

VENTURING INTO OUR PAST

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE CONEJO VALLEY AND VENTURA COUNTY



JGSCV

July 2023

Volume 18 Issue 10

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

We hope this finds you well and safe.

JGSCV was both privileged and engaged with Randy Schoenberg's presentation, *The Lady in Gold: The Extraordinary Tale of Gustav Klimt's Masterpiece, "Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer"*. It is the true story of Maria Altmann, a Jewish woman who took on and won a years-long battle against the Austrian government to regain ownership of a Gustav Klimt painting of her aunt, Adele Bloch-Bauer. The painting was completed between 1903 and 1907. Altmann, working in collaboration with Schoenberg, successfully sued the Austrian Government for the return of five Klimt paintings seized by the Nazis from the Bloch-Bauer family townhouse in Vienna during World War II. See page 4 for the highlights of this excellent program.

Since our program, the *New York Times* reported that another Klimt painting, "Lady with a Fan," was sold for the highest price for a public sale, for \$108.4 million—an auction record for the artist.

(<https://tinyurl.com/yc84bf9z>.) It was sold to a Hong Kong-based art advisor who was buying for a Hong Kong collector. It was one of two unfinished paintings photographed on easels in Klimt's Vienna studio shortly after the artist died of Spanish flu, at age 55, in February 1918. Simon Stock, a specialist in Impressionist and modern art at Sotheby's, said that he considered the portrait to be "at the point of completion," though it lacks a signature. The painting was kept in the same unnamed family collection since 1994, when it was acquired at a New York auction for [\\$11.5 million](#).

Last month, we reported on the new Archivist of the United States, Dr. Colleen Shogan. She said she intends her tenure focused on improving access to and expanding the reach of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). To read an interview with Dr Shogan see: <https://tinyurl.com/4t9ej9vu>. At her confirmation hearing she said veterans' records are a critical part of the access she is working on and to reduce and eliminate their backlog as quickly as possible.

With the July 4th holiday, many genealogy firms are offering specials. For example, 23andMe's service (regularly \$99) and is being offered for \$79 through July 4 with a limit of 3.

A change for our September speaker: JGSCV Board member Andrea Massion is going to be unavailable for our September meeting and will be rebooked later in the year. In her place, our vice-president, Helene Rosen, will be presenting *Researching an American Family using Many Sources*.

(Cont'd next page)

NEXT MEETING

Sunday, July 9th
2:30-4:30 PM

"Genealogy in the Round"

Genealogy in the round
Genealogy in the round
Genealogy in the round

Genealogy in the round
Genealogy in the round
Genealogy in the round

Presented by our Members

More info pages 3 & 9

NO MEETING IN AUGUST

**IAJGS CONFERENCE
IN-PERSON/LONDON**

(SEE PAGE 3)

WWW.JGSCV.ORG

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Agoura Hills, CA 91301
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2023 JGSCV BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Mission Statement:

JGSCV is a non-profit organization run by enthusiastic volunteers dedicated to the sharing of genealogical information, techniques, and research tools with those interested in Jewish genealogy and family history. Members who include beginners and experienced genealogists share with each other.

We are waiting until Rabbi Diamond sets Temple Adat Elohim's schedule to confirm our meeting dates past September 10. We should learn about the dates in July, and they will be posted to both our website, newsletter, and emails from me.

We are a membership organization. Therefore, we operate on your annual dues. If you have not yet joined or renewed, please do so now. Renewals now are good through December 31, 2023. Those who did not renew were contacted by email previously. They no longer receive meeting notices nor my biweekly emails. I ask now for those who have not renewed to do so. We thank those who have already renewed. A renewal form is available at: <https://tinyurl.com/2p8pp67r>.

JGSCV is requiring you to wear masks and strongly encourage you to have been vaccinated and boosted—we are a group that is predominately over 50 and with aging comes some affiliated health issues.

JGSCV needs volunteers!

1. **I have not heard from enough members** volunteering for our July meeting "Genealogy in the Round" and we need **YOU** to participate. This event always turns out to be one of the best programs because of your participation! See flyer on page 3 for sign-up and page 9 for general meeting information.
2. We need someone to volunteer with Issie Perel to record (audio and video) our meetings. This can be done this using a smart phone. Files can be transferred to my computer by USB or other means. (I have a PC not a MAC so it has to be compatible.)
3. We have had several resignations from the Publicity Committee. We have several members who help us send out by email our meeting notice to local libraries, senior centers, synagogues, etc. It takes less than 2 hours a month. We will provide you with the meeting announcement and the list of places to email it to. If you are willing to help, please contact me at president@jgscv.org

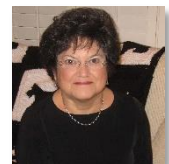
JGSCV member and genealogist Marion Werle will facilitate the Ask the Experts session on July 9th. The Ask the Experts session begins at 2:10 PM in the Social Hall.

Hal Bookbinder continues with the 92nd installment of his "Practicing Safe Computing" series with Computer Cache and Cookies. See page 7.

We are not meeting in August (due to the IAJGS Conference) and will resume meeting on September 10th.

Looking forward to seeing you on July 9th!

Jan Meisels Allen



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Our annual **GENEALOGY IN THE ROUND** meeting is **July 9th!!**

We need 7 members to volunteer to tell their stories of successes, failures, and artifacts.

The meeting is on Zoom, and we can help you with presentation ideas, Power Point, or other.

Please let Jan (president@jgscv.org) know if you will participate and what you are going to share.



Ready to jump-start your research and break thru your brick wall?
Attend the 43rd Annual IAJGS Conference
In-person
July 30 – Aug 3



Presentations by leading Jewish Genealogists in the world today.
Over 200 classes covering a wide range of topics.

More information: <https://site.phedloop.com/event/EVEXVEQJLXVIO/Home>

Register at: <https://site.phedloop.com/event/EVEXVEQJLXVIO/registration#category>

Early-bird pricing extended until July 15th!

Highlights from: “The Recovery of the Klimt Paintings from Austria” with E. Randol Schoenberg

By Andrea Massion

Randy Schoenberg may be renowned for being the lawyer who represented Maria Altmann to successfully retrieve her family’s Nazi-looted Gustav Klimt paintings from Austria. He may be famous for being portrayed by Ryan Reynolds in the film *Woman in Gold* (2015) that retells the sage of that triumphant win. His accomplishments do not stop there.



Randy is an active participant and contributor to the Jewish genealogy community. You never know where he will be on Planet Earth. After his success, Randy lent his skills and support to open a Holocaust Museum in Los Angeles. Oh, and his grandfather was Arnold Schoenberg, the great composer and master of 12-tone music. Randy’s energy and actions are non-stop. His latest endeavor is his film, *Fioretta*, where his exhaustive research leads him and his son on a journey of discovery through 500 years of family history, all the way back to the founders of the Jewish ghetto in Venice, Italy. (See film information and clip: <https://www.rubberrringfilms.com/fioretta>.)

It was especially pleasing to have Randy at our JGSCV June 2023 meeting where we heard the details of Maria Altmann’s case against Austria from the mouth of her attorney.

Rather than retell the story, this article will relate highlights and documents and discoveries of that story. To begin, Randy gave a brief overview of the Jews in Austria.



Not until 1867 where Jews were allowed full citizenship leading to a large influx of returning Viennese Jews and immigrants from the Eastern part of the Austro-Hungarian empire, especially from Bukovina, Galicia, the Czech lands and Hungary. Wealth grew for many Jewish families, including the Blochs who produced sugar from sugar beets and the Bauers were in the railroad business. Their wealth allowed them to collect art, support the art community, and to acquire a historic collection of dishes. There was also the home in Vienna and a summer castle near Prague. All this vanished with World War II. After, the war, restitution was nil. In 1948, there was some, but the Austrian Gallery which housed the paintings threatened to sue Maria if she took action. By the time Maria Altmann challenged them, it was 50

years later.

Why 50 years later? In 1998 Austrian investigative journalist Hubertus Czernin had published a series of articles about the ownership of five famous paintings from artist Gustav Klimt, proving that claims by Austria that they had been donated to the gallery by Ferdinand or Adele Bloch-Bauer were false. The articles led to the passage of Austria’s *Art Restitution*

Law, which allowed the family of Maria Altmann, the niece of Ferdinand Bloch-Bauer, along with Altmann's lawyer E. Randol Schoenberg, to pursue claims successfully to the Klimt paintings ...¹ The fight began.

In his power point, Randy shared two documents the family had acquired:

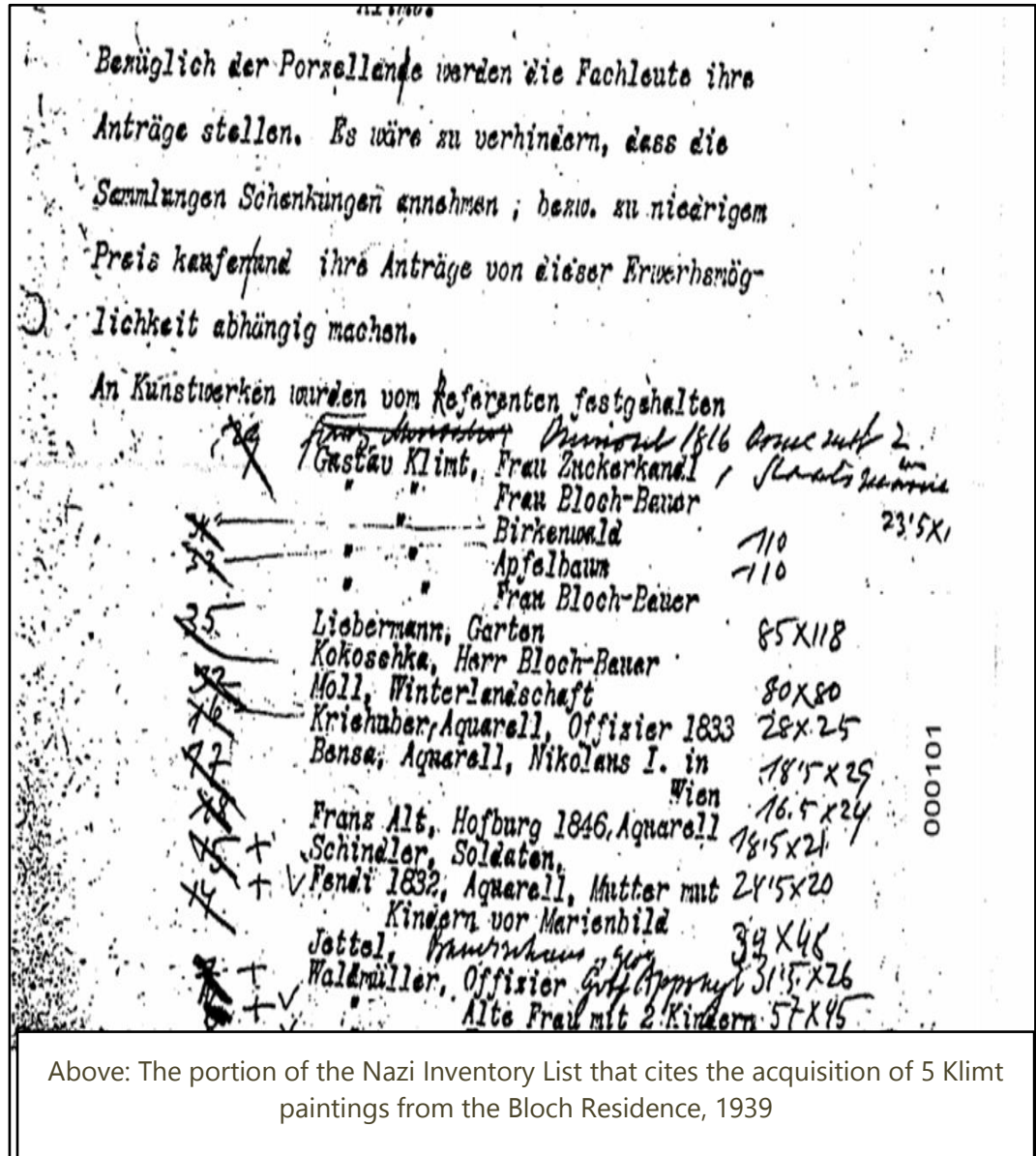
On 19 January 1923 Adele Bloch-Bauer wrote a will with the help of her brother-in-law, an attorney. The will included a reference to the Klimt works owned by the couple, including the two portraits of her:

Translated from the German, it includes the Klimt works: "I ask my husband after his death to leave my two portraits and the four landscapes by Gustav Klimt to the Austrian State Gallery in Vienna."

After Adele died, and the attorney filed for probate, he included a document that stated that the clause in the will was *precatory*, i.e. a request rather than a binding testament. While husband Ferdinand meant to honor this request, he could not yet foresee the Nazi confiscations that would take place in the future. The second was a 1939 Nazi inventory of everything to auction from the Bloch Vienna residence. It cinched the fact that the artwork had been stolen by the Germans.

Nazi confiscation of real estate: Randy showed us a postcard of the Bloch summer home outside Prague which was taken and used as the home of the Reichsprotector of Bohemia and Moravia, Reinhard Heydrich (the man who convened the Wannsee Conference and set in motion the Final Solution). After the war, Communists took the property. When the Communists fell, the Czechs privatized the castle and sold it. Randy stated that real estate is almost impossible to recoup. The Bloch family did not even qualify for any restitution. By the way, same can be said for music royalties that the Nazis took over.

Randy answered questions. He was only 31 when he began this fight for Maria and her family. As to what motivated him to continue the battle that included arguing the case at the U.S. Supreme Court to the mediation panel in Austria in order to get the paintings back to Maria's family? Randy said that his motivation was largely to hold Austria's feet to the fire and stop the lies the government was championing with regard to restitution.



Above: The portion of the Nazi Inventory List that cites the acquisition of 5 Klimt paintings from the Bloch Residence, 1939

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hubertus_Czernin

Links of Interest

- Austria SIG at www.JewishGen.org
- <http://schoenblog.com/> Family notes and stories.
- <https://www.statearchives.gv.at/family-research/> (Austrian Archives)
- <https://www.rubberrringfilms.com/fioretta> A preview of the Schoenberg genealogy documentary that led them to the Jewish Ghetto in Venice, Italy.
- <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2006-jun-15-me-czernin15-story.html> Journalist H. Czernin obituary in the Los Angeles Times.

E. Randol Schoenberg is an expert in handling cases involving looted art and the recovery of property stolen by the Nazi authorities during the Holocaust. Among his most prominent cases is that of "Republic of Austria v. Altmann" which resulted in the successful return of five paintings by Gustav Klimt, including the "Woman in Gold," to their rightful owner.

Schoenberg graduated from Princeton University with a degree in Mathematics and a certificate in European Cultural Studies. He serves on the board of JewishGen and administers the Austria-Czech SIG. Schoenberg is a volunteer Geni.com curator and founded the Jewish Genealogy Portal.

Sidebar:

"**W**hat is the meaning of justice when law is used to legalize thievery and murder?" O'Connor asks. "What is the meaning of cultural property when patrimony is an arm of genocide? What is the value of a painting that has come to evoke the theft of six million lives?" *The Lady in Gold*, she writes, is ultimately an indictment of Austrian historical amnesia about the fate of the Jews and Austria's role in the theft of their property."
~*The Lady in Gold by Anne-Marie O'Connor, Knopf (2012) pp. 368*

Practicing Safe Computing Article #92: “Computer Cache and Cookies”

By Hal Bookbinder



You may have been advised to clear your cache or delete your cookies to resolve an online problem. Indeed, clearing them can solve a variety of issues. And, clearing them rarely causes much computer grief. So, understanding cache and cookies and being ready, and fearless, to clear them can be an easy fix to vexing web problems.

Web pages are “cached”, or copied, to fast internal storage in your computer to speed access to the Internet. Retrieving a page from internal storage is significantly faster than downloading it. Your browser has various ways to determine whether the cached page is still current. Sometimes it is wrong. Other times the cached page is broken. Clearing cache forces all pages to be freshly downloaded from the Internet. New copies will then start being cached.

Cookies are small files used to store data to facilitate your use of a specific online site. They might contain your preferences for that website, speed your logging in to the site, and permit you to stay logged in for the duration of your session. But, sometimes, the website might not be able to interpret the cookie; sometimes the cookie is broken. Clearing cookies can provide a fresh start. See: “[What are ‘cookies’ and should they concern you?](#)” (If the link opens on the first page of the Newsletter, please go to page 15).

If a page that you are trying to access will not load, looks weird, or is acting funky, the problem might be in your cache and cookies. You might try clearing them before calling your favorite techie. You will hardly notice anything different when you clear cache. Temporarily, web pages may load more slowly. This will likely not even be detectable. Start by clearing the cache.

If this does not resolve the problem, go after the cookies. Since your website-specific preferences are stored in cookies, once cleared, these preferences will be “forgotten”, and you will have to re-enter them. You may need to again tell the site to “remember” you on this computer, that your nickname is Joe, or that you prefer sports stories, rather than politics.

Cache and cookies are specific to each browser and reside in that browser’s storage area. If you use Chrome and Firefox, you will have two separate sets of cache and cookies, one for each. Clearing your cache or cookies from within Chrome will not clear your Firefox cache and cookies and vice versa. I periodically clear my cache and cookies, just “to clear the cobwebs” and possibly prevent future problems.

It is only partially true that cache and cookies are “temporary.” They generally have expiration dates. But these dates may be far into the future. The longer they hang around, the more likely they may become dated or broken. This article in PC Magazine provides instructions for clearing cache and cookies for all common browsers. Read it and practice so you can resolve issues: <https://www.pcmag.com/how-to/how-to-clear-your-cache-on-any-browser>.

This is the ninety-second in a series of articles by JGSCV founding member Hal Bookbinder. Hal is also a Past President of JGSLA and IAJGS. He is the 2010 recipient of the IAJGS Lifetime Achievement Award, and his online skills are well documented. All the Safe Computing articles by Hal Bookbinder are available on the JGSCV website <https://www.jgscv.org/noteworthy.html>.

JGSCV Updates



NATIONAL
GENEALOGICAL
SOCIETY®

JGSCV is also a member of National Genealogy Society (NGS).

After holding an in-person conference this May, they have decided to hold their 2024 conference virtually and will return to in-person in 2025.

Community Contribution Program

Whether you are a friend or member we appreciate your support and hope you will sign up for Ralphs and Food-for-Less community programs.

These programs give donations to JGSCV when you shop.

For more information and signing up go to JGSCV's website under Noteworthy <https://jgscv.org/noteworthy.html>.



Family Histories: Call for Entries

In July 2020, our speaker, Joan Adler, suggested members write down family memories and/or genealogical discoveries. We've published fascinating and personal family histories and would love to include more of these stories in this newsletter.

For ideas and assistance, please contact our newsletter editor, [Diane Goldin](#) and Jan Meisels Allen at president@jgscv.org.



Welcome to new member:

Shirley Idelson Weitzman

Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County* (JGSCV)
(*and surrounding areas)

will hold an In-Person meeting at
Temple Adat Elohim, 2420 E. Hillcrest Drive in Thousand Oaks

Sunday, July 9th from 2:30-4:30 p.m.

Ask the Experts/Schmoozing Corner begins at 2:10 PM (led by Marion Werle)

NOTE THE NEW MEETING TIME



JULY PROGRAM

***“Genealogy in the Round:
Successes, Failures, Artifacts
and Brick Walls”***

The Program:

After being homebound most of the past 3 1/2 years due to the pandemic, many of us have done genealogical research. Come and share a genealogical success, failure, brick wall, or genealogical artifact! This is YOUR meeting—We all learn from one another—take this opportunity to share your genealogical story—success or failure, ask questions about your brick walls, and more!

We can assist you with your power point for Zoom if necessary. Its very easy with your computer. Don't be shy!

If you wish to participate in the program, please contact Jan Meisels Allen at president@JGSCV.org. Each participant will be up to 10 minutes to share—depending on the number of presenters. We'd love to hear your genealogical story.

The Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County is dedicated to sharing genealogical information, techniques and research tools with anyone interested in Jewish genealogy and family history.

There is no charge to attend the meeting. Anyone may join JGSCV. Annual dues are \$30 for an individual and \$35 for a family. Anyone may join JGSCV
<https://www.jgscv.org/pdf/membership%20application.pdf>

For more information contact: information@JGSCV.org or call
Jan Meisels Allen@ 818-889-6616
See: www.JGSCV.org



2023 JGSCV Meeting Dates

NEXT MEETING: SUNDAY, July 9 **2:30-4:30 PM – Temple Adat Elohim**		
2023 Meetings		
DATE	PRESENTER	PROGRAM
July 9 2:30-4:30 pm	JGSCV Members	Genealogy in the Round
August	NO Meeting (IAJGS conference – see page 3)	<i>IAJGS Conference will be held in London, England July 30 to August 3, 2023</i>
September 10 2:30-4:30 pm	Helene Rosen	<i>Researching an American Family using Many Sources</i>
October 2:30-4:30 pm	TBA	
November 7:00-9:00pm	TBA	
December 2:30-4:30 pm	TBA	Annual Meeting, Elections, Chanukah Party

Genealogy Odds and Ends



Please join us for a webinar by JDC Archives Fellow
Danielle Battisti:

“JDC Navigation of Jewish Migration and Resettlement under the International Committee for European Migration, 1951-1964”

Wednesday, July 12, 2023
12:00pm - 1:15pm (Eastern Time)
ZOOM (Webinar)

RSVP: <https://tinyurl.com/28zbts78>

RESISTANCE AND RESCUE: DENMARK AND THE HOLOCAUST

The stories accompanying each photograph convey the power of moral courage in confronting hate and atrocities.

<https://www.eastman.org/resistance-and-rescue#>

AJU Buyer Cancels Contract

EF Education First is terminating an agreement to acquire American Jewish University's Familian Campus in Bel Air after encountering opposition from the surrounding neighborhood.

<https://jewishjournal.com/news/359534/jewish-journal-exclusive-aju-buyer-cancels-contract/>



JewishGen Discussion Group Change:

There is a recent change to the options for replying to a message posted in the JewishGen Discussion Group.

Now, when you hit “reply,” you have three options in the “to” drop-down box:

- (1) reply to the message so that the entire discussion group can see it (default option)
- (2) reply directly to the individual who posted the message
- (3) reply to the moderators if there is an issue concerning the post.

Courtesy of Phil Goldfarb in the Weekly News Nosh

‘Generations’

Unscripted Series Exploring Genealogy Set to Premiere on Jewish Life Television

The Museum of Jewish Heritage has unveiled plans for an unscripted, genealogy-focused series “[Generations](#),” which set to premiere in the fall as a co-production of the Museum of Jewish Heritage, JewishGen, and Jewish Life Television.

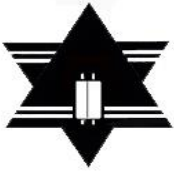
<https://variety.com/2023/tv/news/generations-tv-series-jewish-genealogy-fall-premiere-camryn-manheim-milo-manheim-1235647232/>

CENTER FOR JEWISH HISTORY



**The Jewish Comics Experience
NOVEMBER 11-12, 2023
Center for Jewish History, NYC
In-person & Virtual**

<https://jewce.org/>



2023 Membership/Renewal Form
Jewish Genealogical Society
of the
Conejo Valley and Ventura County (JGSCV)*

*Member of the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS)

www.JGSCV.org

Dues paid now are good through December 2023

Date _____

Check one:

This is a New Membership _____ Renewal _____

Single \$ 30.00 _____ + \$1.00** Family* \$35.00 _____ + \$2.00**

*family defined as two people living in the same household

** \$1 per person is a voluntary donation to the IAJGS Stern Award, granted annually when it recognizes institutions for outstanding work in the creation and availability of resources for Jewish Genealogy.

Additional voluntary contributions:

Library Acquisition Fund \$ _____ Programs Fund \$ _____

Security Fee Fund \$ _____

(suggested minimum voluntary contribution for any fund \$5.00)

Make check out to: JGSCV Mail application to: Helene Rosen,
28912 Fountainwood St.
Agoura Hills, CA 91301

Name (Print) _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zipcode + 4 _____

Home telephone _____ Mobile telephone _____

E-mail address _____

Talents that you have to share (accounting skills, language skills, computer skills, translation, etc.)