experiences complement one another. In-person meetings strengthen our sense of community, while online meetings expand it, making CGS more inclusive, resilient, and connected than ever before.

Whether I meet you in a meeting room or see your name appear on a Zoom screen, I value your participation equally. Thank you for showing up—however you do it. Our society is stronger because of you.

Bobbi King

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Anna Phillips
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Beth Reid
Bill Tracy
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Christine Beebe
Keener
Cina Johnson
Connie Paul
Debra Musselmar

Welcome to Our New and Renewing Members

The Colorado Genealogical Society is delighted to welcome our new members and extend a heartfelt thank-you to those who have renewed their memberships. Your enthusiasm, curiosity, and continued support strengthen our community and help us fulfill our mission of preserving family history and strengthening genealogical education. Whether you are just beginning your research journey or have been tracing your roots for years, we are glad you are part of CGS and look forward to learning and growing together in 2026.

Juan Nava
Barb Albrecht
Terese Scofidio
Beth Reid
Lusia Finberg
Marco Scofidio

**Welcome
New
Members**

| | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| Diane Barbour | Marcy Leonard |
| Gayla Stone | Marge Healy |
| George VanTrump | Margie Yevara |
| Gina Moore | Marie Baum |
| Glenn York | Marilyn Alvord |
| Jane Button | Maryellen Vialpando |
| Jason Cumberland | Marylee Hagen |
| Jean Kane | Michelle Simpkins |
| Jean West | Mike Jones |
| John Brink | Nancy Dierker |
| Julie Miller | Pam Collins |
| Karen Connor | Phillip McGovern |
| Karin Conway | Rudy Ramsey |
| Kay Laughlin | Sharon Tinianow |
| Leon & Shelia Pack | Shirley Vivion |
| Lesle Karnauskas | Teresa Sweetman |
| Libby Dollar | Therese Cordes |
| Lucina Johnson | Wayne Langley |
| Maggie Schmidt | Zoe Lappin |

January Lunch Bunch

We are kicking off the new year by gathering at [P.F. Chang's in Lakewood](#).

When: Thursday, January 22, 2026 at 11:30am

Where: 7210 W Alameda Ave. Lakewood, CO 80226

RSVP: Please email lunchbunch@cogensoc.us to reserve your spot.

We hope you will join us to celebrate 2026 and our shared interests in family history and genealogy.

Research Tip of the Month: Start Small

January resolutions can sometimes feel overwhelming. When it comes to genealogy, consider starting small. Choose one individual, one record group, or one research question. Document what you already know, note what you want to learn, and identify just one next step. Small, steady progress often leads to the most meaningful breakthroughs.

January is a New Beginning

We have been conditioned to think “New Year, New Start.” Whether you define resolutions or set goals, the beginning of a new year seems like a great place to start (or stop). In reality, everyday can be a great place to start.

We encourage you to look at your previous work with a fresh set of eyes. Keep in mind that no family tree is ever truly complete. The generations keep piling up and cousins keep dropping in. Don’t set out to do it all.

Instead, define your project or outcome more specifically. You could focus on the life of a single ancestor. You could commit to locating birth and death records for a single generation. There are so many options. For example, we have a member committed to finding and visiting the final resting place of each of their great grandparents.

New Year’s Day (January 1) - A time traditionally associated with fresh starts, goal setting, and reflection—much like beginning a new research project or revisiting an old one with new eyes.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day (January 19, 2026) - A day to honor service, leadership, and legacy, reminding us that individual lives—documented and remembered—can shape history in profound ways.

As we begin 2026, may your research be productive, your brick walls crack just a little, and your curiosity remain strong. We wish you a happy, healthy, and discovery-filled new year.

NEW Ancestry User Group

Are you an [Ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com) user? Whether you are a new user or have been in Ancestry for years, you can now gather once a month to chat with other users, share tips, or ask your questions about Ancestry. Join the group on Saturday afternoon, January 10 at 2:00pm and typically the second Saturday of every month. Kimberly Weed leads the group. Register to attend on the [CGS website](#) on the Events page.

January discussion plan:

- What's available in the database? Let's take a closer look at the card catalog and search functions.
- Live demonstration: Searching
- Q & A

January Program Presentation Heir to the Family Tree: Now What?

Have you inherited a family tree from a parent, grandparent, or another relative—and wondered what to do next? In **Heir to the Family Tree: Now What?**, Nancy Dierker guides you through the opportunities and challenges of working with inherited genealogy. Using a fun “roadside attractions” theme, you’ll learn how to evaluate existing research, identify new directions for discovery, validate family stories, and preserve your work for future generations.

This month’s program will be held on Saturday, January 17. Be sure to register in advance on the Events page of the CGS website.

Family Tree Maker User Group – Special Sessions!

In October, our Family Tree Maker User Group identified several FTM features that members wanted to explore more deeply. In response, CGS reached out to Family Tree Maker—and we were delighted to host Mark Olsen, Family Tree Maker Ambassador to genealogical societies, for a special session in November. Mark’s detailed explanations and live demonstrations of Maps, Task List, and Source Reports were a big hit with attendees.

If you missed out, don’t worry—there’s another session coming up Wednesday, January 14, 2026 at 7:00 PM

Topics will include:

- Charting Companion
- Error Report
- Duplicate Individuals

This will be a fantastic chance to continue learning about FTM's powerful tools and to get your questions answered directly by an expert. Don't miss this opportunity to take your Family Tree Maker skills to the next level.

Registration is required and attendance is limited to CGS members.

Please visit the [CGS website](#) to reserve your spot.

AI Query of the Month: Where Do I Start?

This is a good time to define your next project or to figure out where to go next with a stalled one. You can use AI to help you get started.

AI Query:

"What questions should I ask before starting (or restarting) a genealogy research project on one ancestor?"

Use AI as a brainstorming partner to help identify gaps, generate research questions, or suggest ways to organize what you already know before diving back into records. This is a great way to get those fresh eyes on your project.

CGS DNA Series

Are you interested in hearing more about the use of DNA to identify family members? Whether you have done a DNA test or are just interested in hearing the details of an actual hunt, you should consider attending the January event.

Libby Dollar will continue the CGS DNA series with her talk on Finding Birth Parents Using DNA. She will build on the Introduction to Genetic Genealogy by Anna Phillips by sharing how she has applied those skills to identify birth parents of adopted individuals. Join her on Saturday, January 17 from 2:00-4:00pm via Zoom. Register on the CGS Events page to get the link.

Both Anna and Libby regularly use their skills in Genetic Genealogy, whether they are assisting an adoptee, identifying unknown remains, or tying DNA evidence to a potential perpetrator for law enforcement. We are delighted that they are willing to share their processes to assist genealogists at all levels in connecting DNA matches to their family trees.

Everyone is welcome!

See What You Might Have Missed

Members of CGS have access to [Video Links of Programs and Classes](#). These recorded programs will be available, at least for a limited time (usually around 30 days), in the Members Only section of the CGS website.

Questions??

Do you have questions for or about the Colorado Genealogical Society? Did you know you can email us at cgscontact@cogensoc.us? That's right. We'll be happy to help you get the answers you need.

If you have questions about any of the excellent archives around the state, you can save time by contacting them directly.

Newsletter Submissions

Have something you'd like to share in the newsletter? Submissions must be received by the **20th of the month** to be considered for the next issue. While publication isn't guaranteed, all submissions will receive a response from the newsletter team.

Send submissions to: newsletter@cogensoc.us.

Unless otherwise noted, all Colorado Genealogical Society meetings are free and open to the public. Please remember to [register in advance](#) for all Zoom activities, as attendance is limited to 100 connections. If you're unable to attend, kindly cancel by clicking the "cancel" link in your registration email.

Message from the Editor

The articles in this newsletter have been written by the people in the know. The articles may have been edited by ChatGPT 5.0 to add clarity and consistency. Our feature, AI Query of the Month, is written in conjunction with ChatGPT.

If you have any feedback on this newsletter, please send an email to newsletter@cogensoc.us.

Don't forget to register for events at <http://www.cogensoc.us/>

90 Days of Genealogy with CGS - Mark Your Calendars

Here is the schedule of events for the next three months! To register for any of this month's events, go to www.cogensoc.us. To join the In Person Lunch Bunch, email lunchbunch@cogensoc.us. Future months are still in development and subject to change.

| January 2026 | February | March |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 - 10:00am Beginning Genealogy 10 - 2:00pm Ancestry.com User Group 11 - 1:30pm-3:30pm WriteNOW 12 - 7:00pm Monthly Board Meeting 14 - 10:00am The Master Genealogist Users 14 - 7:00pm Family Tree Maker Users 15 - 11:30am Virtual Lunch Bunch 17 - 9:30am-11:30am CGS Monthly Meeting Heir to the Family Tree - Now What by Nancy Dierker 17 - 2:00pm Finding Birth Parents Using DNA by Libby Dollar 22 - 11:30am In-Person Lunch Bunch 27 - 7:00pm Tech on Tuesdays | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9 - 7:00pm Monthly Board Meeting 11 - 10:00am The Master Genealogist Users 14 - 10:00am Beginning Genealogy 14 - 2:00pm Ancestry.com User Group 15 - 1:30pm-3:30pm WriteNOW 18 - 7:00pm Family Tree Maker Users 19 - 11:30am Virtual Lunch Bunch 21 - 9:30am-11:30am CGS Monthly Meeting 21 - 4:00pm-6:00pm Introduction to Genetic Genealogy by Anna Phillips 24 - 7:00pm Tech on Tuesdays 26 - 11:30am In-Person Lunch Bunch | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 - 1:30pm-3:30pm WriteNOW 9 - 7:00pm Monthly Board Meeting 11 - 10:00am The Master Genealogist Users 14 - 10:00am Beginning Genealogy 14 - 2:00pm Ancestry.com User Group 18 - 7:00pm Family Tree Maker Users 19 - 11:30am Virtual Lunch Bunch 21 - 9:30am-11:30am CGS Monthly Meeting 24 - 7:00pm Tech on Tuesdays 26 - 11:30am In-Person Lunch Bunch |