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# WCGS NEWSLETTER

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Washington County Genealogical Society of Texas

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[www.bluebonnetgenealogy.org](http://www.bluebonnetgenealogy.org)

[www.facebook.com/wcgs.texas](http://www.facebook.com/wcgs.texas)

## Information

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mailing address:  
2211 South Day St.  
Suite 105  
Brenham, TX 77833

1.979.633.4848  
link to email

**[Use this link to  
subscribe or to renew  
your membership.](#)**

## 2017-18 Officers

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President:  
Jan Kelm

Vice-President:  
Geraldine Johnson

Secretary:  
Vanessa Smith

Treasurer:  
Lu Hollander

Newsletter Editor:  
Susan Lake  
[genealogy@susanlake.net](mailto:genealogy@susanlake.net)

## Don't Forget

This month's meeting will be a week later than usual since Blinn is closed the first week in January. Our program will be A Brief History of Washington County by Geraldine Johnson. We look forward to seeing you at 7:15 on January 8.

It's time to renew your WCGS membership. Dues are still \$12 for a single and \$18 for a couple. Make our treasurer's life easier. Bring your check to the January meeting or mail it to Lu Hollander at the following address:

2211 South Day St.  
Suite 105  
Brenham, TX 77833

## What You Missed

WCGS met at Blinn College at 7:15 on December 4. There were twenty one members present, including our newest member, George Zemanek. There were some technical difficulties with the college computer system that did not allow for the usual visual displays. President Kelm encouraged members to help themselves to the Christmas treats and continue to enjoy the refreshments during the program.

Joycine Hanath delivered her presentation of the history of blown-glass German Christmas ornaments. We learned that St. Boniface is credited with the custom of using live trees for Christmas, typically with an assortment of fruits and cookies used as trimmings. In about 1848, ornaments of glass began to be used as seasonal additions, but only German immigrants in America were using them to decorate their trees in 1850. Lausche, Germany, was a center of production for these ornaments, but no remnant of the factory building remains today. The ornaments became quite valuable over time and Woolworth's

## Looking Forward

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The next meeting will be January 8 at **7:15 P.M.** in the Blinn Student Center. The program is going to be A Brief History of Washington County by Geraldine Johnson.

## Meeting Time

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Our meeting time has been adjusted to 7:15 (from our previous 7 pm) to allow the class using the room ahead of us to leave and to allow time for our speakers to set up.

## New Members

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If you know of someone with a genealogy interest, tell them about us. They can join at any time.

## Memberships

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Texas State Genealogical Society

Washington County Chamber of Commerce

## Dues Reminder

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Please give Lu Hollander your 2018 dues or mail them to 2211 South Day St. Suite 105 Brenham, TX 77833. The cost is \$12 for a single person or \$18 for a couple living at the same address. [Click here for the 2018 form.](#)

department stores sold them in 1880 for \$25.00 each. These ornaments were difficult to acquire from Eastern Germany during the time of the Berlin Wall and were sometimes smuggled out. With deforestation of the trees of Germany, people were discouraged from using live trees for decoration and began to adopt goose feather trees. Joycine brought an example of this kind of tree, an example of a wooden mold, and a sampling of her ornament collection, which she began in the 1980s. These ornaments are especially prized for their beautiful luster, owing to the silver that was applied to the inside of each.

## Business meeting:

Last meeting's minutes and the treasurer's reports were emailed previously and approved with no corrections or additions.

## Tidbit

Jan Kelm read excerpts from the January 1913, Brenham Daily Banner which told of some local holiday celebrations called, "A Christmas Tree" that took place and included singing, sermons, treats of the season.

General discussion took place on the location of the County Poor Farm. It was located off Mount Vernon Road on New Years Creek in the Gay Hill area. The residents also included some local prisoners. The facility was short-lived from about 1900-1915.

## Do Something With Your Genealogy in 2018

As the new year quickly approaches, many of us are making resolutions or setting goals. If something like "do something with my genealogy" is on your 2018 "to-do" list, I have a way that can help.

52 Ancestors in 52 Weeks is a series of weekly prompts designed to help you get past the overwhelm and the feeling of being stuck about what to write. (I was that kid back in school who thought the hardest part of any paper was finding the topic! I've discovered that many genealogists are the same way with sharing their research.)

Each Monday, participants will get an email with the weekly prompt. There's also a monthly recap/look-ahead to help people plan.

What do you do with the prompt? Anything you want. You could write a blog post. You could post a photo on social media. You could make a video. You could record yourself talking about the topic. The point is to get our knowledge and those discoveries out of our filing cabinets and computers and into the hands of others.

Genealogy truly is better when it's shared.

I hope you'll consider joining the 52 Ancestors in 52 Weeks challenge. (By the way, did I mention that it's free?) Every bit that we can record and share with others is another bit of our family history that can be preserved.

You can get more details and sign up over on the blog post "52 Ancestors in 52 Weeks." Here's the link: <https://www.amyjohnsoncrow.com/52-ancestors-in-52-weeks/>

## For Our Czech Researchers

Texas Czech Genealogical Society (TCGS)

Keeping Alive and Cheating Death

January 27, 2018 8:00 AM – 4:00PM

Caldwell Civic and Visitor Center, 103 Texas Hwy. 21 West, Caldwell, Tx. 77836

The January 27, 2018 program on sharing and preserving family health information and records and understanding the genealogical aspects of DNA and DNA results (see details at [www.txczgs.org](http://www.txczgs.org)) is open to anyone interested. Topics included are "Family History: Are You Passing It On?" by Charlene Hurta, "My Moravian Odyssey" by Gladys Valchar, "He Died of What? Explaining Causes of Death" by Doug Kubicek and "DNA Testing and Genealogy" by Jane Magill. Additionally, music will be provided by Henry and Mark Holub, there will be a sales table with authentic Czech items and a silent auction.

Registration (includes catered lunch) Membership in TCGS is not required to attend.

Register by credit card at <https://squareup.com/store/TXCZGS/item/registration> or mail registration form (see [www.txczgs.org](http://www.txczgs.org)) and check to Carroll Brincefield, PO BOX 45, Hallettsville, TX 77964.

Earlybird Deadline: Postmarked on/before January 13th

Members: \$35 and non-members \$40

Regular Deadline: Postmarked between January 14-19th

Members: \$40 and non-members \$45

Registration at Door: For all attendees not registered by January 19th, 2018

\$50 members & non-members.

For more information call 361-798-6588 or 361-798-4280 or email [brincefieldc@gmail.com](mailto:brincefieldc@gmail.com).

See Texas Czech Genealogical Society (TCGS) website (<http://txczgs.org/>) for forms and additional information.