



San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society

www.srvgensoc.org



San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society

Vol. XXXVII No. 5 November - 2021

November Presentation:

Tuesday November 16, 2021 at 10 am

ABSENT ANCESTORS AND HIDDEN CLUES!

(VIA ZOOM)

BY PAM VESTAL, APG



Why haven't you found your ancestors in the records? Documents are often hidden from view, with information that is present but concealed, stored in a place or a manner that is unexpected, misspelled, indexed incorrectly, or separated from the other similar records. Pam will explore strategies for tracking down these elusive ancestors so that we don't miss a single detail.

Pam Vestal is a professional genealogist and speaker from West Linn, Oregon and the owner of Generations Genealogy, LLC. After 20 years as a professional writer, Pam turned her full attention to her longtime love of genealogy. Since then, her articles have appeared in the Association of Professional Genealogists Quarterly and

FGS's Forum magazine, and her lectures take her from coast to coast. Currently Pam offers genealogical research for clients and works one-on-one with aspiring genealogists who want to improve their skills.

Until the restrictions of 2020, Pam had spoken annually for the previous 5 years at the Southern California Genealogy Jamboree. She has also lectured at regional genealogical conferences and societies in Illinois, Texas, Virginia.

Pam's website is <https://www.generationsgen.com>

A link to the meeting will be sent out to all members a few days prior to the meeting. If you have any friends or family that would like to attend, have them contact Steve at president@srvgensoc.org for the link prior to the meeting. If you have any Zoom questions or issues, please contact Steve Watty at 925-766-6706 or Bill George at wiliamcgeorge@gmail.com.

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Notes on the October Presentation:

Tuesday October 19, 2021

HERE COMES THE 1950 US CENSUS!**WHAT TO EXPECT (VIA ZOOM)**

Notes by Russ Erickson

Joel Weintraub and Steve Morse, with 70 volunteers, have worked on the 1950 census for 8 years, regarding utilities, enumerators (census takers), codes, and summaries evaluating what to expect and how best to use this census for genealogists and others. <https://www.stevemorse.org> and JDW Talk (15 segments) on U Tube contain much data and references. ED = Enumerator district. 1950 also added a housing schedule for the first time.

Dr Weintraub suggests preparing a 1950 folder on computer, with his handout as a first sheet and a list of people of interest to you as a second. Put in a blank high resolution Enumerator sheet-available in his handout data.

Census basics: one done every 10 years since 1790 which re-apportions the House of Representatives and determines distribution of federal funds. There is a 72 year privacy period to obtain results for genealogists, determined in conjunction with the National Archivist. Caveats: you do not know who provided the information for any household (noted in 1940, but not 1950), was the census taker honest? Were questions asked as written? The US Territories (Alaska, Hawaii) and military, civilian contractors and their dependents living abroad (but not private citizen Americans abroad) were included, with 500,000 people, but not all of these will be available to us. Claire Kusken, the National Archivist in charge will let us see a part of these only. <https://www.tinyurl.com/8st4d8ke> is a web site that has some detail on each census from 1790-1950.

Evaluators had to send supervisors a daily postcard on their progress, and were paid 7 cents visit (about \$87 for 98 work hours). In rural areas the rate was hourly. In 1950, a very good restaurant meal was about \$1.50. They had footnotes for questionable answers, especially about ages of family members. Place of birth was also often questionable. College students were interviewed at any public place they might congregate, not at their homes. Housing and costs went by census tracts, adding the number living there. Transients were also included. There was a 20% sampling for education level, marriage duration, etc. Note that 6% of people had moved in the past year on average. Income was requested but often refused. The median then was \$2600 per year (isn't inflation wonderful?)

In 2012, the 1940 census opened and note that demand crashed the website; likely to happen again this year. Genealogy volunteers indexed the 1940 census in nearly 5 months, with 163,000 volunteers. This census will be digitalized. There are ~9600 1950 ED maps on line in the NARA Catalogue and maps on the speaker's U Tube site. Put the ones you want in your 1950 folder. <https://www.stevemorse.org> also has a Unified Utility Tool. Note the census used maps available to denote ED districts, some as old as the 1930s! The National Archives do not have all ED maps, but Morse and Weintraub have them on their U Tube websites.

Between 1940 and 1950, the population of Contra Costa County more than doubled! EDs were often split, adding an A, B, C. etc. to district numbers. (Fort Worth, TX went to H in subsplits.) Check the legend with ED maps for the first 2 numbers when maps show only 3 numbers with some letters. You need 5 to seek map information, and use of a street with cross streets is very helpful in reducing the possible number of districts to check. Looking for people, use the National Archives as well as Morse and Weintraub sites. Check the handout for various tools to put in your 1950 folder.■

*In case you missed this presentation, **Its Not Too Late!** The link to the Zoom recording is available on our website www.srvgensoc.org for our members until Nov 16, 2021. (You may wonder why we retain the recording for only 1 month. We are limited to the amount of space we are allowed for Zoom recordings; and some of our speakers have restrictions on how long we make their presentations available.) The handouts for most of our speakers are retained long term on our website for members.*



President's Message

By Steve Watty



The year 2021 is in the final quarter which includes some of the best family holidays, Thanksgiving and Christmas. I wish all our members very joyous celebrations during these months as we transition to larger family gatherings during these challenging times. This newsletter will be the final printing of the year and our general meeting

on November 16 will also complete society business for 2021. Our Cookie Exchange, previously held during December, again, will not be held due to Covid limitations placed on group gatherings. We only hope that this traditional event can be resumed in 2022.

The society contemplates Zoom meetings to continue into mid-2022 until the Family History Center, Contra Costa County, and our members agree that it is again safe to meet in person. We continue to evaluate the hybrid meeting option, i.e., a combination of Zoom and in-person attendance and hope this will provide a good viable option for all our members.

Many opportunities exist for volunteer work during 2022. First, the society will need members to fill board and committee termed-out positions starting in June 2022. Please consider one of these important assignments. Second, the National Genealogical Society (NGS) will hold their conference in Sacramento during May 2022. Volunteers are needed to help with this event. Additional information is included elsewhere in this newsletter.

Wishing everyone a safe, healthy, and enjoyable holiday season. Happy hunting!■



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

November 2021

- 16 Tuesday—10am the November General Meeting will be held via Zoom Link. The speaker will be Pam Vestal on **Absent Ancestors and Hidden Clues**.
- 23 Tuesday—10am The Board Meeting will be held via Zoom

December 2021

There are no meetings in the month of December, and no Newsletter is published. Our traditional Cookie Exchange is also cancelled.

January 2022

- 18 Tuesday—10am the January General Meeting will be held via Zoom Link. The speaker will be Steven Morrison on **Western Overland Trails**
- 25 Tuesday—10am The Board Meeting will be held via Zoom

February 2022

- 15 Tuesday—10am The February General Meeting will be held via Zoom Link. The speaker will be Kathy Wurth on **Preparing for a Heritage Trip**.
- 22 Tuesday—10am The Board Meeting will be held via Zoom.

March 2022

- 15 Tuesday—10am The March General Meeting will be held via Zoom Link. Christine Cohen will speak on **Immigration Ports of Entry**.■



Like us on
Facebook

You know you're addicted to genealogy when you act like a kid on Christmas morning after visiting a state archive or county courthouse.

GREAT UNCLE WALTIE AND THE IRISH CEMETERY

By: Leslie Stewart

Great-Uncle Waltie, Grave-Desecrator.... My mother's uncle, Walter Keene, was a reputable Seattle lawyer in the 1890s and early 1900s, as far as I knew. He had come to Seattle from Wisconsin, along with his family and the family of his brother-in-law, Seattle politician Hiram Gill.

I was a little surprised to find that his mother's postcard album included many postcards sent by Walter from Cork, Ireland in 1906 and 1907. And I was even more surprised when I went looking in newspaper archives to see why he was in Ireland, and found an article saying he had almost been arrested for desecrating a graveyard. He and his companions boarded the ship home just ahead of the warrant reaching the docks.

Walter was in Ireland researching the claim of a client, supposedly the brother of a very wealthy man who had died in Seattle in September of 1900. Although the deceased, John Sullivan, said he had no relatives once his sisters in Cork had died, the fact that he died intestate had claimants appearing from all over Canada, the US and Ireland, and lawyers signing up to represent them.

Eventually the claims and counter-claims, including those from the state and from King County, became so complicated that the court authorized a

commission to go to Ireland and collect depositions. Walter had already gone to Cork once and come back to the US for more research on his client's case. He set out again to be part of the group taking depositions.

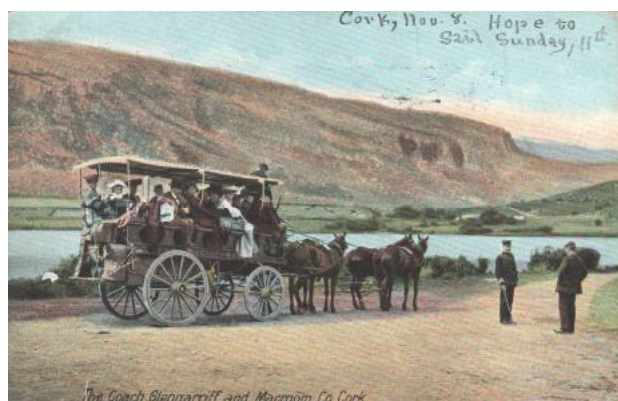
The administrator of the estate, Thomas O'Brien, had made his own trip to Ireland shortly after Sullivan's death. He had located some possible cousins. He also researched John Sullivan's sisters; both had died childless. At least one of them, Ellen, had been buried in the family grave.

And here is where an old Irish custom contributed to some ghoulish research. In Ireland, at that time, when a member of a family died, the family grave was opened, and the coffin from the previous burial was discarded. The bones were placed back in the grave, and the new coffin was added on top, with the "breast plates" ("coffin plates" in the US) of the earlier burials laid on top of that.

So when O'Brien got permission to open Ellen Sullivan Silva's grave, her coffin rested on the bones and under the breast plates of relatives, some of whom were assumed, and later proven, to be her parents. Residents of the area protested about opening the grave, and were overruled, as the procedure wasn't actually illegal, just distasteful.

At the end of the Seattle commission's visit, Walter, the other attorneys and the commission's stenographer again managed to get the grave opened, and they removed and photographed the remains and the breast plates which were now resting on Hannah Callaghan's coffin. This time the protests of the community rose to such a level that the group was under danger of arrest.

Although he was a "wanted man", Walter later returned to Cork without incident, although it's unclear what he was seeking on that trip. His claimant



to the Sullivan fortune had failed to prove a relationship to the dead millionaire. Walter and his legal partner had probably spent a good deal of money on a dry hole. Luckily, his cemetery research was only a brief note in a case that made headlines for almost ten years. He died with his reputation intact, and the story forgotten even by his relatives, although as one of them reported, "Waltie never liked the Irish".



Editor's note: This article is from one of our members. I encourage all of you to write a short story to be published in a future issue of our Newsletter. There must be something that you are proud of finding, a breakthrough that has been long coming or even a funny, interesting, or possibly ironic story about one of your ancestors. It can be as short as a paragraph or two or as long as two pages or so. Publication will be determined by when I receive it and by space available.



We Want Your Suggestions and Feedback ...

To Our Membership: The Programs Committee is actively lining up speakers going into 2022. In order to make sure that the subject matter is of interest to you, your board would like to hear from you on subjects that you would like to hear about as we continue to schedule speakers. Please email any of the members listed on p.6 with your thoughts, suggestions, comments, and ideas.

The Cousin Explainer



Newsletter update

As per other society functions, there will be no newsletter published for the month of December. There will be no monthly or board meetings and with a couple of exceptions and you know who you are, none of the SIGs will be meeting. I wish you all a very healthy and happy holiday season and will welcome any of your stories for publication in future issues. If you have any suggestions or ideas for how to improve or make your newsletter more helpful, I welcome those as well. See my contact info in the officers box on p. 6. Happy Holidays and I'll "see" you in January, Barbara!

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Shhhh!
Be vewy,
vewy quiet.
I'm hunting
forebears.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP UPDATE

By: Bill George

In November, the five SIGS will meet online. The Publishing SIG is using *Google Meet* and the rest, *Zoom*. All SIG members receive emails from their leaders on how to join each meeting. See details below.



Irish/Scottish Research - Wednesday, Nov 10th (the 2nd Wednesday) You may contact Patty Erickson, the SIG leader at russpat@comcast.net.



Family Search - Monday, Nov 8th, (the 2nd Monday) **1 pm – 3 pm** in a Zoom Meeting. Learn the many aspects of this free, comprehensive genealogy web site. You may contact SIG Leader Bill George at williamcgeorge@gmail.com.



Publishing – Thursday Nov 18th, (the 3rd Thursday) **10:30am – 12noon** via Google Meet. Contact Kathy Javdani at kjjsc@aol.com for info on how to join the meeting. Francie Lloyd, is the SIG Leader and can be reached at frances_lloyd@comcast.net.



DNA - Monday Nov 22th, (an exception to the usual 3rd Monday due to scheduling conflicts) **1 – 3pm**, in a Zoom meeting. This SIG assumes a basic knowledge of Genealogical DNA testing and therefore is only open to those who have completed the SRVGS Intro to DNA class or an approved equivalent. You may contact SIG Leader Mark McLaren at greatscot@earthlink.net.



German Research – Wednesday Dec 1st, (this date is an exception to the usual 4th Wednesday so as to not interfere with Thanksgiving) **10am – 12noon**, in a Zoom meeting. Members share information from a variety of sources. You may contact SIG Leader Cathy Tanaka at cathytanaka622@gmail.com. ■



EDUCATION

By: Kathy Javdani

Let's give thanks in November for a bountiful harvest of learning opportunities.

 The California Genealogy Society's Library, www.californiaancestors.org, is open for research by individual appointment only. Classes and events will continue online. Check website for details and to register for the following activities and note any fees.

On Sat. Nov. 6th from 10:15-12:15 **Introduction to Genealogy** will meet. The focus this month will be on **Vital Records, Birth Marriage and Death**

On Tue. Nov. 9th from 6:30 to 8 there will be a final session of the class on **BIPOC Genealogy and African American History in California's Gold Rush**.

On Sat. Nov. 27th from 2-4 the **Eastern European Special Interest Group** will hold its quarterly meeting facilitated by Craig Siulinski.

On Sat. Dec 4th from 10:15-12:15 the **Intro to Genealogy** will focus on **Organizing Your Family History Work**.

 Oakland Family Search Library, www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Oakland_California_FamilySearch_Library. The library is open by appointment only. Email fhcoakland@gmail.com or call 510-531-3905 for an appointment or to register for an online class. In addition, the website has links to online classes at other Family Search Regional Libraries. The Family History Library in Salt Lake also presents a number of webinars each month. Go to https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/img_auth.php/e/7/11-Nov_2021.pdf for the list of November webinars.

- On Wednesdays from 6-8 Jane Lindsey will provide **French Canadian Assistance**. No appt. required.
- On Wed., Nov. 28th from 6-8 the **African American Research Group** will have a Zoom meeting.

 The Southern California Genealogical Society (SCGS), www.scsgsgenealogy.com/webinar/jes-index.html offers free webinars. Register online in advance. The upcoming presentation is:

- On Sat. Nov. 6th at 10 Billie R. McNamara will share **It Takes a Village to Unearth the "Real" History**.

- On Wed. Nov. 17th at 6 Steven W. Morrison will explore **Western Overland Trails - Following the Seven T's**.

- On Sat. Dec. 4th at 10 Mary K. Risseuw will examine **Genealogy of a Neighborhood, Urban and Rural**.

SCGS also offers the following webinars at their website for free to the public.

- **Microfilm Catalog, Archival Databases and Guides National Archives** by Kerry Bartels with downloadable notes.
- **Neither Filmed or Scanned: NARA Treasurers Await** by Kerry Bartels
- **The Many Facets of the National Archives** by Kerry Bartels with downloadable notes.
- **National Archives Website Microfilm Catalog, Archival Databases and Guides** by Kerry Bartels with downloadable notes.

 The New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS), <https://www.americanancestors.org/education/online-classes> has a growing Online Learning Center that offers educational resources for both guest users and NEHGS members. It contains subject guides on a variety of genealogical topics, informative videos, webinars, online courses, and more. If you have questions or feedback, contact Online Education. Register online.

- On Tue. Nov. 2nd, 9th, 16th and 23rd from 4-5:30 ET Dr. Aaron Welt will lead an online class on **The Yiddish of Yankeeland: The Jews of Boston and America, 1840-1924**. Fee \$85.
- On Wed. Nov. 3rd, 10th, and 17th from 6-7:30 ET Joseph McMillan and Nathaniel Lane Taylor will present **Introduction to Heraldry for Genealogists**. Fee \$85
- On Thur. Nov. 4th from 1-2 ET Anne Willan will share her book **Women in the Kitchen**.

- On Fri. Nov. 5th from 4-5:15 ET Thomas Michie will explore **The Impact of the China Trade on New England Architecture**. Fee \$15
- On Tue. Nov. 9th from 6-7 ET Robert A. Gross with a panel will discuss **The Transcendentalists and Their World**.
- On Fri. Nov. 12th from 1-2 ET Dr. Jennifer Melville and Dr. Hannah Lee will present **Facing Our Past: Addressing the Legacies of Slavery and Empire** at National Trust for Scotland Properties.
- On Mon. Nov. 15th at 6 ET there will be a panel **Discussing Outcomes in the Search for Knowledge, Past and Present**. Fee \$75
- On Thur. Nov. 18th, from 3-4 ET Hallie Borstel will answer **Where? Understanding Boundaries and Jurisdictions**.
- On Wed. Dec. 1st, 8th, and 15th from 6-7:30 ET David Allen will present **Researching Civil War Ancestors**. Fee \$85.

Unable to attend the live broadcast? A recording of the free events will be posted to the NEHGS website the following day.

 The National Archives - www.archives.gov/research/genealogy offers a genealogy tutorial, genealogy research topics and a variety of charts and forms.

 The DAR Library at www.dar.org/national-society/genealogy offers help on a variety of genealogical topics. Also see the upcoming events schedule here: www.dar.org/libraryevents

 Ancestry.com offers online courses. Some are FREE, while others require a subscription. You can READ about them at <https://ancestry.com/academy>

 The Allen County Public Library's Genealogy Center offers a number of webinars. Go to <https://acpl.lib.in.us/genealogy> to check the listing for November and register for them online. Also explore the Genealogy Center Videos at <https://acpl.lib.in.us/explore-genealogy/our-services>.

 Legacy offers numerous free webinars every month. Go to <https://familytreewebinars.com> to register.

- On Tue. Nov. 2nd at 6 Cathie Sherwood will examine **Uncovering the Lives of Your Lon-** ►

don (England) Ancestors.

- On Wed. Nov. 3rd at 11 Diahan Southard will explain **Investigative Genetic Genealogy- the Use of DNA for Law Enforcement**.
- On Fri. Nov. 5th at 11 Char McCargo Bah will present **Say Amen: Going to Church with the Master - Finding the Mother Church**.
- On Tue. Nov. 9th at 11 Elisabeth Zetland will offer **An Overview of the Massive New Record Collection from France**.
- On Wed. Nov. 10th at 5 Larry W. Thomas will contrast **The Two Colonial Georgias**.
- On Fri. Nov. 12th at 11 Nicka Smith will share **Court Records for People of Color Family History Research**.
- On Tue. Nov. 16th at 5 LaBrenda Garrett-Nelson will explore **Planning Research**.
- On Wed. Nov. 17th at 11 Marc McDermott will explain **How to Build Your Genealogy Website on WordPress**.
- On Fri. Nov. 19th at 11 Christine Woodcock will explore **Finding Your Scottish Ancestors in Canada**.
- On Tues. Nov. 30th Benjamin Hollister will present **Genealogy a la Carte—Using Australian Historical Maps in Your Research**.
- On Wed. Dec. 1st at 11 Michelle Leonard will discuss **The Top Ten DNA Do's and Don'ts**.

 Here are some other webinars and podcasts that are online:

- Extreme Genes: Family History Radio <https://extremegenes.com/blog>
- The Genealogy Guys Podcast www.genealogyguys.com
- Lisa Louise Cooke's Genealogy Gems <https://lislouiscooke.com/podcasts>
- Lisa also has an hour genealogy chat on Youtube at 9 am on Thursdays entitled **Eleven-
ses**.
- Thomas MacEntee's website: www.genealogybargains.com

- Judy Russell's web-site: www.legalgenealogist.com
- Family History Fanatics www.familyhistoryfanatics.com/blog
- Connie Knox <http://genealogytv.org>

And there's more....

 The Sutro Library hosts the **Bay Area Genealogy Calendar**, www.library.ca.gov/sutro/genealogy/calendar. This calendar provides information about events throughout the Bay Area.

 ConferenceKeeper.org, <https://ConferenceKeeper.org>, lists conferences events, calls for papers, contests, grants, volunteer opportunities, tours and more. You can sign up at mail@sendfoxmail.com to receive *Tami at Conference Keeper* which lists events that have been added in the last week.

Events from Local Societies

- On Thur. Nov. 4th at 1 the Genealogical Society of Vallejo and Benicia, <https://gsvb.org>, will present Jeff Solomon as their guest speaker. He will discuss **Naturalization**. Please contact 707-334-0675 or President @gsvb.org to register to attend.
- On Mon. Nov. 8th from 7-8:30 the Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society, www.l-ags.org, will host a ZOOM meeting with Cath Madden Trindle as guest speaker. She will discuss **Exploring Irish Townlands**. Register on the society's website.
- On Thur. Nov. 11th from 6:30-8 the Contra Costa County Genealogical Society, <https://cccgs.net>, will hold a ZOOM meeting with Janice Sellers as guest speaker. She will present **Read All About It! Using Online Newspapers for Genealogical Research**. Register on the society's website.
- On Tue. Nov. 16th from 6:30-8:30 the Santa Clara County Historical & Genealogical Society, www.scchgs.org, will hold its meeting via ZOOM. Cyndi Ingle will present **Cyndi's List in Practice**. Register on the society's website.
- On Thur. Nov. 18th Napa Valley Genealogical Society, www.napagensoc.org, will present Mark and Sally Perkins via ZOOM speaking ►

on **Mayflower: The Story Goes On**. Register on the society's website.

- On Thur. Nov. 19th at 9:30 the Mt. Diablo Genealogical Society, <https://mdgs.webs.com/calendar>, will host a ZOOM meeting. Robert Trapp will discuss **The 401st Anniversary of the Landing of the Mayflower, and What is Needed to Join the Mayflower Society**. Register on the society's website.
- On Sat. Nov. 20th at 12 the Sonoma County Genealogical Society, www.scgsonline.org will host Rebecca Whitman Koford as guest speaker. She will examine **The War of 1812: Service Records, Pension, and Bounty Land**. Register on the society's website.
- On Sun. Nov. 21st at 1:30 the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society, www.sfbajgs.org, will hold a ZOOM meeting. Joel Weintraub will present **Here Comes the 1950 U.S. Census! What to Expect**. Register on the society's website.

Upcoming Special Events...

Please note that some conferences are opting to hold virtual presentations instead of their usual on-site conference. Visit the conference site for registration and updates.

- Scottish Indexes, www.scottishindexes.com, will hold its next one day conference on Sunday December 5th. Register on the website.
- RootsTech Connect 2022, www.RootsTech.org will take place virtually from March 3-5.
- From May 25-28, 2022 the California Genealogical Society will host the 2022 National Genealogical Society Family History Conference at the SAFE Credit Union Convention Center in Sacramento. Refer to <https://conference.ngsgenealogy.org>. The NGS is looking for volunteers for this conference to help with conference registration, serve as room monitors, Ask Me volunteers, goodie bag stuffers etc. Volunteering does *not* include free access to the official conference events but will entitle you to visit the exhibit hall, attend planned social events and go on one of the four tours. Check back on the January issue of this newsletter for more details as they become available.■ ►

Update on Family History Centers opening...

The Oakland Family Search Center (at the Oakland LDS Temple) is open now for limited in-person research by appointment only but Chris Engstrom understands that there is plenty of availability. Call them at 510-531-3905. Chris reports that she is still awaiting the appropriate approvals to reopen the local Diablo Family History Center. Check back here next month for a update on this process. Be aware that appointments will probably be needed since there will most likely be a limit to the number of people in the room at any time. Regular sanitization of the computers, desks and chairs will be conducted, and masks will be required for patrons with exceptions allowed for those with difficulty breathing. She notes that the Concord FHC is open and no appointments are necessary.■

All my friends are posting weather updates and photos on facebook and I'm just over here dancing around 'cause I just found out my 3rd great grandmother's name.

Danville Family History Center

2949 Stone Valley Rd. Alamo

Phone: 925-552-5920



Monday: 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Tuesday: 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Wednesday: 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

and 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Closed on Holidays, the month of August

FHC Director:

Chris Engstrom: cechocolatego@gmail.com

Subscription Sites Available For Free at FHC:

- Ancestry.com
- Fold3.com
- Heritage Quest
- MyHeritage.com
- Origins.net
- ProQuest Obituary Listings
- Godfrey Memorial Lib
- Newspaper Archive
- World Vital Records
- Findmypast (UK)

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