



NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2026
VOLUME 2026 ISSUE 10

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STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

**Next meeting: 3RD WEDNESDAY
OCTOBER 21ST 2026**

6:30 PM – NEW BERLIN LIBRARY*
15105 West Library Lane
New Berlin ~ WI 53151



Our newsletter is for you, and we want to make sure it's packed with content you look forward to reading! Take part in this refresh. We'd love to hear your suggestions and insights. Please take a quick moment to send your ideas and comments to lindamurphympafug@gmail.com

- **Format Change:** longer, shorter, ?,
- **Member Highlights:**
Would you like to see a biography section featuring members who want to participate (sharing your brick walls, favorite discoveries, or projects)?
- **The Playroom:** Should we add interactive fun like puzzles, word jumbles, or genealogy word searches?
- **Surname Exploratory:** Are you interested in a regular feature exploring surname origins, variations, and matching members tracking the same names?
- **Announcements:** Do you want a dedicated section for member milestones, breakthroughs, or local news?

What do you want to see more of?

What should we skip?

All ideas are completely welcome!

Thank you for helping us build a
better community space.

NEW MEETING SCHEDULE - 2026

***3rd WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH
for the remaining Aug-Nov 2026.***

MONTH & DATE	ROOM
10/21/26	COMMUNITY
11/18/26	HERITAGE
DEC	NO MEETING

OCTOBER PRESENTATIONS

IT'S MEMBER SHOW & TELL TIME!

Bob Heck	Photos Out Of The Blue and AI Photos
Linda Murphy	AI & Grandma Murphy
Randy Ray	My Great Grandmother's Journey
Susan Curtis	Civil War Story
Bob Tatalovich	Gemini Translates Exit Doc

Over the years we have had some really
wonderful presentations and this year is
looking to be just as promising!
Bring a friend to enjoy this with!

SEPTEMBER PRESENTATION RECAP

US GENWEB

By Bob Heck

- Bob guided us through this wonderful free resource. Check out his handout as there are many helpful tips to walk you through.
- This free resource is run by over one-million volunteers and contributors making it arguably, the largest, single-interest group on the internet.

- Today the USGenWeb Project has thousands of sites, millions of web pages, a wealth of genealogical and historical information online and welcomes several millions of visitors each year to its sites
- Top tips to keep in mind:
 - Covered by county – each by a different volunteer running their page their way.
 - Start with the state, then county.
 - Most have GenWeb info, data links, volunteer list of people willing to help.
 - Generally, will have vital records, cemetery records and death resources, queries, history, news, maps, biographies, photos, plat maps and more.
- There is a census project that lead to two free sites as part of the USGenWeb system.
 - Handout has links and are available also on Family Search.
- USGenWeb.com
 - Free as well and covers every state in US with nearly every county represented.
 - Most in English, lists volunteers and contains free on-line data.
- WorldGenWeb includes:
 - Starting page has three sections listing which countries each list covers.
 - Same info may be available in each of the breakdowns such as Czech RepublicGenWeb or IrelandGenWeb
 - Again it is free, covers nearly every country in the world and is relatively new and growing, has lookup volunteers and free on-line data
- Bob reminded us to be mindful of dates you are looking for vs the name of the area at that time. Example made sense that if looking up Kenosha, before it was named that, it was Racine, and before it was Kenosha, it was part of the Milwaukee area.

- Great walk-thru of this vast resource – thanks Bob!



CREATING A PERSONAL ARCHIVE

By Randy Ray

- Randy brought some examples of how he has created some treasured archival pieces to examine and ask questions about.
- Through his various volunteer experiences, he has seen a lot of donations come and go and shared his best tips to help create your own artifacts archives.
- There are certain steps, “do’s and don’ts”, as it were when documenting, preserving, digitizing and displaying pictures, slides, documents, and more when it comes to helping it last as long as possible for all generations to continue to enjoy and learn from.
- He made an incredible velvet covered keepsake of his beautiful wife, covering her special moments from the beginning.
- Gave helpful tips from where-to-begin to how to store, condense, toss, and deal with backups to ensure longevity.
- Some of the things he and Bob have seen come in to FamilySearch and other locations find a home, and some do not. Here are some tips in particular to aid the process:

- Gather and sort your materials
- Use a folding card table to organize and sort

<i>Do not...</i>	<i>Instead do this</i>
Roll items	Store flat
Use regular tape or glues, staples, metal paperclips	Archival bond tape
Hang pictures in	More secluded

sunlit areas	hallway with no sun exposure
Store in attics, garages, damp areas	Select climate controlled area with no moisture in proper cases/boxes/sleeves
Write on the photo	Put in an archival sleeve, cut paper to back like matting and apply archival label for names, date info

- His handout has sources for materials to obtain, several online and some local like Hobby Lobby, Michael’s and more.
- He covered digital preservation steps and encouraged consistency so most of the genealogy sites are in compatible formatting for dates, names, places.
- Backup, backup, backup!
- Heirlooms and objects need special handling.
 - Clean gently with soft dry brush
 - Pack with acid free tissue paper in archival box
 - Use cotton gloves to keep oils and dirt off of the items
 - Never hang garments, fold gently in box with acid free tissue.
- Label your final storing options so y’all know what is in it!
- His summary reminds us it does not have to be a lot of work or expensive.
- Pace yourself – it does not have to be done in a day. One box or collection at a time.
- If donating – do it right away before Aunt Gladys and Uncle Frank change their mind about it going away lol.
- Toss moldy or musty items right away. It will contaminate and spread to the rest of the collection in the container.
- Fantastic examples and list of resources Randy – great job and thank you for sharing!



MUSINGS & MUTTERINGS:

Outhouses, Outhouses Everywhere: A Look Back at Wisconsin Halloweens in the 1920s

If you think your ancestors spent their autumn evenings quietly sitting by the hearth, a quick flip through old Wisconsin newspapers from 100 years ago might give you a fright. In the mid-1920s, Halloween across the Badger State was less about collecting fun-sized chocolate bars and much more about localized chaos, community-wide parties, and creative mischief. Back in 1926, the modern tradition of neighborhood door-to-door trick-or-treating as we know it today was still finding its footing. Instead, October 31st was widely known as "Mischief Night" or "Beggars' Night". For the youth of rural farming communities and booming cities alike, it was a licensed night of pure, unadulterated hooliganism. Wisconsin teens spent their evenings soaping windows, knocking over corn stalks, and notoriously tipping over outhouses. In the Northwoods, local reports from [WXPR History](#) recalled that boys would pour hot paraffin wax onto the automobiles parked along the streets, creating a logistical nightmare for drivers trying to scrape it off the next morning.



Frustrated by the annual destruction, city leaders from Rhinelander to [Blanchardville](#) fought back not with curfews, but with parties. Throughout the decade, schools, civic clubs, and local governments began hosting massive, town-wide costume parties and parades specifically designed to distract young people from vandalism. According to historical records preserved by the Wisconsin Historical Society, these gatherings featured elaborate homemade outfits. Witch costumes, paper hats, and traditional folk garments were all the rage at a massive Milwaukee party in the early 1920s, often accompanied by live music played on the concertina. At these community centers, ancestors bobbed for apples, told ghost stories, and partook in autumnal feasts that honored the state's deep European immigrant heritage.

The year 1926 also brought a somber and eerie historical coincidence to the state's cultural fabric. On Halloween night in 1926, the world's most famous illusionist and escape artist, [Harry Houdini](#), passed away. Having been raised in Appleton, Wisconsin, Houdini's death forever tied the state's local history to one of the most famous supernatural dates in American lore, a milestone that magicians and historians still honor every October 31st. As you dig through your family archives this season, take a closer look at the old photo albums or local newspaper clippings from the 1920s. You might just find a picture of your great-grandfather wearing a terrifying papier-mâché mask, or a police blotter mentioning a tipped-over outhouse with a familiar surname attached to it.

PRIOR MEETING ATTENDANCE



WE WOULD LOVE TO SEE YOU IN OCTOBER – BRING A FRIEND! MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

*Membership in MPAFUG is open to anyone
interested in learning more about computer
genealogy.*

\$12 – the cost per calendar year membership that
covers individual and family

***RENEW NOW FOR 2027 SO YOU DON'T MISS
ANY MEMBER-ONLY BENEFITS .***

Please send a check for \$12.00 made payable to
MPAFUG or bring to the next meeting:

Include: name, address, email & phone number.

Deborah A. Bluett / Marilyn Romani

MPAFUG Treasurer

PO Box 229

Delavan, WI 53115-0229

About This Newsletter

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newsletter. Articles will be used as space permits.

NO COPYRIGHTED ARTICLES may be submitted
without express permission of the author and publisher.
Articles should be submitted by the 1st Wednesday to be

considered for inclusion in that same month. Credit will
be given for your article.

RESOURCES

The Family Search Center

9600 West Grange Avenue, Hales Corners

The Family Search Center Library hours:

Tuesday: 8:30AM – 3:30PM

Wednesday: 8:30AM – 12 Noon

Thursday: 8:30AM – 3:30PM and

6:30PM – 9:00PM

Saturday: 10:00AM – 1:00PM

Enter at the main doors facing West Grange
Avenue and follow the signs to the library.

On Thursday evenings, Bob Heck and Randy Ray
are the volunteers on duty who will assist you in
your research.

For some extra special help from May through
September, Cheryl Heck is there to help you.
Cheryl is LDS Mormon and is the expert in the
Family Search website and LDS issues.

There are numerous portal systems available for
free use at the center.

Come enjoy this resource!

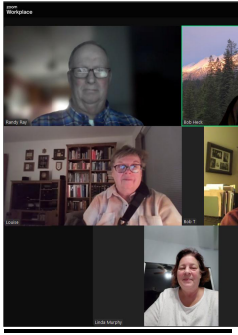
MPAFUG KEY INFORMATION

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Bob Heck	Debbie Bluett	Randy Ray
Bob Miller	Linda Murphy	Sam Colon
Bob	Merilyn	Steve
Tatalovich	Romani	Gulgowski

Steering
Committee
meetings are
held via Zoom
on the
Wednesday
following the
presentation
meetings. The
Steering
Committee is an
informal group of
members who
get together to

plan topics for
future meetings.



**If you would like to make a presentation or have
a suggestion for a meeting topic**

Write, call or email:
MPAFUG c/o Bob Heck
4910 Steeple Dr.
Greendale, WI 53129
414-421-7143
bobheckmpafug@gmail.com

OUR WEB PAGE

<http://mpafug.org>

We invite you to visit our page, print a copy of this or last month's newsletter. You'll find a surname section where you can see who else is working on your family line.

Members of MPAFUG have access to a members-only web page which contains past newsletters and handouts from our meetings.

***The New Berlin Public Library does not advocate for or endorse the viewpoints of meetings or meeting room users.**