



**GENEALOGICAL
SOCIETY OF
VERMONT**

NEWSLETTER

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dates to remember

GSV membership meeting

Saturday, May 18, 2002, 9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Hampton Inn, Colchester, Vermont

(just off Exit 16, I-89)

Watch for a post card mailing. Registration fee: \$16.00 for members, \$19.00 for non-members, includes morning coffee break and lunch.

Vermont History Expo

Saturday - Sunday, June 22-23, 2002

Tunbridge Fairgrounds, Tunbridge, Vermont

The third annual running of what is already becoming a classic Vermont event, sponsored by the Vermont Historical Society. Dozens of exhibits and events. Local and state history presented by organizations from all over the state. GSV will be on hand in the genealogy center.

GSV membership meeting

Saturday, October 19, 2002, 9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

To be held in the Rutland region.

New England Regional Genealogical Conference

November 6-9, 2003

Seacrest Resort, North Falmouth, Massachusetts

Check the NERGC Web site <www.rootsweb.com/~manergc/> GSV is a sponsoring organization, as we have been for each of the six previous NERGC events.

GSV Publications

We are always on the lookout for good material of interest to Vermont family history research for publication in our journal *Vermont Genealogy* or as separate volumes in our special publications series. If you are working on a project that seems to qualify, let us know. We are interested in previously unpublished primary source records; compiled genealogy; indexing of material which has been hard to negotiate

in unindexed form, and other good ideas. Compiled family genealogies may be excellent for *Vermont Genealogy*, but we are not looking for book-length family genealogies to come out under the GSV imprint. We do not have staff available to do extensive editing or formatting; in general, material should be submitted in electronic form or camera-ready copy for publication. We will, however, try to work with authors on how to make their material ready to publish.

CALL FOR PAPERS

2003 NEW ENGLAND REGIONAL GENEALOGICAL CONFERENCE AMERICA'S MELTING POT

Lecture proposals are now being accepted for the seventh New England Regional Genealogical Conference. The deadline for submission is June 29, 2002

The conference focus will be the immigration of diverse ethnic and racial groups into and out of New England since the Great Migration, immigrant settlement, lives and activities in New England, and the heterogeneous society they helped create. There will also be tracts on general genealogical topics and for the demonstration of computer software of interest to genealogists.

Possible lecture topics include reasons for immigration, the immigration experience, research in ancestor's country of origin, techniques for locating and researching immigrant ancestors, New England records created by and about immigrants, settlement patterns of various ethnic and racial groups, the work of immigrants, immigrant organizations and aid societies, passenger lists, and naturalization records.

For additional information or a detailed copy of the conference Call for Papers, please contact NERGC 2003 Program Chair, Joyce S. Pendry, CG, 200 Mill Road, Falmouth, MA 02540, e-mail: jpendry@aol.com.

SOME THOUGHTS ON GENEALOGICAL TECHNOLOGY

By John Leppman

Our society's participation at the GENTECH conference in Boston in January gave me a chance to observe for a couple of days the changing face of the genealogical community. A couple of decades ago, when I first attended a large genealogical conference, the typical attendee was a Caucasian woman of a certain age who was likely to be a member of the Daughters of Something or Other. (Obviously, there were people involved in genealogy then who didn't fit the stereotype, and many of those Daughters did excellent research work.) The typical attendee at GENTECH, one might almost assert, was male, thirty-something, and very computer savvy. (And now I have to point out that there were plenty of women there of a certain age who were quite computer savvy themselves.) GENTECH has been going on for a decade now, but this was the first of their conferences I had attended. The conference sessions now include topics not even on the radar screen a decade ago.

Technology has made some fantastic contributions to genealogical research, but to its credit, the conference incorporated plenty of opportunities to hear cautionary

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News, articles and comments
should be mailed to:

Mrs. Margaret R. Jenks
24 Mettowee Street
Granville, NY 12832-1037
(518) 642-1894
e-mail: mjenks@capital.net

Deadlines for information are:
Dec. 15, Mar. 15, June 15 & Sept. 15
for the February, May, August and
November issues of the *Newsletter*.

messages. One speaker related the tale of a man coming into one of the nation's leading genealogical libraries, laden down with just about every electronic gadget imaginable. He spent some time getting everything hooked up to the outlets and ports the library had available, and then approached the reference desk with the simple question, "Where are the names?" He wasn't interested in connecting to the library's catalogue of holdings. He just wanted the library's comprehensive index of all the names they had in their collections. When he was told that no such index exists - and indeed no library has such an index - he indignantly proclaimed, "It could be done, you know!" High profile articles in national news-magazines and other sources have led many naive would-be researchers to believe that there is some sort of central genealogical data base that can be tapped into on the Web to provide a full accounting of anyone's ancestry. Purveyors of some on-line services have found (or perhaps concocted) stories of people finding a thousand ancestors in an evening's work. It's not so easy, and probably never will be.

What can technology offer to genealogical researchers? First and oldest of the benefits is the capability to preserve the information content of records. This started with microfilm and related media, and has gone on to various forms of digital preservation. There are serious drawbacks to excessive dependence on these techniques, however. Many digital preservation media have considerably shorter projected useful shelf lives than properly made paper copies, and they depend on technologies for reading the data which may become obsolete.

Next in line are computerized systems for recording and organizing research results. These range from common word processing and indexing programs to the various elaborate computer programs for sorting out ancestors and making printouts of data in all sorts of formats. These are fun to play with and certainly shorten some of the tedious tasks in genealogical writing like creating an index, but they do nothing to guarantee the quality of the research data put into them, and their outputs can sometimes be much more pretty than useful. They should be used as

tools to create effective and well organized written research reports, not as an end in themselves. I had the impression at this conference that the market has been somewhat saturated with genealogical programs and the number of new ones coming along has slowed down.

Of course the biggest buzz in the last few years has been the use of the Internet as a tool for connecting people with common interests, sharing data, and speeding everyone's research. Huge data bases like the LDS Family History Library's *Familysearch.org* can now be accessed on line and incorporate many useful clues. A multitude of smaller Web sites include material which ranges from the sublime to the ridiculous. Unfortunately, it isn't always easy to figure out which is which, particularly if one is a beginner. It can't be said often enough that just because something is on the Web doesn't make it true, any more than just being in print ever made something true. A common word of caution among speakers at GEN-TECH was that information on the Web tends to be fleeting as sites come and go. It's frustrating to find information and cite it carefully, only to have the Web source of the data disappear into the ether. Web sources should be traced as carefully as possible to their point of origin and information verified with less ephemeral records. The wonderful communication capability which the Internet provides should be used to sharpen our ability to analyze data and check out hypotheses, rather than just to spread around misinformation and repeat mythology. The genealogical frauds committed by such masters of the art as Gustave Anjou have taken on new life as they have bounced around on the Internet. That is not an example of technology serving genealogy well.

Finally, much discussion at the Boston conference focused on applications of biotechnology to genealogical questions. The hot items in this field these days are mitochondrial DNA - the bit of genetic inheritance you get only from your "umbilical" or straight-back maternal line - and the Y chromosome - the one which only men have and which comes from their straight-back paternal line. Y chromosome analyses have been used to substantiate the hypothesis that Thomas Jefferson

fathered one or more of mulatto slave Sally Hemmings' children, and there have been other similar efforts to sort out paternity issues by this technique. Mitochondrial DNA analysis leads to various hypotheses about common matrilineal ancestors thousands of years ago, including the popular book *The Seven Daughters of Eve*, whose author, Bryan Sykes, was the conference's banquet speaker. (People were including on their conference name tags the mitochondrial DNA subgroup - i.e. the "daughter of Eve" - which they belonged to. "What's your sign?" is just *so over* as a pickup line.) DNA analysis is wonderful, but there will never be any way of getting your DNA analyzed and detecting the name of a single person on your family tree. You may be able to figure out whether someone's father was really his purported father or perhaps the mailman, and if historical records suggest who the mailman was you might be able to test that hypothesis. (I can think of an eighteenth-century circumstance I've worked with which might be open to such testing.) Your genes, however, won't yield your family tree chart any more than the Internet will. Probably less.

Genealogical research still demands several efforts, which may be tedious and difficult. We must find records which reliably provide the information we need. Technology helps with this, both with preserving the records and with improving our chances of locating them. We must analyze their content, including their contradictions, to come up with well worked out theories of how family connections were in times past. Technology offers some help with this, including the newest biotechnology techniques, but it doesn't solve many of the problems we will encounter. It does offer a chance to discuss our thoughts with others with more speed and thoroughness. And we must present our information in clear and understandable terms, including clear indication of where we found what we know. Technology helps with organizing data but does not assure clarity. Disseminating the information by whatever media we have available is commendable, but nothing is likely to last as long and do as much good as a well-bound book on good paper.

VHS LIBRARY OPENING DATE

Saturday, July 13, 1002

The Vermont Historical Society announced last week that the opening date of the new VHS library in the Vermont History Center in the Spaulding Building in Barre, Vermont, will be July 13, 2002. The opening has been delayed from the projected opening date of June 1 due to delays in obtaining some building materials, the Society's involvement in the Vermont History Expo 2002 the weekend of June 22 and 23, and the July 4 holiday. A grand opening celebration is scheduled for Saturday, July 13, from 10 am until 4 PM. Check the Society's web page at www.state.vt.us/vhs for details and photos of the history center under construction.

Paul A. Carnahan, Librarian John Leppman adds to check the Web site to learn how the project is progressing and for several of his pictures.

MEETINGS**NEHGS GETTING STARTED**

This program is offered the first **Wednesday** of every month from 12 noon to 1 p.m. and from 6 to 7:30 p.m. and the first **Saturday** of every month at 11 a.m.; at 101 Newbury Street, Boston, MA. This free program gives an introduction to NEHGS, its services and ways to help you find your family roots. Tips on how to begin your own family research, tour of the newly renovated library and a chance to meet the library staff. Non-members will receive a free pass to the library. No registration is required.

A REMINDER

Please look at your address label. Your membership expires on the date shown on the label. Send your check in US funds to:

**Genealogical Society of Vermont,
PO Box 1553**

Saint Albans, VT 05478-1006

**Dues are \$20 for US addresses
Canada and Mexico \$25, foreign \$30**

For the latest information on meetings and GSV, visit us on our web site at:
<http://www.rootsweb.com/~vtgsv>

GENEALOGY IN A NUTSHELL

Beginning in September 2001, spend a morning at NEHGS attending a short concise "nutshell" class held in the education center. Topics will range from "Researching Your French Canadian Ancestors" to "Using CD-ROMs and the Internet for Research". Classes are held on Wednesdays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

NEHGS IRISH GENEALOGICAL CONFERENCE

Friday & Saturday September 27-28, 2002

The conference will be held at the Sheraton Hotel, Braintree, MA. This special conference will feature a wide array of topics of interest to researchers of all skill levels and features NEHGS staff as well as nationally known speakers.

Pre-registration is required for the above program. Contact the NEHGS Education Department, 101 Newbury Street, Boston, MA 02116-3007; phone 1-888-286-3447 or 617-536-5740, ext. 227 or by e-mail education@nehgs.org.

FALL VOCA MEETING

The fall meeting of the Vermont Old Cemetery Association is planned for Saturday October 5, 2002 at the Congregational Church, Bradford, VT.

Please visit VOCA's web site at: <http://www.sover.net/~hwdbr/voca> [This address is correct, but if you have a problem, go to the GSV site, then link to VOCA.]

CORRECTION TO WINDSOR COUNTY, VERMONT PROBATE INDEX, 1778-1899.

by Scott Andrew Bartley &
Marjorie-J. Bartley

Page 456, at the bottom, add a line: STERLIN(G). The header starting the next page is correct.

BOOK REVIEW POLICY

Books for review should be sent to John A. Leppman, 29 Oak Hill Terrace, Belows Falls, VT 05101.

FAMILY REUNIONS

The **Conord Family Reunion** will be held June 27 through June 30, 2002 at the Holiday Inn 1776 Resort, Williamsburg, Virginia. Contact: Kathleen Conord Brook, 1416 Wind Chime CT, Lawrenceville, GA 30045 770-979-2616 brook6@attbi.com

The **Lovell Family Association** (descendants of Alexander of Medfield, MA and Thomas of Ipswich, MA) will hold their 14th reunion on August 11, 2002 at Plymouth State Park in Plymouth, VT. Contact Elisabeth Lovell Bowman, 12 Leone Road, Toms River, NJ 08755-6321. After June 10: 42 Spruce Lane, Ludlow, VT 05149, phone 802-228-4214

The **Society of Stukely Westcott Descendants** will hold a reunion July 18-20, 2002 at the Johnson & Wales Inn, Seekonk, MA. Contact Betty W. Acker, 3654 Mill Dr., Zanesville, OH 43701-1126 e-mail: betw@prodigy.net.

The **Towne Family Association, Inc.** The descendants of William and Joanna Blessing Towne, including collateral lines, Nurse, Esty, Bridges, Cloyes, Perkins, Cummings, etc. will hold the 22nd. Annual Reunion and Meeting at The Ponchartrain Hotel, New Orleans, LA September 4-8, 2002. Contact: Wayne M. Riggle, 19 Fairway Drive West, Etowah, NC 28729 -9769 e-mail: rigglew@bell-south.net. For membership information contact: Barbara Patterson, 11 Country Club Lane, Merrimack, NH 03054-2692

Announcements of family reunions must be received by the editor no later than **March 15** each year to be included in the **May Newsletter**. Be sure to include date, place, name & address of contact person. Announcements received after March 15 will be used in the August **Newsletter** if they are for reunions held after Sept. 1.

Contributions to the Permanent Fund

None

Contributions to the Computer Fund

None

Please send your donations to GSV, PO. Box 1553, St. Albans, VT. 05478-1006. Please mark your check "Permanent Fund" or "Computer Fund."

Janet Induni, Treasurer

**THE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
OF VERMONT WELCOMES THE
FOLLOWING NEW AND
REINSTATED MEMBERS:**

- 3587 (reinstate)
Josephine Bates
18032 Propser Ave.
Eastpoint, MI 48021
- 4644 (reinstate)
Edith Lillie Bartley
253 Hicks
Brooklyn, NY 11201
e-mail: edith.bartley@worldnet.att.net
research interests: Lillie, Lilly, Lilley, McIntosh, Child
- 4675 (reinstate)
Duncan D. Chaplin, III
Wingate Road,
RR 2, Box ;668
Center Barnstead, NH 03225-9103
e-mail: dsnack@worldpath.net
- 5055 (reinstate)
Jerome E Anderson
7 Dartmouth St.
Somerville, MA 02145-3833
- 6362
Norma H Fatone
75 4th St
Troy, NY 12180-3901
research interests: Hunter, Brayton, Hyde, Jenkins, Sweet
- 6364
Lyle K Williams
5100 Randol Mill Road, #3215
Fort Worth, TX 76112-1583
research interests: Williams, Ogden, Baldwin
- 6365
Nancy Martin Bell
13355 N Highway 183, #911
Austin, TX 78750
e-mail: nmbell@austin.rr.com
research interests: Martin, Hatch, Briggs, Grant, Delano
- 6366
Lorraine Tute Maloney
PO Box 124
4238 VT Route 105
Newport Center, VT 05857-0124
research interests: Tute, Nash
- 6367
Tom Parrish
44 Monadnock Drive
Marlborough, NH 03455
e-mail: TomParrish@earthlink.net
research interests: Rumrill
- 6368
Priscilla J Mounts
PO Box 123
Cavendish, VT 05142
e-mail: LTWildwood@tds.net
research interests: Shaw, Bennett, Stark, Pond, Nelson
- 6369
Gloria Ellis
4612 Colonial Drive, Apt 2
Saginaw, MI 48603
e-mail: ellisgj@core.com
research interests: Ellis, Runkel/Runkle, Gemmell, Gimmel
- 6370
Necia Currier
129 Brackett Road
New Durham, NH 03855
e-mail: berner@metrocast.net
research interests: Roberts, Newton, Chase, Bailey, Estes
- 6371
Valerie H. Berberich
76 Bullfrog Hollow Road
Wells, VT 05774
research interests: Cross
- 6372
Erin Tolchin
7284 Wakefield Drive
Fayetteville, NY 13066
e-mail: ntolchin@twcny.rr.com
research interests: Farr, Robinson, Fay, Stevens
- 6373
Jeanne M. Wolf
660 Willow Valley Square, M-107
Lancaster, PA 17602-4874
e-mail: jwolf223@aol.com
research interests: Stewart, Smith, Clark
- 6374
Donald A. Sage
2925 Lincoln Drive, #318
Roseville, MN 55113-1347
e-mail: dsage@usfamily.net
research interests: Shedd, Sage
- 6375
Kathy Lovell
941 Fish Pond Road
Colebrook, NH 03576
e-mail: Kathy@aspi.net
research interests: Merritt, Stanley, Olin, Judd, Allen
- 6376
Tina L. Attig
1454 Fritts Ct
Hinesville, GA 31313
e-mail: booboo52764@hotmail.com
research interests: Perkins, Irish, Otis, Coombs
- 6377
Alan L. Williams
3 Dagmont Ave.
Barre, VT 05641
e-mail: awilliams@per.state.vt.us
research interests: Meaker, Meeker, Ducharme, Beckley, Bassett
- 6378
Carol Waldron
2 Patricia Lane
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866-2812
e-mail: cwald36709@aol.com
research interests: Bouvier, Boucher, Bushey, LaDue, Monigui
- 6379
Kathy R. Thompson
421 Old Oakhill Road
Jamestown, SC 29453
e-mail: krtpon1@aol.com
research interests: Johns, Ackerman, Saxton
- 6380
Thomas E. Dunn, LADC
1966 VT Route 16
E Hardwick, VT 05836-9654
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research interests: Dunn, Fields, Whipple
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Bertha Akley
PO Box 723
Wilmington, VT 05363
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VERMONT FAMILIES IN 1791, Volume 1

Edited by Scott A. Bartley

This award-winning first volume of a projected long series has stimulated research and guided many people to sources useful to establish their own ancestry. The goal of this series is to describe in detail the families listed in the First Federal Census taken in Vermont in 1791, the year Vermont joined the Union. Special Publication No. 1, 1992. xxvii + 281 pp., hardbound, \$30.00

Volume 2

Edited by Scott A. Bartley

This volume covers 107 families and has improved formatting and more complete information on the third generation. Special Publication No. 5, 1997. xlvi + 304 pp., hardbound, \$30.00

VITAL RECORDS OF ROCKINGHAM, VERMONT AND THE RECORDS OF THE FIRST CHURCH OF ROCKINGHAM

Reprinted from the rare first editions of 1908 and 1902, this is an important source for one of Vermont's oldest towns, chartered in 1752. The town records extend to 1845, church records from 1773 to 1839. New to this publication is an indispensable index of nearly 10,000 names, constructed by Christopher T. Norris and Scott A. Bartley. GSV Special Publication No. 3, 1994. 323 pp., hardbound, \$30.00

MEMBER RESEARCH DIRECTORY

Compiled by Janet E. Induni

The directory lists addresses and interests of a majority of GSV members. Each member listed provided up to five surnames of Vermont families on which he or she might like to share information. Published in 1998 for GSV members only. 63 pp., \$3.00.

VITAL RECORDS OF PUTNEY, VERMONT TO THE YEAR 1900

Compiled and edited by Ken Stevens

This is not just a verbatim listing of such events, but a complete, concise and accurate compilation from all primary sources available in the town. This material is augmented by the ministerial records of the pastors who served from as early as 1776. Special Publication No. 2, 1992. x + 406 pp., hardbound, \$30.00

GEORGIA, VERMONT VITAL RECORDS

Edited by Peter S. Mallett

The first of its kind for northern Vermont, this volume presents all births, baptisms, marriages, deaths and burials recorded in the town. All the civil books were transcribed as well as the records from the Georgia Plains Baptist Church, Congregational Church, Emmanuel Episcopal Church, and Methodist Church of Georgia and North Fairfax. GSV Special Publication No. 4, 1995, hardbound, \$30.00

INDEX TO BRANCHES & TWIGS 1972-1995

Edited by Robert M. Murphy

The long-awaited every-name index to GSV's *Branches & Twigs*, published for 24 years, 96 issues. The 180,000 index entries include every name mentioned in every issue, except those cited in connection with Society business, those mentioned in purely casual historical context, and the ancestry service ("Apple Orchard") feature, which was alphabetically arranged. Separate sections of this work list the coverage of each installment of the Apple Orchard, and provide a full author-title index to book reviews. *Branches & Twigs* included immense quantities of information of interest to Vermont family historians. Special publication No. 7, 2000, 572 pp., hardbound \$65.00.

WINDSOR COUNTY VERMONT PROBATE INDEX, 1778-1899

Compiled by Scott Andrew Bartley
and Marjorie-J. Bartley

A comprehensive index of all files in the Probate Courts of the two districts (Windsor and Hartford) in Windsor County, Vermont, between the earliest records (1778) and the end of the nineteenth century. More than 20,000 files are indexed by the name of the major party in the case, place of residence, district, type of record, year, and volume of the bound records in which the record(s) will be found. Special publication No. 6, 2000, 560 pp., hardbound, \$50.00.

A BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR VERMONT GENEALOGY

by John A. Leppman

A reprint, with updates and some format changes, of the series recently completed in Vermont Genealogy, listing over 500 books and other published sources about Vermont and its counties and towns which are of particular use to genealogical researchers. (Family genealogies are not included in its coverage.) A useful reference work for any Vermont researcher. Special publication No. 8, 2000, 66 pp, soft cover, \$7.50 plus \$1.50 postage

SUDBURY, VERMONT: TRAN- SCRIPTION OF VITAL RECORDS AND GENEALOGIES OF RESIDENTS

by Mary Ann Z. Wheeler

A comprehensive transcription of vital and census records for this Rutland County town, plus carefully compiled genealogies of families. This book will take its place among the very best genealogical resources available about a Vermont town. A cooperative publication of GSV and Picton Press. Special publication No. 9, 2000, 416 pp, hardbound, \$49.50

10% discount for GSV members. Please add \$3.50 postage for the first book, \$1.00 for each additional book in the same order to the same address. Please add the Vermont Sales Tax of 5% for books mailed to a VT address. Mail your checks, payable to GSV, to:

Genealogical Society of Vermont, PO Box 1553, Saint Albans, VT 05478-1006

VERMONT FAMILIES IN 1791, VOLUME III

Drew Bartley has announced that this year he will be working on Vermont Families in 1791, Volume 3.

If anyone has submitted material in the past but has more now, they should consider writing an updated version and e-mailing it as an attached file to him at YourGenealogist@aol.com. New submissions are welcome of course. "I assume I will be physically working on it over the summer. If there is any questions, you should feel free to e-mail me, but

remember to put "VFP" or "Vermont Families" in the subject field." Drew gets a great deal of junk mail. If the subject does not make sense and he does not recognize the e-mail address, he will delete it without reading.

ARE YOU MOVING? REPLACEMENT COPIES

Please notify the Society in advance of any address changes (including summer and winter addresses) at GSV, PO. Box 1553, St. Albans, VT. 05478-1006. Your copies of *Vermont Genealogy* and *The GSV Newsletter* are forwarded to you by

the Post Office with additional charges to the Society if you have filed a forwarding notice with the Post Office.

We will send you replacement copies of *Vermont Genealogy* by first class mail for a small replacement fee of \$3.25 for each issue. Replacement copies of *The GSV Newsletter* will be forwarded at no charge. Thank you for letting us know of any address changes in advance. This helps keep costs down.

Janet Induni, Treasurer

B & T BACK ISSUES

Each issue is \$2 (including postage). Currently available are: Volumes 12:5; 14:1,3; 16:2, 18:1,2,3; 19:4; 20:1-4; 21:1-4; 22:2,3,4; 24:1-4.

VG BACK ISSUES

Each issue is \$5 (including postage). Currently available are: Volumes 1:1-3; 2:1-4, 3:1-3, 4:1-4; 5:1-4.

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The *Newsletter* is now accepting paid advertising at the rate of \$3.00 per column inch. All advertising must relate to genealogy, preferably Vermont genealogy, and must be received before the deadline of the issue the ad is to appear in. Checks must be made out to GSV but sent to the *Newsletter* editor along with the exact wording for the ad. GSV offers no warranty on the services of the advertisers.

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