

Family Living

The Portland Observer

An aid to locate vital records

Vital records are just that...vital. We need access to them.

In this age of bureaucratic documentation, everyone has need of copies of records of birth, death, marriage or divorce. An application for benefits from the Veterans Administration or Social Security, a passport or marriage license requires not only the information in the records but usually copies of the records themselves.

All these records are stored permanently by municipalities, counties, states and the Federal government. We all know this, but where each document is kept frequently unknown.

The Consumer Education Research Center, a national non-profit consumer group, found there was little uniformity on where the records were available and the costs. In some states, birth records are kept by the city and in others by the county or state. To further complicate matters, often older records are held in different places than current ones. In addition, the addresses where the records are kept are changed quite often.

The consumer group found many people had difficulty in locating the records they needed. Often, it was necessary to make expensive long

distance calls just to find out where to write, what information was required and how much money to send. For that reason CERC has been publishing a book entitled *Where To Write Worldwide For Vital Records* which contains a state-by-state listing of the addresses and telephone numbers of the archive where each record can be found, the cost of a copy of the document and sample form letters containing all the information needed to get these and other vital documents. For those needing information from foreign countries, the book contains a list of government offices where you can get help in locating vital records kept in almost every country. Even U.S. citizens born overseas, on a ship or aircraft can locate the place where their records are kept.

CERC found that many people have used previous editions to locate their family trees or roots. For those, the book includes information on the Family History Library of the Mormon Church. This library contains over 200,000 volumes of family history records and a list of almost a quarter-million people who are willing to share information to help you find your family roots.

CERC has just released an updated 1996 edition. To get a copy of the

useful book, send \$8.97 (plus \$2 s&h) to Consumer Center-Documents, 1980 Springfield Ave. Maplewood, NJ 07040 or call 800-872-0121 with credit card. More information can be found on the World Wide Web <http://www.planet.net/cerc>

Robert L. Berko, executive director of CERC says that originally the book was published to satisfy the needs of persons applying for various benefits but many others have found it useful. He has received letters from libraries, coroners, law enforcement, social agencies, credit grantors, collection agencies, stock ownership tracers, lawyers, persons searching for missing heirs, adoptees and those interested in searching their family roots.

All these and others have found use for a book that helps them locate and prove the status of individuals.

Many times documents can be used to prove things other than what they record. For instance, one woman wrote to the group telling them that a birth certificate for her child proved her residence at that time in the United States and helped her become eligible for legal residence and citizenship.

Second Annual Kindergarten Showcases

Portland Citizens for Oregon Schools (PCOS) Education Fund and Schools for the City have joined together to present two Kindergarten Showcases to help educate parents of pre-school children on the options available to them within the Portland Public School system:

• **East Side--February 19, 6:45-8:30 p.m. at Fernwood Middle School**

• **West Side--February 20, 6:45-8:30 p.m. at Bridlemile Elementary School**

The PCOS Education Fund and Schools for the City, non-profit, parent-based organizations promoting

quality public education, plan to have neighborhood public schools represented as well as the variety of magnet/alternative programs.

Each program will give a brief presentation and be available for one-on-one discussions with parents.

The deadline for applying to most magnet/alternative programs for the 1997-1998 school year is in early April, applications will be available at each Kindergarten Showcase.

"The prospect of determining what elementary school option is best for one's child can be daunting for parents of pre-school children,"

said Bobbie Regan, PCOS board member. "The Portland Public School District offers a wide variety of high-quality, innovative options. We want to make parents aware of these so they make the right choice for their child."

The Portland Public School District has about a dozen Early Childhood Education Centers (ECECs) offering pre-kindergarten and all-day kindergarten programs; two Head Start programs; two year-round schools; and seven "magnet" and "immersion" programs offering intensive language, arts and science programs.

Sonja Gantt's Lasagna



- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1/2 cup chopped red bell pepper
- 1/2 cup chopped green bell pepper
- 2 large garlic cloves, minced
- 1 1/4 teaspoons dried basil leaves
- 1 1/4 teaspoons dried oregano leaves
- 1/2 lb. ground beef round steak
- 1 (26-oz.) jar spaghetti sauce
- 1 cup sliced fresh mushrooms

- 1/4 cup water
- 1 (1-lb.) pkg. Green Giant Frozen Cut Leaf Spinach, cooked, well drained
- 1 (15-oz.) container light ricotta cheese
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 3 tablespoons shredded fresh Parmesan cheese
- 9 uncooked no-boil lasagna noodles
- 1 (8-oz.) pkg. sliced mozzarella cheese

Makes 8 servings.

Prep time: 40 minutes (Ready in 1 hour 40 minutes).

1. Heat oven to 375 F. Spray 13X9-inch (3-quart) baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.

2. Spray large nonstick skillet with cooking spray. Add onion, bell peppers and garlic; cover and cook over medium heat for 5 minutes. Stir in 1/4 teaspoon each of the basil and oregano. Place half of vegetable mixture in medium bowl; set aside.

3. Add ground beef to remaining vegetable mixture in skillet; cook over medium heat until beef is no longer pink. Add spaghetti sauce, mushrooms, water and remaining 1 teaspoon each of the basil and oregano; mix well. Cook until bubbly, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat; reserve 2 cups meat sauce.

4. Add to reserved vegetable mixture in medium bowl, add spinach, ricotta cheese, salt and 2 tablespoons of the Parmesan cheese; mix well.

5. In bottom of sprayed baking dish, place 3 uncooked lasagna noodles (breaking to fit, if necessary). Top with 1/2 of remaining meat mixture, 2 cups of meat sauce. Top with remaining 1 tablespoon Parmesan cheese. Spray sheet of foil; cover dish.

6. Bake at 375 F. for 40 to 50 minutes or until edges are bubbly and center is hot. Let stand 10 minutes before serving. If desired, garnish with fresh basil.

Looking for someone?

Every day thousands of people are searching for other people. Some are adopted children looking for birth mothers, others are looking for missing spouses, their ancestors or missing friends. Many people think these searches require expensive private detectives or other professionals. In most cases this is not so. Usually these detectives get their information from the same public records that you can use.

A new book by Robert L. Berko, Executive Director of the non-profit Consumer Education Research Center will help amateur searchers in their quests for missing persons, birth parents or information about themselves that government bureaus have in their files.

The book, *How to Find People With Information From Public Records*, is available for \$19.95 from Consumer Center, 1980 Springfield Ave., Maplewood, NJ 07040 or by calling 1-800-872-0121.

Many searches are as simple as looking for the name in a database containing all telephone records in the United States. There are several computer programs for sale that contain this information. If you don't want to go to this expense, Mr. Berko's organization has a database of 80 million records and can do the search for you.

Other public records that you can use are marriage, death, divorce, voter registration, Post Office, Motor Vehicle, Selective Service military and many more. The book will not only show you how to determine what records you need, but how and where to get these records.

If your problem is a missing spouse who in arrears on child support, every state has a Child Support agency that will do most of the searching for you even if your spouse is in another state. The book lists the address of the Child Support office for every state.

For those searching their roots, there are many sources of information.

Foremost is the Family History Centers which have literally millions of different studies and histories of family names of those who are working on family histories for their own family names.

Some of these people could be working on your family's and could save you the search.

The national archives have records of anyone who has had any contact with the U.S. Government. This includes just about anyone who has ever lived in the county. They have Indian Records going way back and even

records of black slaves owned by Indians. In addition they have land records, passenger lists, naturalization records, passports records, and much more.

The address of all Regional Offices of National Archives are listed as well as their computer online address.

Increasing numbers of people are looking for parents. For those searching parents who moved away, the quest is usually not difficult.

For adopted children looking for birth parents, the search is very difficult. They have no name to start their search because birth and hospital records are changed to reflect the name of the adoptive parents. But don't lose hope of finding your birth parents.

There are records that are not

changed and ways to find the true facts behind the altered records. In addition, there are several hundred organizations that can and will help you in your search.

These organizations provide advice and assistance from people who have made many successful searches to locate birth parents.

How to Find People with Information from Public Records includes the names and addresses of these organizations as well as tactics for making your search successful.

Many people would like to know what is in the files kept by government agencies such as the FBI. The book contains all the rules that govern getting copies of documents about yourself or any one else.



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PRICES EFFECTIVE JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 1997

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2	3	4	25	30	31	1

Prices Effective Wednesday January 29, 7am
(Items Excluded February 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31)

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WINTERTIME SAVINGS

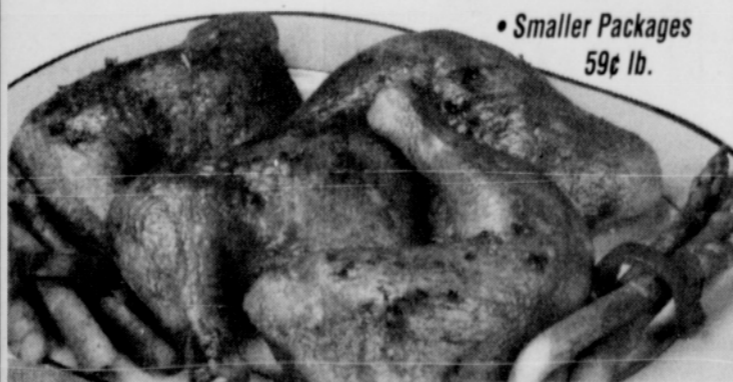
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- Sold in 5-lb. packages \$1.90 ea.
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• SAVE up to 41¢ lb.

38¢ lb.

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QUILTED NORTHERN 12 ROLL

Limit two items per coupon. One coupon per customer per visit. Not valid with any other coupon or offer. Valid 1/29/97 thru 2/4/97 at your Oregon Safeway Stores (except Milton-Freewater) and S.W. Washington stores serving Clark, Wahkiakum, Clatsop, Clack, Skamania, and Klickitat counties. COUPON CANNOT BE DOUBLED.

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