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Blessings in Our Midst . . .

by Curt B. Witcher

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During this extended season of Thanksgiving and gift-giving, thoughts often turn to family, friends, neighbors and colleagues. No matter our station in life, our current challenges, or the unexpected changes that we might have experienced during the past year, there still is much for which we can give thanks. If we pay attention to our thankful heart, it might inspire us to slow down, even in the midst of the busy holiday season, to appreciate the truly important things in our lives. Coincidentally, some of these just might turn out to be truly important "genealogical" things.

At the close of this day, November 30, 2012, my long-time assistant manager, e-zine co-editor, colleague and friend, Steve Myers, officially ends his career in The Genealogy Center. He is retiring from the library to pursue other genealogical opportunities. Steve has been with us since 1986. During that time, he has helped The Genealogy Center accomplish many great things. He assisted with two major moves (2003 and 2007) of not only the genealogy collection, but also of the entire library. He has been editor of our subject guides and co-editor of "Genealogy Gems," has provided top-shelf programs and reference service to patrons, and pioneered our two-day mini-courses. Throughout all of these duties and more, Steve has challenged us to keep our customers central in all we do. In reflecting on Steve's nearly innumerable contributions to The Genealogy Center, the library, and the genealogical community for more than a quarter of a century, I am reminded again of the ever-present need to recognize and appreciate the blessings in our midst.

And in some way, isn't this also a lesson for our genealogical endeavors? As we hurry from website to website, as we plan a full calendar of research trips year after year, trying to find time for those family gatherings and reunions, do we do enough analysis of the data we collect to discover all the answers--the blessings, if you will--that it might provide? How often, when we finally carve a moment or two out of our hectic schedules to organize our research notes and document copies, do

we find answers and "new" discoveries that have been there all along? Those, too, truly are blessings in our midst.

Sometime each December, The Genealogy Center staff and volunteers gather to share a meal and good conversation. It's a great way to connect with individuals each of us may not see that often during the year. As people arrive and depart over the gathering hours, I am always impressed with the number of individuals who contribute to the Center's success by giving of their time and their amazing talents. They prepare preservation photocopying for binding, file correspondence, index local marriage records and obituary notices, keep our collections in order, assist in answering information requests, scan thousands of photographs, organize donations, and digitize many thousands of books. Our volunteers are indeed more blessings in our midst.

Many among us, year after year, lament the hustle and bustle of the ever-more-commercial holiday season. Yet we continue to get caught up in the same activities each year, letting the gift buying, party scheduling, present wrapping and mass-mailing of holiday cards crowd out those things that might really provide us with some meaning and contentment. During the next several weeks, I encourage you to take a breath, grab a moment, and consider a more unique holiday gift--the gift of you. Digitize some seldom-seen family photographs and give them on a USB drive, or upload them to a shared online space for nephews, nieces and grandchildren to enjoy. Send a picture of yourself at the same age that your grandchildren are now, and include a note promising to take them on an "ancestral adventure" during the holidays or next summer. Consider giving a digital recorder as a gift so that family members can record their favorite holiday memories. Maybe they will be inspired to go beyond holiday memories and record other life stories. Capturing living memory could be one of the best gifts you'll ever give OR receive, yet more blessings in our midst . . .

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#### Fraternal Organizations

by Dawne Slater-Putt, CG(sm)\*

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Part of the reward of family history research is going beyond the names, dates and places, to discover how our ancestors fit into the tapestry of history as a whole. For this reason, once a newbie genealogist gets his "sea legs," he may begin to seek out books pertaining to the history of localities, events, and social topics. Alvin J. Schmidt's "Fraternal Organizations" (366 Sch5f) is one such volume. The library has a second copy in Readers' Services that can be checked out by ACPL cardholders.

Entries for the various organizations are arranged alphabetically by society name, with cross-references to alternate names. Each sketch includes a brief history of the organization, information about its purpose, rituals, parent and offspring societies, and a reference for the information provided. The volume has a table of contents and index, as well as a section in the front titled "The Fraternal Context" that explains the rise and history of and reasons for the establishment of fraternal organizations in the United States. Appendices list fraternal organizations chronologically, provide geographic headquarters, group societies by ethnic affiliation and religious affiliation and discuss interrelated fraternal organizations, such as the multiple variations of Freemasonry.

Many of the organizations are fascinating, such as the Order of Anti-Poke-Noses, founded in Searcy County, Arkansas, in 1923 in opposition to the Ku Klux Klan. In the preamble to its constitution, this group professed to be "opposed to any organization that attends to everyone's business but [its] own." Another group described on the same page is the Arctic Brotherhood, founded as a secret society by gold-seekers to Alaska in 1899 and espousing kindness to horses and dogs. While most societies have a few sentences to a few paragraphs of information, the section on Freemasonry spans about twenty pages since, as the book explains, "No other organization in the fraternal world is so prominent and so large as Freemasonry."

Schmidt points out in "The Fraternal Context," that America has been called a nation of joiners. Citing Charles Merz, he said that about half of the 60,000,000 individuals listed in the 1920 census were members of a fraternal organization, and that by 1927, more than eight hundred different such societies were in existence. Chances are good that we all have ancestors who belonged to one. We might discover this in a county history biography, in an obituary, or by spotting a fraternal symbol carved on a cemetery marker. "Fraternal Organizations" can help us begin to understand what it meant for our ancestors to be part of one of these societies.

\*"CG" & "Certified Genealogist" are service marks of the Board for Certification of Genealogists, and are used by authorized associates following periodic, peer-reviewed competency evaluations.

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Name Index to Early Illinois Records, 1810-1950  
by John D. Beatty

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For many years, the staff of the Illinois State Archives (ISA) maintained the card index, "Name Index to Early Illinois Records, 1810-1850." These alphabetized cards, both handwritten and typed, included information extracted predominantly from state and federal census schedules for 1820 to 1850. The source was intended as an internal finding aid for Archives users. The Genealogical Society of Utah microfilmed the index in 1975, and The Genealogy Center's copy consists of 340 reels of film. Unfortunately, many of the card images are dark and difficult to read.

Initially it would seem that since the Illinois federal and state census schedules have been digitized and made widely available, this set offers little of value to modern researchers, but such a view would be premature. The index also includes references from and abstracts of a number of lesser-known Illinois governmental and manuscript sources not widely available in other formats. Two examples are election returns for various local offices (justice of the peace, constable, county clerk, judge, school commissioner and recorder) from the source "Election Returns," and militia officer commissions, appointments of public notaries and names from petitions, all extracted from the "Executive Record." While the abstractors usually made only brief summary notations, they included the name, date and county, with a reference to the source (often abbreviated) and page where the original record was found.

In a few cases the cards provide more extensive information. Abstracts of federal land patents in Illinois include the grantee, township, range, section number and date of the grant. Other cards are extracts from a "Receipts and Disbursements Ledger, 1813-1820," little-used property tax records taken from an unpublished manuscript.

The title of the set, "Name Index to Early Illinois Records, 1810-1850," is somewhat misleading since it includes some data from a much earlier time period. Of interest are references from the Perrin Collection, part of the "Record of Registration and Donation in Kaskaskia District, 1739-1796." This unpublished manuscript collection of eighteenth-century French settlers in present-day St. Clair and Randolph counties includes royal land grants, property donations, marriages, probates and other court business. In this record subset is the marriage abstract of Theresia Archange Boucher de Montbru, widow of Chenier, to Alexis Doza on May 4, 1795, by G. Richard, curate of St. Mary's of Kahaskia. One entry traces John Boucher from his arrest for assault and battery in 1812 through 1818, when he signed petitions, was sued for debt and registered the crop marks of his livestock. Other cards describe Marie Therese Bourgeois, "a business woman dwelling at Post St. Louis, wife of Rene Choutaud, merchant absent," who donated a lot with a stone house and several slaves, including both Africans and Indians, most of whom were named with their approximate ages.

Some of these cards include surprising detail, as noted above, but are not fully cited and researchers will need to try to identify the original ISA record from which they were extracted. These gems make this set worth a look, even if the census information is more easily accessed elsewhere.

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Technology Tip of the Month--Correcting Color Cast Using Variations  
by Kay Spears

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Last month's column mentioned color cast problems that can occur with color photographs and mentioned some of the tools in the Adobe Photoshop and Elements software package that may help counteract them. Remember that fixing problems with photographs often will require the use of more than one tool. Unfortunately, there is not one magic button that says "fix all."

When working with color problems in photographs, it is helpful to have a general knowledge of the color wheel. Usually when there is a color cast problem, the fix is to add color from the opposite side of the color wheel. So if the photo is too red, adding green probably will help. If it is too blue, it may look better with yellow added, and so on.

One way to correct color cast in a photograph is to use the Variations tool. The Variations tool may be found in different places on the screen in different Adobe packages and versions. In Adobe Photoshop (included with Creative Suite), go to Image>Adjustments>Variations. In Adobe Elements, go to Enhance>Adjust Color>Color Variations. Regardless of the path to find Variations (or Color Variations) in the different Adobe products, this is the same tool and produces the same effects.

To use the Variations tool, open the problem photograph within Adobe, then open the Variations tool. Within the dialog box that appears, again there is a difference in verbiage, depending on which Adobe product is being used. In Photoshop, the terms Original, Current Pick, More Red, More Blue (additional colors) and Lighter and Darker will appear, each with a thumbnail of the photograph. In Adobe Elements, the terms below the thumbnails of the photo will be Before, After, Increase Blue, Increase Red (additional colors), Decrease Blue, Decrease Red (additional colors) and Darken and Lighten.

Both Photoshop and Adobe Elements have the choices Midtone/Highlight/Shadows/Saturation and a slide bar to adjust the color intensity. Before beginning to correct the photo's color cast, move the slide bar completely to the right and notice how the thumbnail changes to almost primary colors. This exercise demonstrates how intense the colors in the photograph can be. Then move the slide bar back to its original position. Now, make sure that the Midtone check box is checked.

The photograph I like to use as an example has a too-red cast to it, so I begin to correct it by clicking on the thumbnail that says Increase Green or More Green, depending on my Adobe product. When I do this, the thumbnail that says Current Pick or After changes. If the altered photograph still looks too red, I can click again to balance it with green. It is important to look at the altered photograph itself - outside of the Variations tool - after the first click; the thumbnails within the tool really are too small to show the changes clearly. Once the too-red cast is no longer apparent in the photo, the use of the color thumbnail buttons in the Variations tool is complete.

At this point, it may be desirable to darken or lighten the photograph with the Variations tool, or you may choose another method.

In my example photograph, increasing green balanced the color and caused the red cast to lessen. However, the little girl (me) is wearing a leather jacket that I know was red although it still appears in the photo to be magenta. So another tool will be used to fix this problem - the Hue and Saturation tool.

Next month: Using the Hue and Saturation Tool.

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Quick-Tip of the Month for Preservation--Preserve Historical Ephemera at WeRelate.org, a "Virtual Filing Cabinet"

by Dawne Slater-Putt, CG(sm)\*

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As genealogists, we often have a natural interest in history and a tendency to save or collect paper ephemera, including items that do not specifically pertain to our ancestors. These documents and photographs might have historical significance for organizations to which we belong, or for our local communities. We can scan and upload our genealogy documents and photographs and link them to our ancestors. But what can we do with those other miscellaneous items we have saved like school play programs, theater tickets and flyers from neighborhood historic home tours? One answer is to upload them to the WeRelate website at <http://www.werelate.org>.

WeRelate is a free wiki site that bills itself as "different than most family tree websites." It promotes a shared approach to genealogy through which anyone can create a page for a person, a family unit or a place, and anyone can change data on those pages and add more information to them. Some genealogists may squirm at the idea of anyone being able to make changes to their people and family pages. But where this collaboration shines is for the genealogist/pack rat with the piles of historical ephemera mentioned above. WeRelate.org can be used as a virtual filing cabinet for those local history documents by scanning them and uploading them to the site, linking them to a locality page. Anyone can be a contributor by creating a username and password. There are tutorials on the

site, and uploading and linking images takes just a little practice to master.

The *Genealogy Center* becomes a home for hundreds of individual clippings, flyers, programs and photographs annually. Many of these come to us tucked inside high school and college yearbooks that are donated to the collection. Over the years, this has caused a dilemma. The *Genealogy Center* does not maintain vertical files, and it is not cost-efficient to bind a single graduation program into a book and give it a call number. Yet these items are pieces of history, usually include names - sometimes many names - and are too valuable to discard outright.

The solution has been to scan and upload each item to WeRelate and link it to a locality page, then to try to find a museum or historical society in that area to become its forever home. Church dedication programs, sports team photographs, high school theater tickets, community event flyers and many other pieces of ephemera of all types have been handled this way.

Treat yourself to a visit to WeRelate.org soon. If you have explored the site previously and have limited yourself to searching by name, try looking at the pages for your ancestor's town, county or state of residence. You may find some treasures in the gallery of images at the bottom of the page.

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#### WinterTech 2012-2013 Continues

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In the midst of the myriad of end-of-year activities, be sure to take time to attend December's WinterTech class. WinterTech classes are the second Wednesday of each month, November through February beginning at 2:30 p.m., and cover a technology topic in the genealogy space.

Following these afternoon presentations, spend some time researching at The *Genealogy Center*, network over a dinner or a snack with fellow genealogists, and then attend the Allen County Genealogical Society's monthly meetings at 7 p.m.

December's WinterTech offering is "Using OneNote in Your Genealogical Research." Are you having trouble keeping research tasks and needs organized? Learn how to use Microsoft OneNote to keep your genealogical notes, references and research in a single place. The class will be in Meeting Room A on Wednesday, December 12, beginning at 2:30 p.m.

Future WinterTech classes feature "e-Readers & Family History" on January 9, and "Plug-In Your Armchair Genealogy: Researching from Home," on February 13. For more information about these classes, see the brochure at [http://www.genealogycenter.org/Libraries/2012\\_Brochures/winterTech2012.sflb.ashx](http://www.genealogycenter.org/Libraries/2012_Brochures/winterTech2012.sflb.ashx). To register for a class, call 260-421-1225 or email [Genealogy@ACPL.Info](mailto:Genealogy@ACPL.Info). Stay involved through the winter months with technology for your genealogy!

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War of 1812 Pension Digitization Update--FamilySearch Rocks!

by Curt B. Witcher

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A colleague posted on our *Genealogy Center* blog <[www.genealogycenter.org/Community/Blog.aspx](http://www.genealogycenter.org/Community/Blog.aspx)> this week that "FamilySearch Rocks!" as she was talking about the more than two million Indiana marriage record images that were recently added to the FamilySearch website for free use by all. I certainly echo that statement and that sentiment for many reasons! On Tuesday of this week, FamilySearch announced a \$250,000 donation to the "Preserve the Pensions!" Project--a project to digitize and make freely available on the Internet the War of 1812 pension files! That is a huge boost, a true pace-setter gift, to this effort being spearheaded by the Federation of Genealogical Societies. With Ancestry.com's match, it represents a half million dollars toward the goal of \$3.7 million. Incoming Federation President, Joshua Taylor, encourages everyone in the genealogical community to show thanks to FamilySearch by personally contributing to the project. Together we can make it happen.

A copy of the press release is below for those who may not have seen it earlier this week.

#### War of 1812 Pension Digitization Fund Receives Generous \$250,000 Donation

AUSTIN, Texas—The Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS) is pleased to announce that the War of 1812 "Preserve the Pensions" Digitization Fund received a generous donation this week of \$250,000 from FamilySearch, a nonprofit organization and world leader in the genealogy community. The donation helps move the Fund closer to its goal of \$3.7 million in donations to digitally preserve and index the War of 1812 pension and bounty land records.

The War of 1812, often called the "Second Revolution," was a pivotal moment in our nation's history. Individual states struggled to become one nation after a long-fought Revolution, and the "American Experiment" was still at a precarious stage. The strength and courage of the patriots who fought in the War of 1812 ensured that our American Revolution did not end up as a mere footnote in British history. Instead, valiant farmers, merchants, seamen, fathers and sons became soldiers to fight for what they and their fathers had believed in: Their American home.

Now, two hundred years later, the War of 1812 "Preserve the Pensions" Digitization Fund celebrates their success, honor and memories by digitally preserving the veterans' pension records and making them freely accessible to all online. The initiative will digitally preserve the 180,000 War of 1812 pension records (7.2 million pages) located at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), and create a searchable index online. Currently, NARA receives more than 3,000 patron requests per year for copies of soldiers' files.

"The Federation is extremely grateful to FamilySearch for its generous support of this enormously important endeavor," said Curt Witcher, vice president of development for FGS. "Linking the genealogical community, marshaling that community's resources, preserving and making accessible records that document our heritage--all are central to the Federation's mission. FamilySearch's very generous pacesetting gift helps ensure that this 21st century preservation and access project is a reality."

David Rencher, chief genealogy officer for FamilySearch, said, "FamilySearch publishes over 400

million images of historic documents online for free each year, and is honored to support community efforts like the War of 1812 'Preserve the Pensions' Digitization Fund to preserve and make additional high priority historic records more widely available."

The War of 1812 files are very valuable to family historians and genealogists because they contain rich information such as:

- Veteran's name and age
- Residence
- Widow's name and maiden name
- Service history and dates
- Military rank and organization
- If Bounty Land was granted and information about those warrants
- Marriage information
- Death dates for soldiers and widows
- Additional names of neighbors and comrades

Anyone can donate to the project at [www.fgs.org/1812](http://www.fgs.org/1812). Each pension page costs 45 cents to digitize. Each dollar of contribution digitizes two pages. Every little bit helps. To view the FREE images already online, go to: <http://go.fold3.com/1812pensions>.

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#### Out and About

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The Genealogy Center staff members are "home for the holidays." Wishing you and yours a joyful one!

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#### Area Calendar of Events

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Allen County Genealogical Society of Indiana (ACGSI)  
December 12, 2012--Allen County Public Library, 900 Library Plaza, Fort Wayne, Indiana. 6:30 p.m. refreshments, followed at 7 p.m. by Dawne Slater-Putt's presentation: "How to Use the FamilySearch Website."

Allen County-Fort Wayne Historical Society/The History Center, 302 East Berry, Ft. Wayne, IN.  
Next program will be in January 2013.

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#### Driving Directions to the Library

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Wondering how to get to the library? Our location is 900 Library Plaza, Fort Wayne, Indiana, in the block bordered on the south by Washington Boulevard, the west by Ewing Street, the north by Wayne Street, and the east by the Library Plaza, formerly Webster Street. We would enjoy having you visit the Genealogy Center.

To get directions from your exact location to 900 Library Plaza, Fort Wayne, Indiana, visit this link at MapQuest:

<http://www.mapquest.com/maps/map.adp?formtype=address&addtohistory=&address=900%20Webster%20St&city=Fort%20Wayne&state=IN&zipcode=46802%2d3602&country=US&geodiff=1>

>From the South

Exit Interstate 69 at exit 102. Drive east on Jefferson Boulevard into downtown. Turn left on Ewing Street. The Library is one block north, at Ewing Street and Washington Boulevard.

Using US 27:

US 27 turns into Lafayette Street. Drive north into downtown. Turn left at Washington Boulevard and go five blocks. The Library will be on the right.

>From the North

Exit Interstate 69 at exit 112. Drive south on Coldwater Road, which merges into Clinton Street. Continue south on Clinton to Washington Boulevard. Turn right on Washington and go three blocks. The Library will be on the right.

>From the West

Using US 30:

Drive into town on US 30. US 30 turns into Goshen Ave. which dead-ends at West State Blvd. Make an angled left turn onto West State Blvd. Turn right on Wells Street. Go south on Wells to Wayne Street. Turn left on Wayne Street. The Library will be in the second block on the right.

Using US 24:

After crossing under Interstate 69, follow the same directions as from the South.

>From the East

Follow US 30/then 930 into and through New Haven, under an overpass into downtown Fort Wayne. You will be on Washington Blvd. when you get into downtown. Library Plaza will be on the right.

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Parking at the Library

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At the Library, underground parking can be accessed from Wayne Street. Other library parking lots are at Washington and Webster, and Wayne and Webster. Hourly parking is \$1 per hour with a \$7 maximum. ACPL library card holders may use their cards to validate the parking ticket at the west end of the Great Hall of the Library. Out of county residents may purchase a subscription card with proof of identification and residence. The current fee for an Individual Subscription Card is \$70.

Public lots are located at the corner of Ewing and Wayne Streets (\$1 each for the first two half-hours, \$1 per hour after, with a \$4 per day maximum) and the corner of Jefferson Boulevard and Harrison Street (\$3 per day).

Street (metered) parking on Ewing and Wayne Streets. On the street you plug the meters 8am -

5pm, weekdays only. It is free to park on the street after 5pm and on the weekends.

Visitor center/Grand Wayne Center garage at Washington and Clinton Streets. This is the Hilton Hotel parking lot that also serves as a day parking garage. For hourly parking, 7am - 11 pm, charges are .50 for the first 45 minutes, then \$1.00 per hour. There is a flat \$2.00 fee between 5pm and 11pm.

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*Genealogy Center Queries*

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The Genealogy Center hopes you find this newsletter interesting. Thank you for subscribing. We cannot, however, answer personal research emails written to the e-zine address. The department houses a Research Center that makes photocopies and conducts research for a fee.

If you have a general question about our collection, or are interested in the Research Center, please telephone the library and speak to a librarian who will be glad to answer your general questions or send you a research center form. Our telephone number is 260-421-1225. If you'd like to email a general information question about the department, please email: [Genealogy@ACPL.Info](mailto:Genealogy@ACPL.Info).

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*Publishing Note:*

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This electronic newsletter is published by the Allen County Public Library's Genealogy Center, and is intended to enlighten readers about genealogical research methods as well as inform them about the vast resources of the Allen County Public Library. We welcome the wide distribution of this newsletter and encourage readers to forward it to their friends and societies. All precautions have been made to avoid errors. However, the publisher does not assume any liability to any party for any loss or damage caused by errors or omissions, no matter the cause.

To subscribe to "Genealogy Gems," simply use your browser to go to the website: [www.GenealogyCenter.org](http://www.GenealogyCenter.org). Scroll to the bottom, click on E-zine, and fill out the form. You will be notified with a confirmation email.

If you do not want to receive this e-zine, please follow the link at the very bottom of the issue of Genealogy Gems you just received or send an email to [kspears@acpl.lib.in.us](mailto:kspears@acpl.lib.in.us) with "unsubscribe e-zine" in the subject line.

Dawne Slater-Putt, CG & Curt Witcher, co-editors