
Subject: Your new summer newsletter is here!



Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society

P.O. Box 418 ~ West Springfield, MA 01090-0418

www.westmassgen.com

YOUR NEW SUMMER SCHEDULE!
We will be meeting on the first Wednesdays
of both July and August
Save this newsletter as this edition
covers both months

But we're still giving the newsletter volunteers the summer off. This edition will be an abbreviated newsletter to let our members know what is planned for the summer !

[Click here to visit the WMGS Website](#)

Wednesday 01 July 2015

Our "first" July meeting will take place, as usual, at the [Agawam Senior Center, 954 Main Street, Agawam, MA](#). The Veterans room will be set up theater style with a table for 2 or 3 panelists who will field your research questions or help with your brick walls. We'll have the screen

and projector set up to take you to any websites necessary to give you a "jumpstart!"

Can't make it? We're experimenting with the ability to broadcast live in real time with an interactive venue as a part of this meeting. Click here [WMGS](#) to visit your WMGS Google Community.

We would naturally prefer that you come to the Agawam Senior Center for the panel, but if you can't make it, here's the link you can click Wednesday at 6:00 PM Eastern to watch the live YouTube video where you can watch and comment: [Live WMGS Event](#)



Wednesday 05 August 2015

Remember last January when we traipsed off to the [Lyman and Merrie Museum of Springfield History and Archives](#)? It was dark, some weren't sure they wanted to drive into a Springfield neighborhood with which they were unfamiliar and most of all, IT WAS FREEZING THAT NIGHT!!

OK, we've taken care of that! We have arranged for yet another trip to the Archives to spend some time with Maggie Humberston and Cliff McCarthy. They'll describe the facility and give us a tour into a room where none is ever allowed, unless they're on a WMGS tour!

[Click here for a Google map with directions](#)

You can enter your own address by changing the line that says, "20 State St., Springfield, MA 01103."

Mark the date and join us!

**French - Canadian Research anyone?
Coming attractions!
Wednesday 02 September 2015**



In September, we have the good fortune to have a Western Mass native "come home" and spend an evening with us on the favorite subject of many of our membership.

Pauline Cusson, board member of the [American-Canadian Genealogical Society](#) and an integral part of the success of several NERGC conferences, will be with us to discuss her specialty, French-Canadian, Franco-American and Acadian genealogy. Her topic will be "*French Canadian Research: Bridging the Gap.*"

**And finally, Dave Robison's article on
"Phone, Internet and E-Mail Safety"**

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PHONE, INTERNET AND E-MAIL SECURITY

The offers are glamorous or promise great financial returns. "Send a little...get a lot!" But according to news reports as recent as this morning, the citizens of Agawam (and other areas) have been plagued by crooks trying to scam innocent people through phone call solicitations. It also applies to e-mail, but I'll get to that in a minute.

The "fix" is incredibly simple with these 2 rules.

RULE 1: If you don't know who's calling you and they want you to send them money, hang up. Forget civility and politeness. Crooks don't deserve it! And, by the way, it was a computer program that called you even though a human (probably with a thick foreign accent) spoke to you.

RULE 2: If you're in doubt, refer to RULE 1.

Another very popular phone scam that's coming around again is the call you get from "Windows" or "Microsoft" warning you that they've detected a virus on your computer. HANG UP! Don't even speak a single word!!! I listened to these crooks once just to hear how they try to set this up. I only got as far as them telling me that they would "simply connect to the computer and remove any unwanted viruses." That's when I had enough and didn't want to risk entertaining them (or myself) anymore. Here's what I said to the guy who called me: " ". That's right, all he heard from me was the sound of me hanging up! I have my own computer protection software. It's free from Charter!

E-MAIL. These can be hard to resist because it's so easy to click on an attachment or a link. The absolute most dangerous e-mails are the ones that contain attached files, especially attached ZIP files. The ZIP file icon looks like any other but it has a tiny zipper down the front, thus the term "ZIP" file. If you don't know the sender, DELETE, DELETE, DELETE!! Attachments can, and often do, contain dangerous programming that can take control of your computer without your knowledge. And if you succumb to temptation before you realize what's going on, you may not see the damage for a week or a month or more. Do you know what "tracking" or "keylogging" software is? It's a program that blindly copies every keystroke you make on your computer. Yes, that means usernames and passwords. The crooks can figure out which belong to your bank or other financial accounts online.

A good friend of ours called me last year to say that she thought she made a "boo-boo" and admitted she opened what looked to

her like a nonsense attachment. I advised her to change her password IMMEDIATELY, even while I had her on the phone. It took 3 months, but sure enough, as she was logging into her checking account one day, she got a warning from the bank of suspicious activity and was required to call the bank to fix it. Apparently, there was a keystroke software program on her laptop so changing the password was a moot point. They got it anyway. It's a good thing her bank had excellent security software in place or she would've had about 3¢ left in her account.

"You are hereby notified that you are to appear in court for failure to pay your [*fill in the blank*]. To avoid further fines and penalties, please contact us through this link to provide your account details and make immediate payment."

"We have detected suspicious activity on your account and your access has been limited. Please verify the following information to resume normal access: Name, address, checking account number and bank routing number. [This part is a bonus optional tease] For more information, click the link below."

And the most ubiquitous: "Congratulations my brother/sister in Christ Almighty. My name is Beloved Mother Nancy of the Cameroon country and I am proudly pleased to inform you of your famous and good fortune. A sum of £7,000,000 is be prepared for depositing in your account. Please to send your deposit account details to make us sure to deposit in your account as soon as possible!" Or some other similar nonsense. If spelling, punctuation and grammar are an issue, BEWARE!! DELETE, DELETE, DELETE!!!

Occasionally, you may get an email that seems to be from someone you know. The only thing in the body of the e-mail is a link to a website, nothing else. DELETE, DELETE, DELETE!!! Then contact your friend and tell them that their e-mail account

has been compromised and they should close it and open a new one or, at the very least, change their password.

The best passwords contain at a minimum, 8 positions with a combination of UPPER case and lowercase letters with numbers and symbols mixed in: nZH8**ktUU459#%bgRK for example. However, some sites have specific directions and may not allow symbols or UPPER case. Just follow the directions. More importantly, record the password somewhere that is NOT on your computer. And when you record it, try not to associate it with the website or account that it belongs to. I have my own "system" but, of course, I can't tell anybody what it is!

With some very simple precautions mixed in with due diligence, we can all use the internet safely without risking our identities...or our savings accounts!

01 July 2015

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