

Challenge 3141 - Adopt A County Project

We are very excited to announce the launch of a new challenge program that is designed to expand the holdings and increase the value and breadth of the genealogical collection held at the SCGS Family Research Library: **Challenge 3141**.

What Is Challenge 3141? The Census Bureau lists 3141 counties (including county-equivalent territory such as independent cities) in the United States. We want to make significant progress toward our goal of having at least one resource for every county in the United States, thus the "Challenge 3141" name. We are turning to our members to help us expand our collection and asking each member to Adopt A County.

How can you participate?

You can participate in this challenge by contributing materials for one or more of the counties that you are researching.

1. You may have acquired publications or reference guides in the course of your own research, and no longer need to keep them handy. Why not donate one or two of those books to the SCGS Library? You can regain some shelf space at home and help the Library at the same time. Best of all, you can still have access to the resource if you need it.
2. There may be publications that are on your wish list for counties you are researching. Purchase new materials and have them sent to you. Use them to do your lookup, and then pass them along to the SCGS Library.
3. If several publications are available for a particular county, you could send the list or order form to the Library, along with a donation to cover the publications you suggest be purchased. Our Acquisitions Committee will make the purchase.
4. Finally, we will be glad to accept a financial donation targeted toward the Challenge 3141 project. On your check, you can indicate the county or counties you would like to support.
5. If you are inspired to donate more than one resource, you can either send them all from a single county, or you can select materials from several counties.

What kinds of publications and resources do we want?

We are most interested in materials that are not easily accessible on the Internet. County-level indexes for a US Census, for example, do not add much value to the collection because of the ease of obtaining the information with our Ancestry Library Edition and Heritage

Quest online subscriptions. However, special state-level censuses that have been indexed at the county or town could be very beneficial.

Of particular interest are indexes -- birth, marriage, death, cemetery, immigration or naturalizations, probate or other legal index, newspaper indexes, city directories, or county histories that contain biographies. Vital records are highly desirable, as are genealogy society or historical society indexes or publications.

Please do not send general historical volumes and other non-indexed (or non-searchable digital) materials. No newspapers, please.

Although family histories are not included in this challenge, we will gladly accept donations of printed family histories or genealogies at any time, pursuant to the Society's donation policy.

The material can be in hardcover, soft-cover, or spiral-bound print format, or it can be on CD or microfilm.

Check for current holdings before ordering or donating materials.

Of course, the SCGS Library holds over 30,000 reference volumes now, and we want to avoid duplicating our current holdings. Before purchasing any new items, please check the online catalog <http://www.scgsgenealogy.com/catalogMain.htm> and recent acquisitions at <http://www.scgsgenealogy.com/acquisition-list.htm>

You can also check the catalog to get an idea of the counties that (a) may have a number of resources and (b) those that are not represented in the SCGS collection. Just click on the state in which you are interested, and then search for the name of the county. It's not exact but it will give you an idea of the current holdings for your counties.

Where can you find available publications?

First, we encourage our members to purchase from state, county or local genealogical or historical societies whenever possible. You can find contact information for these societies:

1. Online. Google the name of the genealogy or historical society. Many societies have their publication list available online, and many offer online purchase. If you can't find the material on the county website, check the state genealogy society's website. In some counties, the county Genweb has links to resources for that county. You can even find some on the online auction site eBay.
2. In reference guides. Refer to one of the many genealogy resource guides available, for example:

The Handybook for Genealogists, published by Everton Publishers, Logan Utah.

Ancestry's Red Book: American State, County & Town Sources, Edited by Alice Eichholz, Ph.D., CG and published by Ancestry Incorporated.

The Source, A Guidebook of American Genealogy, Edited by Loretto Dennis Szucs and Sandra Hargreaves Luebking and published by Ancestry Incorporated.

Governmental offices, in some instances, may publish indexes. For example, the City of Sioux City, Iowa, Parks and Recreation Department oversees the city's three city-owned cemeteries, and they publish a new directory every year.

You may find a treasure held in an antique store, used book store, or even a Goodwill or Salvation Army store. You may be able to pick up a volume in another library's duplicate book sale.

Microfilms can be purchased from several sources, including Heritage Quest publications, NARA, and the LDS church.

Documenting your contribution

When you send your donation, please enclose 2 completed copies of the contribution form. The form can be found online at <http://tinyurl.com/3ajeyy>. SCGS is a 501(c)(3) organization and, depending on your personal tax situation, donations may be tax-deductible. Challenge 3141 donors will receive a letter of acknowledgement and will be listed in The Searcher.

We thank you for your support of this program and look forward to reporting the results of this challenge in upcoming editions of The Searcher and News & Notes.