



# THE Forum Insider

Newsletter of the Genealogical Forum of Oregon  
Volume 36 • Number 1 • July 2024

## Can't Read That Digitized Record?

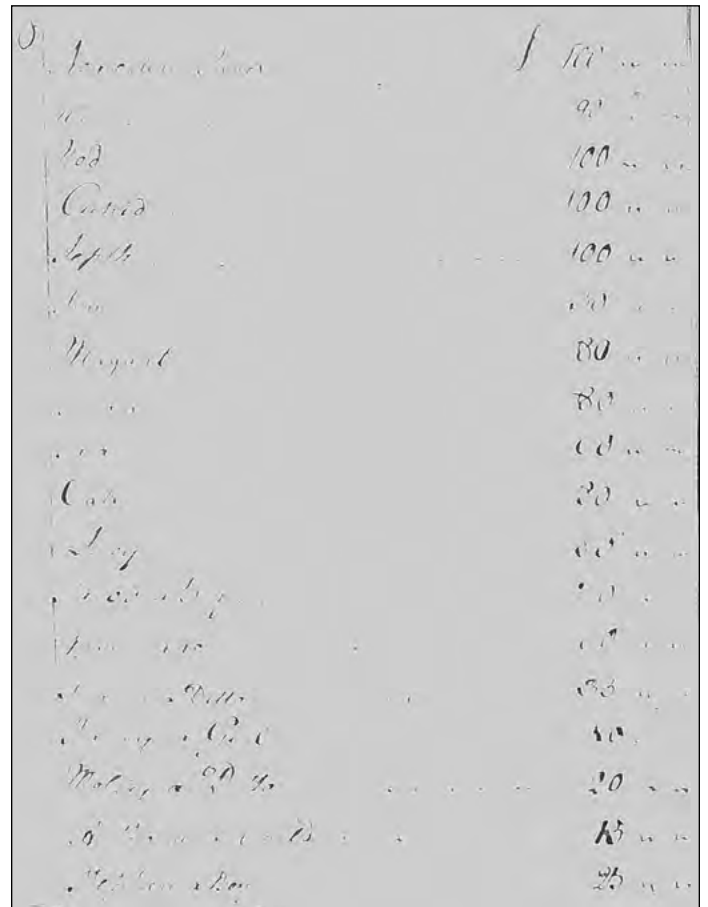
*The answer might be in a book at the GFO Research Library*

Chris Knutson

Have you ever spent time looking through digitized microfilm records, only to find that the page you were looking for was barely legible due to poor image quality? One of the great things about the GFO library is that it has a large collection of books with abstracts or transcriptions of official records from all across the United States and beyond. If you look on the GFO's **OPALS** catalog, there's a chance that the GFO library has a book with at least a partial transcription that might help make sense of the record. Consider the following example.

For much of the past year I've been searching through will books, court orders, and other digitized records, trying to find the names of individuals who were enslaved by some of my ancestors. I've been compiling the names and other details about the individuals identified in these records for the **10 Million Names Project**, a project that was launched by the **American Ancestors—New England Historic Genealogical Society** last year and seeks to find and honor the names of the estimated ten million individuals of African descent who were enslaved in North America between 1619 and 1865. I submitted some of my research findings to the project last September, and since then, I've found the names of other enslaved individuals by examining records I had previously overlooked.

One such record is the estate inventory of an ancestor of mine named John Roberts, who lived in Halifax County, Virginia, in the eighteenth century; Roberts was both my seventh great-grandfather and my eighth great-grandfather (through a marriage of first cousins, once removed, in the nineteenth century). I knew that Roberts was an enslaver



*Enslaved individuals listed in John Roberts' estate inventory*

because of his will (dated 1774), which identified seven enslaved individuals by name: Abraham, Bob, Jemmy, Lucy, Nanny, Sarah, and Tiller. However, I initially neglected to look at his estate inventory, which was in the same will book, though more than 200 pages after the will; the inventory was recorded in 1781, five years after Roberts' death in 1776.

*Continued on [page 4](#)*



# Genealogical Forum of Oregon

2505 SE 11th Ave., Suite B18  
Portland, OR 97202-1061

## Mission

To inspire and empower every person to *discover* and *engage* with their family history.

## Contact Us

503-963-1932  
[info@gfo.org](mailto:info@gfo.org)

## Visitor Information

Library Hours  
Sunday 1–5 p.m.  
Monday & Tuesday 9:30 a.m.–5 p.m.  
Wednesday 1–5 p.m.

## Executive Board of Directors

President <b>Geoff Smith</b>	Treasurer <b>Rebecca Tait</b>
Vice President <i>Open Position</i>	Director at Large <b>Harold Hinds</b>
Secretary <b>Alexa Waddle</b>	Director at Large <b>Tina Rainer</b>

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Library <b>Laurel Smith</b>	Purchasing <b>Loretta Welsh</b>
Membership <b>Jane McGarvin</b>	Technology <b>Richard Crockett</b>
New Home <b>Geoff Smith</b>	Webmaster <b>Ed Vandehey</b>


## Submissions to *The Forum Insider*

Please send short stories, news, announcements, comments, and corrections to Geri Auerbach, AG®, and Keri Logan, Editors, at [insider@gfo.org](mailto:insider@gfo.org).



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# 2024–2026 GFO Board Members Installed

On 15 June 2024, during the GFO annual meeting, two incumbent Board members were installed for the 2024–2026 term. One new Board member was unable to attend the virtual meeting: Tina Rainer will be installed as a Director at Large at a later date.

Geoff Smith was elected President for his second term. Geoff served as President from 2022–2024 and as Secretary from 2018–2020. He heads the Education and New Home Committees. He can be reached at [president@gfo.org](mailto:president@gfo.org).

Alexa Waddle has served as secretary since 2020, making this her third term. She is a Research Assistant at the GFO Library and leads the **Q Review Special Interest Group**, which discusses an article from the *National Genealogical Society Quarterly*



*Geoff Smith*

PRESIDENT



*Alexa Waddle*

SECRETARY



*Tina Rainer*

DIRECTOR AT LARGE

each month. Alexa can be reached at [secretary@gfo.org](mailto:secretary@gfo.org).

Christina “Tina” Rainer was appointed to complete 2022–2024 term vacated by Joyce

Grant-Worley in December 2023. With this induction, she will begin her first elected term. She also serves on the Library Committee and the New Home Committee. She can be found in the library workroom every Wednesday and Sunday evaluating, accessioning, and cataloging new and donated books. Tina can be reached at [tina.rainer@gfo.org](mailto:tina.rainer@gfo.org).

All GFO members are invited to attend Board meetings, which take place via Zoom on the second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. To receive a link to this online meeting, send an email at least 24 hours in advance to [president@gfo.org](mailto:president@gfo.org).

At this time, the Vice President position is vacant. If you would like to learn more, please email Geoff Smith at [president@gfo.org](mailto:president@gfo.org). The current term is active until the end of June 2025.

## Lineage Society Workshop in Person at GFO

Have you considered joining one of the major lineage societies? Whether it's the **Mayflower Society**, **Daughters of the American Revolution**, **Sons of the American Revolution**, **Colonial Dames**, or any of the many others, the essential techniques are the same. It's not as intimidating as it sounds!

Join us for a special, full-day workshop hosted by the Oregon Society of Mayflower Descendants and the GFO. Learn the basics of navigating society forms, documenting supporting evidence, and efficiently finding the information you need.

You'll also receive personalized, hands-on assistance and advice for your membership application from local experts.

The event takes place at the GFO library in the basement of the historic Ford Building on Friday, July 12, 2024, from 9:00 a.m.– 3:00 p.m.



The  
**Mayflower  
Society**

Our address is 2505 S.E. 11th Ave., Suite B-18, Portland, Oregon. To get more information about visiting our library and gaining entrance to our building, visit our [website](http://www.gfo.org).

Cost to attend is \$20 per person. Please register in advance at <https://gfo.org/learn/lineage-society-workshop.html>.



Can't Read that Digitized Record?, from page 1

When I later found the inventory on FamilySearch, it appeared to list 18 enslaved individuals, though the image quality was so bad that I could only read about half of their names. Ancestry had a slightly more legible version of the image, though some of the names were still too faint for me to decipher. I considered contacting the local courthouse to order a better copy of the record, but on a whim, I decided to check OPALS to see if the GFO library had any will book transcriptions for Halifax County. Sure enough, the library had four volumes of Halifax County will abstracts, including one volume that corresponded to the will book I was interested in.

On my next visit to the GFO, I made a beeline for the Virginia section and found the volume I was looking for. While the abstract for John Roberts' inventory left out many details from the original record, it did include transcribed names for 17 of the 18 enslaved individuals; for some reason, the researcher hadn't included James, the first enslaved individual listed in the inventory, even though his name was clearly legible. Some of the names, like Molley and Anthony, matched what I'd guessed from examining the digitized versions, while other names like Frank and Sarah would've been impossible to discern without having access to the original record (or at least a better copy), as the researcher had.

Transcriptions should always be approached with some caution, as they may include errors that were not in the original records; apart from James being omitted from the abstract, the researcher transcribed the fifth name on the list as "Joseph," though it looks more like "Jepth" to me (I'll leave it to readers to decide). Overall, though, the abstract was helpful in providing names that were barely visible—let alone legible—in the digitized versions of the original record. I've ordered a better image of the record so I can double-check the names myself, but based on the available images and the abstract, it appears that only three of the enslaved individuals identified in Roberts' will were also listed in the 1781 inventory. That means that Roberts and his family enslaved at least 22 individuals, including at least 15 individuals who weren't identified in his will.

# Membership Dues to Rise August 1

The GFO Board voted to raise membership dues, effective August 1. The \$1 increase is calculated to cover most of our annual \$1,200 increase in rent. Prices to receive a print publication of our quarterly, *The Bulletin*, have been raised to cover increasing mail costs.

You can renew at the old price, even if your membership still has many months left. To renew, visit [Membership](#) or send an email to [membership@gfo.org](mailto:membership@gfo.org). To lock in the lower price, complete your renewal before August 1, 2024.

Membership	Digital*	Print*
August 1, 2024–June 30, 2025		
Individual-12 month	\$52.00	\$82.00
Individual-25 month	\$104.00	\$164.00
Joint-12 month	\$78.00	\$108.00
Joint-25 mo	\$156.00	\$216.00
Student-12 mo [ID required]	\$23.00†	NA
Individual, Life Member	\$1,040.00†	NA
Joint, Life Members	\$1,560.00†	NA
Libraries/Societies	\$30.00†	NA

\*By choosing digital pricing, members will receive all GFO publications electronically. To receive our quarterly journal *The Bulletin* in print, the print price is applicable.  
 †Student, Life, and Library/Society memberships receive digital publications only.





# Mystery from My Closet

## *Solving the puzzle of my grandmother's unknown correspondents*

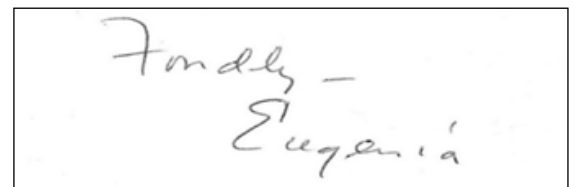
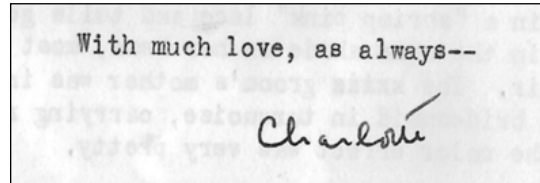
Bonnie Randolph

Why did my grandmother keep letters she received from two sisters named Charlotte and Eugenia? When my niece invited me to the Oregon coast to organize the family's archives of photos and letters, I filled my car with boxes from my closet, where they had been for 20—or maybe even 30—years. I started organizing the correspondence my grandmother received from the 1940s through the 1960s, and my niece began scanning photos. She had the technical know-how, and presumably, I knew the family history.

Many of the bundles of letters wrapped in disintegrating rubber bands were easy to figure out: letters written home by my dad and uncles during World War II, letters from my grandmother's relatives in Texas, and correspondence from my granddad's family in Tennessee. Some bundles took a little more research: old schoolmates of my grandmother from Valley View, Texas; families my grandparents knew from their time in the Forest Service in Detroit and Cascadia, Oregon; Texans who had migrated to Corvallis like the Becks and Lucretia Bates (whose home I remember vaguely); and Daisy Overlander, an amateur biologist.

I was baffled by letters spanning two decades from sisters, Charlotte and Eugenia. Research revealed that they were two decades younger than my grandmother; Eugenia was married to an attorney, and Charlotte was married to a physician in California. My grandma, a widow by the 1950s, lived in a wood-heated cabin with a honeysuckle-covered outhouse in the Oregon coast range. How on earth did they know each other?

My research revealed Eugenia and Charlotte had an aunt, Eugenia, who married Prince Lucien Campbell, the fourth president of the University of Oregon. He was the namesake of a tall glass and panel building completed in 1964, sadly out of sync with the ivy-covered architecture of the UO campus. I lived across the street from this building from 1967 through 1969. Was that the connection?



The sisters were also first cousins once removed to Eugenia and Sally, daughters of Asahel and Eugenia Bush, wealthy residents of the Bush Park mansion in Salem. In 1930, Charlotte lived with her cousins Sallie and Eugenia at the Bush mansion.<sup>1</sup> The Bush sisters had a third sister who adopted a daughter she named Eugenia.<sup>2</sup> Suddenly, as in most genealogical stories, there were too many Eugenias!

Years ago, I found some books on my uncle's bookshelf inscribed "Best wishes for Christmas" on the flyleaf. I was told they were gifts from Eugenia and Sally Bush, who gave books to children in rural Oregon during the Depression. I can only assume my grandmother, Bonnie Heare Springer, initially wrote to thank the Bush sisters for the books, which morphed into a chatty, lively correspondence with their cousins Eugenia Zieber Shafer and Charlotte Zieber Simpkin. The connection to Prince Lucien Campbell Hall on the University of Oregon campus was a red herring.

1. 1930 United States census, Marion County, Oregon, population schedule, Salem, enumeration district 28-61, p. 10A, dwelling 254, family 254, Charlotte Zieber in the household of Sallie Bush; "United States Census, 1930," *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:XC95-5B6> : accessed 8 March 2024).

2. Jennifer Hogle, *Vignettes of the Bush Family* (Salem, Oregon: Bush House Auxiliary, 1983).



# LINEAGE SOCIETY WORKSHOP

Sponsored by  
Oregon Society of Mayflower Descendants  
Genealogical Forum of Oregon

**Friday, July 12, 2024  
at the GFO Library  
9 am-3pm**

[gfo.org/seminar](https://gfo.org/seminar)

Genealogical Forum of Oregon **GenTalk**

## MEXICAN AND SPANISH COLONIAL GENEALOGY RESEARCH

July 20, 2024  2:30 p.m. PT

[Free Registration at gfo.org/gentalk](https://gfo.org/gentalk) 

**Presenter  
Moises Garza**





# 2024 GFO Hall of Fame Recipient

If you've come into the GFO Library over the last couple decades, the odds are good that you've met this year's Hall of Fame recipient. Judith Leppert is a well-known and familiar face around the GFO. She became a member in 2007, a Life Member in 2013, and has been volunteering her time in various capacities ever since.

Those who cross paths with Judith appreciate her readiness to share knowledge and to offer help. Her experience as a high school teacher and graduate school educator shines through in her role as "Research Assistant Extraordinaire," pointing patrons in the right direction and encouraging them in their research. She is often the first to jump in and cover absences. To help ensure that our growing collections remain organized and accessible to patrons, she has probably moved every book in the library at least three or



four times! She has helped host many in-person events, often baking goodies and coming in early to brew coffee for attendees. As the Tours Coordinator, she introduced many people to the library and shared her knowledge of its holdings. She currently serves on the Books Sales Team and the Library Committee, checking donations against our current holdings and researching prices for the books we sell.

In addition to her presence at the library itself, Judith has offered crucial support to the GFO in some more behind-the-scenes ways. She served for a few years as a Director at Large on the Board. As the GFO's Good Will Ambassador, she has sent cheery notes to members who were ill and notes of condolences to GFO members who suffered losses in their families. She wrote obituaries for *The Bulletin* for many years. Among her other writings for *The*

## Judith Leppert



*Bulletin* and *The Forum Insider* are biographies of her parents, articles on the First Families of Multnomah County, and book reviews.

Judith's contributions extend beyond the GFO to our Portland-area neighbors and the larger genealogical community. She has represented the GFO at several different community events. She is always a marvelous ambassador, never missing an opportunity to tell others about our organization and all we have to offer.

Thank you, Judith, for your past, present, and future dedication and enthusiasm in all your roles supporting the GFO!



# Join the Search for Hidden Bottles

**Hidden Bottle Hunt** from **BottleDrop** is back for 2024. On Wednesday, July 3, six commemorative bottles will be hidden in wonderful places across Oregon. BottleDrop will issue clues over a five-day period to reveal their location. Each lucky finder gets to keep the bottle as a memento of their triumph and select a BottleDrop Give nonprofit of their choice to receive a \$1,000 donation! GFO is one of the possible recipients to choose from.

Inspired by the beautiful sunsets on Oregon's coast, the 2024 Hidden Bottles have an ocean and sunset vibe and include the state motto—She Flies with Her Own Wings—on the back. The Hidden Bottles are made from BottleDrop's Refillable Bottles, which support the only statewide refillable bottle program in the United States.

**Sign up** to get the clues on the Bottle Hunt webpage, and spend some time in the long summer days exploring Oregon in the hunt for bottles.



Commemorative bottles feature a sunset and the Oregon state motto.

FREE REGISTRATION - [GFO.ORG/GENTALK](https://GFO.ORG/GENTALK)

GENEALOGICAL FORUM OF OREGON GENTALK

# FRIEDRICH EILER

## Building an Identity from Scant Clues

Aug. 17, 2024 at 2:30 p.m. PT

Jill Morelli, CG, CGL





# July Events

## Monday, July 1

### Free Monday

No charges for nonmembers to use the library.  
9:30 a.m.–5 p.m.

### RootsMagic–Online

10 a.m.–12 p.m.

[Register](#)

## Tuesday, July 2

### Library open

9:30 a.m.–5 p.m.

## Wednesday, July 3

### Library open

1–5 p.m.

## Saturday, July 6

### German Group–Online

1–3 p.m.

[Register](#)

## Sunday, July 7

### Library open

1–5 p.m.

## Monday, July 8

### Library open

9:30 a.m.–5 p.m.

## Tuesday, July 9

### Library open

9:30 a.m.–5 p.m.

### Board Meeting–Online

6:30–8:30 p.m.

All GFO members are invited to attend. To receive a link to this online meeting, or request an agenda item, send an email at least 24 hours in advance to [president@gfo.org](mailto:president@gfo.org).

## Wednesday, July 10

### Library open

1–5 p.m.

## Thursday, July 11

### The Q Review–Online

6–7 p.m.

[Register](#)

## Friday, July 12

### Lineage Society Workshop–

### GFO Library

9 a.m.–3 p.m.

Learn more on [page 3](#).

[Register](#)

## Saturday, July 13

### Access GFO Resources–Online

10 a.m.–12 p.m.

[Register](#)

## Sunday, July 14

### Library open

1–5 p.m.

### The Writers' Room–Online

2:30–4:30 p.m.

[Register](#)

## Monday, July 15

### Library open

9:30 a.m.–5 p.m.

## Tuesday, July 16

### Library open

9:30 a.m.–5 p.m.

## Wednesday, July 17

### Library open

1–5 p.m.

## Saturday, July 20

### African American Ancestry–

Online

12–2 p.m.

[Register](#)

### GenTalk: Mexican and Spanish

### Colonial Genealogy Research

2:30–3:30 p.m.

[Register](#)

## Sunday, July 21

### Library open

1–5 p.m.

## Monday, July 22

### Library open

9:30 a.m.–5 p.m.

## Tuesday, July 23

### Library open

9:30 a.m.–5 p.m.

## Wednesday, July 24

### Library open

1–5 p.m.

## Saturday, July 27

### DNA Advanced–Online

9 a.m.–12 p.m.

[Register](#)

## Sunday, July 28

### Library open

1–5 p.m.

## Monday, July 29

### Library open

9:30 a.m.–5 p.m.

## Tuesday, July 30

### Library open

9:30 a.m.–5 p.m.

## Wednesday, July 31

### Library open

1–5 p.m.





# GFO Stars

## May

### *Roger Ostrom*

Roger Ostrom attended all three book-mending events at the GFO. Being skilled at repairing books, Roger brought his own equipment and tools and shared his knowledge of book mending with all the volunteers. Roger has continued to take books home to work on them, skillfully repairing one or two books every week.



Thank you, Roger, for sharing your expertise with the GFO and helping us return our books to the shelves.

## June

### *Chris Knutson*

Chris Knutson made a stunning presentation about his participation in the **10 Million Names Project** sponsored by American Ancestors–NEHGS. He completed a book on the topic and has begun a second work on the topic of enslaved people in America.



A GFO member and attendee at the presentation recalled to us that she approached Chris regarding some personal research that revealed information about enslaved individuals. Curious about what she could do to contribute to the project, “Chris had the answers! He gave me forms and some explanation, and he sent me out on my project. Chris Knutson, a real star!”



**Registration** for Rogue Valley Genealogical Society Interest Groups.

All times are Pacific Time.

**July 9, 2024**

**11 a.m.–12 p.m.**

**German**

**1:30–3 p.m.**

**Family Tree Maker**

**July 10, 2024**

**10:30 a.m.–12 p.m.**

**Genetic Genealogy**

**July 11, 2024**

**6–7:30 p.m.**

**Genealogy Newbies**

**July 12, 2024**

**1:30–3 p.m.**

**Irish**

**July 13, 2024**

**10:30 a.m.–12 p.m.**

**Brick Wall Roundtable**



# GFO Special Interest Groups

SIG meetings occur virtually in Pacific Time. They are open to the public. Learn more about our SIGs at our [SIG page](#).

## AFRICAN AMERICAN GROUP

Led by Janice Sellers  
[african\\_american@gfo.org](mailto:african_american@gfo.org)

## BRITISH GROUP

Led by Duane Funk  
[uk@gfo.org](mailto:uk@gfo.org)

## DNA – Advanced

Led by Tim Janzen  
[dna@gfo.org](mailto:dna@gfo.org)

## DNA Q & A – The Basics

Led by Lisa McCullough  
[dna\\_qa@gfo.org](mailto:dna_qa@gfo.org)

## FAMILY TREE MAKER

Led by Johnna Waldon  
[ftm@gfo.org](mailto:ftm@gfo.org)

## FRENCH CANADA GROUP

Seeking leader  
[president@gfo.org](mailto:president@gfo.org)

## GENEALOGY PROBLEM SOLVERS

Led by Katie Daly  
[gps@gfo.org](mailto:gps@gfo.org)

## GERMAN GROUP

Led by Tia Cobb  
[german@gfo.org](mailto:german@gfo.org)

## GREAT LAKES

Led by Kim Thurman  
[greatlakes@gfo.org](mailto:greatlakes@gfo.org)

## IRISH GROUP

Led by Karen Hubbard, Peg Kenaga,  
and Erinn Sears  
[irish@gfo.org](mailto:irish@gfo.org)

## LEARN & CHAT

Led by Sandy Alto  
[learnandchat@gfo.org](mailto:learnandchat@gfo.org)

## THE Q REVIEW

Led by Alexa Waddle  
[qreview@gfo.org](mailto:qreview@gfo.org)

## ROOTSMAGIC

Led by Barry Wolff  
[rootsmagic@gfo.org](mailto:rootsmagic@gfo.org)

## VIRGINIA ROOTS & VINES

Led by Judi Scott and Carol Surrency  
[virginia@gfo.org](mailto:virginia@gfo.org)

## WRITER'S ROOM

Led by Geri Auerbach, AG®  
[writers@gfo.org](mailto:writers@gfo.org)



## Get Help at PMUG Clinic

**Every Tuesday Evening  
6:00 – 7:30 pm on Zoom**

- Get Free Help for your Macintosh, iPhone, iPad, iPod or Apple Watch
- For info on how to attend, contact us at:

[info@pmug.org](mailto:info@pmug.org)





# Treasurer's Report

Contact: [treasurer@gfo.org](mailto:treasurer@gfo.org)

## APRIL 2024 INCOME

Book Sales & Misc. Income	\$ 540.82
Contributions	\$ 2,389.26
Grants (Unrestricted)	\$ 0.00
Interest & Dividends	\$ 2,957.80
Library & Research	\$ 306.35
Memberships	\$ 4,193.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 10,387.23</b>

## APRIL 2024 EXPENSE

Facilities & Equipment	\$ 9,917.60
Administration	\$ 340.84
Other	\$ 175.00
Publications	\$ 29.99
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 10,463.43</b>

Net Income for the Month	\$ -76.20
Year-to-Date Net Income	\$ 27,926.58

Donor-restricted Donations	\$ 795.00
Liabilities (Restricted Grant)	\$ 0.00
Unrealized Gains/Losses	\$ -18,614.83
<b>Total Adjustments</b>	<b>\$ -17,819.83</b>

# A Feast of DNA Topics with Paul Woodbury

**4 Sessions • Intermediate & Advanced**  
**Sat. Nov. 2, 2024 9:00 - 4:00**  
*Bonus: DNA for Beginners Fri. evening*

**Genealogical Proof**  
**Adoption & Misattributed Parentage**  
**Real-World Case Studies**  
**Endogamy**

**Register at**  
**[gfo.org/seminar](http://gfo.org/seminar)**