

VENTURING INTO OUR PAST



JGSCV

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

March, 2014

Volume 9 Issue 6

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

We had an excellent time at the Family History Library [FHL] for our annual assisted research afternoon! We are very appreciative of Director McBride, Sister Hunt and Sister Evans for permitting us to come each year and for organizing the volunteers to assist the JGSCV members and most especially for the FHL volunteers to come in on Sunday—their day off. Of course JGSCV had our own superb volunteers to assist our members, including Hal Bookbinder, Debra Kay Blatt and Warren Blatt. Being able to attend and get hands-on personal attention with your own genealogy is one of JGSCV's members-only benefits. We had the fantastic Barbara Algaze give a presentation on the FamilySearch website and the "free" access to the subscription websites available through the Family Search website. Barbara also discussed the books available at the FHL—both the JGS Los Angeles Library and the Polish Genealogical Society's libraries are housed there in addition to the FHL's own book collection. Barbara also helped many of our members with their research. We hope to have this privilege again next year.

In the interim, anyone may visit the Los Angeles Family History Library Monday-Saturday—but JGSCV won't be there to help. Barbara is at the FHL most Tuesday afternoons. She suggests you email her to make an appointment and to assure that she will be at the Library that Tuesday. You may



Barbara Algaze describing Family History Library Resources at the February Meeting

NEXT MEETING

SUNDAY, March 2nd 1:30-3:30 PM

A Hundred Germanies A Hundred Jewish Histories

Ger-SIG research coordinator Roger Lustig presents the German-Jewish experience in Germany in the late 19th century.

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Remember there are smaller Family History Libraries closer to us. On the JGSCV website there is a list of centers in Ventura county (including addresses and phone numbers) under *resources*. Be sure to check their hours before you go. And remember, their computers have the same access to the same subscription websites and FamilySearch as in Los Angeles but they do not have as many computers. If you want to order a microfilm from Salt Lake City (see write up on Barbara's talk on page 6) you may prefer to have the microfilm delivered to the Family History Center closest to you rather than the one in Los Angeles.

I just returned from RootsTech, the largest genealogy-and technology conference in North America. Fifteen of their programs were live streamed and are now archived. See <https://rootstech.org/about/videos/> for the list and links for these programs. While there, I had the delight meeting up with and hearing two of my favorite genealogists: Judy Russell, The Legal Genealogist and Crista Cowan, Ancestry. Com. Other JGSCV members were also in attendance including Warren Blatt and Hal Bookbinder. For the first time the IAJGS had a booth in the exhibit hall, where I helped by working each day—it's a great way to meet people. Working at the table was also a way to promote the IAJGS conference this summer in Salt Lake City (see page 10) and the IAJGS conference in 2015, which will be held in Jerusalem.

The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance has honored me by inviting me to participate in workshops on archival access and to present on the topic of archival obstacles to genealogical research at their conference this June in Berlin, Germany, entitled "The State of Access to Holocaust Materials". As many of you know my passion is records access and I have chaired the IAJGS Public Records Access Monitoring Committee since 2003-2004. Neither Tom nor I have been to Berlin before and we are excited about this opportunity.

Germany brings me to this month's exciting program on March 2nd with Roger Lustig entitled "A Hundred Germanies A Hundred Jewish Histories". Until 1871 Germany's Jews were subjects of dozens of different states, each with different laws and attitudes toward its Jewish population. Napoleon emancipated most of Germany's Jews but as soon as he was gone, the many German states returned their Jews to one or another special legal status. Roger is the Ger-SIG research coordinator.

If you have not renewed your JGSCV membership yet, please do so now as we will be dropping from the membership roster those who have not renewed at the end of the month. If you have not yet joined, this is a perfect time to do so!

I look forward to seeing you on March 2nd.

Jan Meisels Allen



ABOUT JGSCV . . .The Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County meets once a month, usually on a Sunday. Meetings are oriented to the needs of the novice as well as the more experienced genealogist. Members share materials, research methods and ideas as well as research success or failures. Members have access to the JGSCV library located on special shelves at the Agoura Hills Public Library. Members also receive our monthly newsletter, which is circulated by email.

2014 dues are \$25.00 for a single membership and \$30.00 for a household unit. To join, please send a check in the appropriate amount to JGSCV and addressed to Helene Rosen at 28912 Fountainwood St., Agoura Hills, CA 91301. Obtain the new/renewal membership form on our website at www.jgscv.org by selecting the membership button.

MARCH CLASSES THROUGH JEWISHGEN

JewishGen is offering 2 classes in March:

- Beginning Jewish Genealogy in the U.S.
March 16-April 13
- Independent Study March 28-April 28

There are enrollment fees and the Independent Study class is limited to 8-10. For more information visit <http://tinyurl.com/k92psae>

ROOTSTECH VIDEOS ONLINE

If you missed RootsTech, the largest genealogical conference in North America, videos of the presentations are available on the website: <http://tinyurl.com/nsdtttl>

POLISH CONFERENCE IN MAY

The United Polish Genealogical Societies Conference will be held May 2-5 in Salt Lake City. For more information visit the site at <http://pgsa.org/#UPGS>

UK BURIAL RECORDS RELEASED

More than 2200 burial records including about 2000 photographs have been posted online by the UK special interest SIG. Records are from the Leeds Beth Hamedrash Hagadol cemetery. The site is <http://tinyurl.com/m2c8rv6>

NEW RECORDS AT FAMILYSEARCH

More than 7 million records from England, Germany, Italy, Mexico, Peru and the U.S. have been added to the FamilySearch database. This includes over 4 million images of Canadian border crossings (1895-1924) 718,619 images of U.S. passport applications (1795-1925). Go to: <http://tinyurl.com/ne3g398>

TOP GENEALOGY WEBSITES

The website no1reviews.com has listed its top 10 worldwide genealogical websites. It also includes a list of with clickable links to 58 sites: <http://tinyurl.com/kt2hzz4>

SEND YOUR FAMILY HISTORY TO THE U.S. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

The Library of Congress is encouraging genealogists (and anyone searching their family roots) to send them a copy of their family history. The Library is attempting to collect all published and self-published works. According to their website, "genealogies and U.S. local histories are very important to the international research clientele who frequent the institution". The Library of Congress also offers resources such as guide books for organizing resources and how to find a publisher. To learn more, go here: <http://tinyurl.com/ngvcxzg>



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

The JGSCV will hold a general meeting, co-sponsored with Temple Adat Elohim, on Sunday, March 2, 2014 at Temple Adat Elohim 2420 E. Hillcrest Drive, Thousand Oaks, 1:30-3:30 p.m.

The Topic: A Hundred Germanies A Hundred Jewish Histories

“The Holy Roman Empire is neither holy, nor Roman, nor German.” —Voltaire

Yet the “Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation” was German, and it defined what “German” meant. It was also the home of an ancient Jewish culture—dating back to the real Romans—and hundreds of Jewish communities, large and small.

Until 1871 Germany's Jews were subjects of dozens of different states, each with different laws and attitudes toward its Jewish population. Napoleon emancipated most of Germany's Jews and led Prussia to do likewise for almost all the rest; but as soon as he was gone, the many German states—most with new boundaries—returned their Jews to one or another special legal status.

Those legal statuses, make the researcher's job more complicated, because the same type of information—birth, change of residence, etc.—might be kept by different authorities and in different ways. Roger will review where the larger Jewish congregations and rural communities lived in Germany, and how to determine which states ruled over them at a given time using examples of how family histories are recorded across longer periods and crossing boundaries.

Speaker: Roger Lustig is a genealogical researcher based in Princeton, NJ. Since 2002 he has specialized in the Jewish families of Prussian Poland, especially Upper Silesia and West Prussia. He has worked in archives in the US, Germany and Poland He is the research coordinator for GerSIG .



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 \$25 for individual and \$30 for a family. Join now for 2014!

March, 2014

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JGSCV UPDATES . . .

Members already received a notice from Jan Meisels Allen that Marion Werle resigned from the board. Marion prefers “hands-on” genealogy, giving presentations, 5-minute genealogical hints etc. to organizational genealogy. While she will be missed on the board, she will remain an active JGSCV member to the benefit of all. We all appreciated her excellent presentations on *Canadian Research* and *Beyond the Family Tree – Bringing Your Family Stories Alive*. Thank you Marion for your service to the JGSCV, and we look forward to future presentations.



This opens a position on the JGSCV Board of Directors. The by-laws permit the president with approval from the Board to appoint someone until the next election (December 2014). Any 2014-dues paid member who has been a member for at least one year and would like to serve please contact Jan Meisels Allen at president@jgscv.org. While the preference would be to have a new person on the JGSCV Board take over Marion’s duties on the Publicity Committee, that Committee position need not be a board-member slot. Regardless of when you joined JGSCV, if you are interested in helping with publicity, please contact Jan. You must be able to send emails with either Word or .pdf attachments and be able to post notices on electronic bulletin boards. There are four volunteers on the Publicity Committee who equally divide the work. Monthly, each person sends out about 30 emails. They are time sensitive therefore, they MUST be sent out the first week of each month.

THE SCHMOOZING CORNER was not available at the FHL in February however it will resume at the March meeting. If you would like individual insights for your genealogical pursuits – from an experienced JGSCV member – come to the Schmoozing Corner. it will be open 20 minutes before the meeting is scheduled to begin. Come to the front right corner of the meeting room and look for the SCHMOOZING CORNER sign.



You can help JGSCV when you shop at Amazon.com by simply entering the Amazon site from JGSCV’s **home page**. Start at <http://www.jgscv.org> and scroll to the bottom to click on the Amazon graphic (like the one here). This will take you to the same page you always start at – except JGSCV will receive a marketing fee at no cost to you.



Don’t forget to sign-up or renew your Ralph’s Community Contribution Program. JGSCV receives significant contributions from Ralph’s when you use your Ralph’s Card and have chosen JGSCV as your participant organization. See “Notices” at the JGSCV website www.jgscv.org.

If you enjoy and are enriched by JGSCV programs, please remember to renew your membership or join for the first time. JGSCV dues help defray the costs required to develop such a full schedule of fertile programs and speakers to enhance your genealogical research and experience. A form is on page 12 and on the website www.jgscv.org

Highlights From:

Assisted Research Afternoon Presentation by Barbara Algaze

By Jan Meisels Allen

JGSCV avid researchers had a great afternoon on February 9th researching their own genealogy with help from senior members of JGSCV and volunteers from the Los Angeles Family History Library (LAFHL). We are delighted that the meeting drew three new members and several renewals!

Barbara Algaze, JGSCV member, librarian for JGSLA and a volunteer at the Los Angeles Family History Library gave a presentation on the subscription websites available at the Family History Library as well as highlights on the FamilySearch website. Barbara also discussed the various book collections available at the LAFHL.



Barbara's handout is available on the JGSCV website www.jgscv.org under meetings, prior with the February 2014 date.

Ancestry.com

The first suggestion was when starting to search for your ancestors on Ancestry.com to start with the most recent US census—1940—if your ancestors immigrated to the United States. It is always wise to start with the latest and work back since different censuses asked different questions. Some of the older ones asked questions such as the year of immigration and

naturalization status which offer helpful clues to find even more information.

Barbara reviewed the Ancestry.com card catalogue. The card catalogue has over 31,000 databases. Here one can search all records or search certain categories such as census and voter lists. Barbara showed what happens if the researcher restricts the search to “exact”. There are several options: using the default or soundex or phonetic spelling.

We were reminded that names changed over the years . . . neither spelling nor ages were important until more recent times. Barbara explained that using the back button will delete the search results we already found, and suggested instead to go to the edit box on the upper left to add more information to refine the results.

On the right side of the page are categories: a compilation of data such as census and voter lists, birth, marriage and death records, military, immigration and travel – all of which make it easier to do searches. To simplify printing censuses the user can use the “slider” to make it larger or smaller for ease of reading the document.

Ancestry has the ability to filter by collection. For example on the home search page under “collection priority” one can click on a variety of countries as well as “Jewish”. The example Barbara gave was that there are 76 databases under “Jewish” but if we filter it by “birth,

marriage and death” the number of databases is reduced to 16 – a more manageable number to search.

FamilySearch

FamilySearch is sponsored by the LDS Church and is open to anyone at no cost.

Both Ancestry.com and FamilySearch permit searches by first names only if one cannot find their subject by surname.

On FamilySearch, a checkmark (✓) next to the search subject’s name makes the search “exact”. One can refine the search by going to collections.

FamilySearch has many databases, for example, 439 for Continental Europe alone. Those that have been digitized **and** indexed with the image on the website are denoted with a camera icon in front of the name of the document. If a camera is not shown, then the images have been digitized but **not** indexed and you have to search by looking page by page on the website. One can search by surname as well as location.

Barbara advised about the difference in searching by town. On FamilySearch one looks at the original name of the town, whereas on JewishGen one looks at the current name of the town. For example, Pressburg was the German name for what today is Bratislava the capital of the Republic of Slovakia. Pressburg would be the name used to search on FamilySearch and Bratislava on JewishGen.

If one wants to order a microfilm that is not available, they can order the film online to be delivered to the nearest FHL. The directions to order microfilms or microfiche are on the FamilySearch website at: <http://tinyurl.com/k6q4sln>. You must have a FamilySearch account, and will need to select your "favorite" FHL before you commence placing orders. This is free.

FamilySearch has a wiki which is very easy to use and similar to Wikipedia. One can access the wiki on the search page across the top or go

directly to the wiki at: <http://tinyurl.com/9sbsd5b> and fill in the term you are looking for in the search box.

There is a great service provided by FamilySearch and that is the free photo duplication service. If you find a record you want copied, fill out the form at: <http://tinyurl.com/azugkzr>. The instructions are included on Barbara’s handout.

Other subscription sites available at the Family History Centers include Fold3 for military records, FindMyPast, an excellent website especially if you are researching the British Isles, Canada, Australia and Ireland.



As mentioned previously the LAFHL houses the JGSLA book and journal collection as well as the Polish Genealogical Society library. In addition the LAFHL has a book room where they have books by state. The Family Search catalogue is searchable by either name or call number. If one uses the call number by JGS the full list of JGSLA books is available to review.

Barbara showed us how to use a computer tool called a “snipping tool” which is included on Windows 7 and 8. It is found under program, accessories and one can “snip” exactly the part of a large document such as a census and then it can be copied or printed—this tool is available not only on the computers at the Family History Library but on your home PC.

In closing, Barbara told us of a website that is of interest to those researching foreign names. It is “English Versions of Foreign Names” by Paul M. Kankula which may be found at: <http://tinyurl.com/nd6zghf>. It takes a name such as Abraham in English and shows the variations across different languages including: Czech, French, German, Hungarian, Italian, Polish, Slovakian, Russian and Yiddish. The website does warn that there is no author credit and possible typos and other errors.

A Multiplicity of Parents

Posted on February 14, 2014 by Judy G. Russell (<http://www.legalgenealogist.com/blog>)

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Recording families at birth

Two years ago, *The Legal Genealogist* wrote about a New Jersey court case in which the question of the hour was, who were the legal parents of a child born in what most would regard as an unconventional way?

Here were the facts:

Husband and Wife can't have a child naturally because Wife can't carry a child to term. Husband and Wife secure an ovum from Donor, who is anonymous, and the ovum is fertilized by way of in vitro fertilization using Husband's sperm. Husband and Wife contract with Gestational Carrier, who agrees to have the ovum implanted, carry the ovum to term and give birth, and to give up all rights to the child. Child is born, Gestational Carrier signs the required court papers relinquishing any parental rights she may have, and Child goes home with Husband and Wife, with a birth certificate reflecting Husband as father and Wife as mother.¹

The case, *In re T.J.S.*,² didn't pit Husband and Wife against Gestational Carrier. And it didn't pit Husband and Wife against Donor either.

No, the adversary who faced off against Husband and Wife was the New Jersey State Registrar of Vital Statistics — and the State's argument was that Wife shouldn't be listed as the mother of Child on Child's birth certificate without going through the formality of an adoption.

Never mind that an infertile **man** could and can be listed as the father on a birth certificate merely by consenting in advance to the fertilization of his wife's egg with the sperm of an anonymous donor. The Registrar thought that the infertile **woman** who consented to the use of her husband's sperm

to fertilize the egg of an anonymous donor had to go through a full formal adoption.

Both the trial and the intermediate appeals courts in New Jersey ruled that the language of the state statute involved meant the Registrar was right. And the state Supreme Court — understrength due to political wrangling³ — split right down the middle. In New Jersey, that means the lower court decision stands: Mom had to adopt the child to be legally Mom.

The case got me thinking, particularly about non-traditional families and how they will be treated by the law, recorded in the records we as genealogists associate with families — and documented in our software and databases. The position I ultimately took was that:

As genealogists we don't have the luxury of punting. It's our job to record, accurately and completely, the facts that constitute a family. And today, a family may not have Mom and Dad at all. It could well be Mom and Mom, or Dad and Dad. All of these, traditional and otherwise, are families that we must learn to document well. Along the way, our tools, our thought processes, even our hearts may need to change. But we cannot be faithful to the task we've undertaken if we fail to understand — or refuse to admit — that family is so much more than just bloodlines.⁴

After all, the Board for Certification of Genealogists, from which I hold my certified genealogist credentials and which I serve as a trustee, defines genealogy this way:

Genealogy is the study of families in genetic and historical context. It is the study of communities, in which kinship networks weave the fabric of economic, political, and social life. It is the study of family structures and the changing roles of men,

women, and children in diverse cultures. It is biography, reconstructing each human life across place and time. Genealogy is the story of who we are and how we came to be, as individuals and societies.⁵

So I was particularly interested when, earlier this week, from reader Sean Vanderfluit of Canada came “not so much a question, but a bit of news you might find interesting. In my province, British Columbia, the law has been updated to recognize changes in parenting and non-traditional families. You can now have more than two parents listed on a Birth Registration, and the first such registration just occurred last week.”

The child in question was born to lesbian parents with the assistance of a sperm donor, but not an anonymous donor. Instead, the mothers wanted a man who would be involved as a father in the child’s life. A male friend agreed, and when the child was born, both women and the man were listed as parents on the birth registration.⁶

Now I’m not going to get into any discussion of whether this is a good thing or a bad thing. That’s no longer the point. The Brave New World is here, like it or not.

The question is, what are we as genealogists going to do about it? And how will our software and databases respond to the decisions we make?

My own genealogical software, **The Master Genealogist** from **Wholly Genes**, will let me add as many people in as many relationships to the child as I wish — and I can name those relationships the way I want (not the way that, for example, the New Jersey Registrar of Vital Statistics might suggest).

Reporting can be a challenge, since there’s still an assumption that a person has two parents, and getting more than two to appear in a particular report requires some effort.

So... how are YOU dealing with this? And how does YOUR software respond to the challenge of the

non-traditional in our families?

SOURCES

1. Judy G. Russell, “Who’s your Mommy?,” *The Legal Genealogist*, posted 2 March 2012 <http://tinyurl.com/17aiq4l> :accessed 13 Feb 2014).
2. *In re T.J.S.*, <http://tinyurl.com/kaicacp> 212 N.J. 334 (2012), affirming by an equally divided court 419 N.J. Super. 46 <http://tinyurl.com/kvklgjc> (App. Div. 2010).
3. Do **not** get me started on the use of the courts as political footballs... <http://tinyurl.com/lu6ywb7>
4. Judy G. Russell, 12 October 2013, address to American Society of Genealogists, Salt Lake City <http://tinyurl.com/mwaa9ts>
5. “Genealogy,” Board for Certification of Genealogists homepage <http://tinyurl.com/7hns249> accessed 14 Feb 2013). With a tip of the hat to my mentor and colleague Elizabeth Shown Mills, who posted the graphic with this very definition on Facebook today. ←
6. Catherine Rolfson, “Della Wolf is B.C.’s 1st child with 3 parents on birth certificate,” CBCNews, posted 6 Feb 2014 <http://tinyurl.com/one9j6d>

A Certified GenealogistSM and Certified Genealogical LecturerSM with a law degree, *The Legal Genealogist* **Judy G. Russell** is a lecturer, educator and writer who enjoys helping others understand a wide variety of genealogical issues, including the interplay between genealogy and the law.



JGSCV MEMBER BENEFITS

- Annual assisted research afternoon at the Family History Library
- Members-only emails from the president announcing special events and free opportunities with Ancestry and other genealogical organizations and other items of genealogical interest
- Use of the traveling library at president's home – with an advance appointment
- For the first year of membership, JewishGen's Warren Blatt will assist with one concise question per month. He won't do your genealogy but with well thought out questions, he can help you on your genealogical journey.
- NEW! Members-Only Workshops on valuable genealogy tools

34th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy

The 2014 IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy will be held in Salt Lake City July 27-August 1. Registration is open and you may make your hotel reservation at the conference rate now. Registration for the Full Conference is \$295 until May 31, 2014. June 1 the fee increases to \$325. It is \$365 to register on-site. FAQ's regarding registration can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/l3hgysm>

The conference website <http://iajgs2014.org> is updated regularly so visit often to learn more as new information is released.

And, for insights regarding travel and transportation once in Salt Lake City, go to <http://tinyurl.com/l1g4h5o>



City, go

As the conference will start one day shy of the 100th anniversary of the start of World War I, plans include a major focus on the impact of the War on the lives of our ancestors, whether they served in the armed forces of any of the nations involved in the conflict, suffered the impacts of fighting through the heartland of Jewish Eastern Europe, emigrated to another county because of the war and its aftermath, or were otherwise touched by the conflict. All registrants will be encouraged to share family stories and pictures from the World War One era.

Other areas of focus of the conference include:

- Technology in the Pursuit of Genealogy
- Jewish Migrations Over the Ages
- Ethical Genealogical Challenges
- Jews (and crypto-Jews) of the Western United States.

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JGSCV Meeting Dates Through June, 2014*

At Temple Adat Elohim

**Sunday, March 2nd 1:30-3:30 PM Program "A Hundred Germanies—
A Hundred Jewish Histories-German Jewish Genealogy Pre World
War I"**

Roger Lustig, research coordinator for GerSIG and researcher and
genealogist specializing in the history of German Jewry

Monday, April 7th 7:00-9:00 PM "The Sephardic Community in Los Angeles"
Arthur Benveniste discusses growing up in the LA Sephardic community.

Sunday, May 4th 1:30-3:30 PM "Yom Hashoah" (Holocaust Memorial)
Confronting the Holocaust: The United States Response- SS St.Louis -
documentary about the SS St. Louis in 1939 and the absence of the US response
and commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the Holocaust in Hungary with
Clara Knopfler, holocaust survivor.

**Sunday, June 1st 1:30-3:30 PM Program "Roundtables" featuring country-
specific tables with experts leading each table**

*All programs subject to change. Check website www.jgscv.org

JGSCV Welcomes New Members

JOYCE ANTEBI

GREGORY KAY

JODIE MENDELSON

2014 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 2014

Date _____

Check one:

This is a New Membership _____ Renewal _____

Single \$ 25.00 _____ + \$1.00** Family* \$30.00 _____ + \$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 \$ _____

(suggested minimum voluntary contribution for either 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 _____

Day telephone _____ Evening telephone _____

E-mail address _____

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