

Net Notes

USGenWeb SEARCH

<http://www.usgenweb-search.us/>

SEARCHING FOR INFORMATION on USGenWeb has just become a bit easier! There is a project, which may be finished by the time you read this, to allow researchers to search all USGenWeb states, State Special Projects, counties within the states (and where available, cities within the counties) and USGenWeb Special Projects. The Archives and Archives Sub-Projects are excluded because they are hosted by RootsWeb and have their own search capabilities.

The idea is to create a one-stop place to search. When you go to the USGenWeb search page, you will see an alphabetical list of states. Those that are indexed and available for searching are hyperlinked to a search page dedicated



The USGenWeb Search website.

to that state. In addition, there are links to the Archives, Special and Census Projects.

For example, in the late 1800s, there is a Bevan family living in Florida with a North Carolina connection — but where in North Carolina? I found that there were

19 entries, spread across about 12 counties, with Duplin, Columbus and Sampson counties each containing multiple entries. This suggests that these might be the counties to check first. This is just one of the uses for this wonderful search capability.

Also, think about tracking those ancestors that moved around within a state. How nice would it be to quickly find their names in different counties and gain valuable clues to those mobile ancestors? This will definitely make the USGenWeb program and its history of freely available data that much more valuable to the Internet genealogist.

— Diane L. Richard

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF GENEALOGY

<http://www.eogn.com/>

FOLLOWING IN THE footsteps of Wikipedia, Dick Eastman (of Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter, <http://blog.eogn.com/>), has created the Encyclopedia of Genealogy — "a free-content encyclopedia created by its readers, people like you. The Encyclopedia of Genealogy is available to everyone, free of charge. Everyone can also contribute information, again free of charge".

One would visit the Encyclopedia of Genealogy to learn about genealogical tools and techniques. This website helps by serving as a "clearinghouse of genealogy techniques: Where to find records, how to organize the data found, what the terminology means and how to plan your next research effort". You can help by

posting relevant information or by correcting or adding to the information provided by others. Any genealogist may post an article or edit an existing article, but first you need to register for free. To learn more about contributing, check out "How to Contribute Information to the Encyclopedia of Genealogy" in the navigation column on the left of the webpage.

To view the contents of the encyclopedia, you can either use the index or the Search function.

Scrolling through the index

was interesting — there were many unfamiliar terms. I will admit that I don't typically read encyclopedias and dictionaries, yet I found it interesting to stroll through the index since I could easily click on a word, check out the definition and continue on my way. If you are like me and aren't familiar with *appurtenance*, *bistoury*, *chevage* or *denization*, this website provides short definitions, often accompanied by a reference source. And, the best part is that the entries have been created with genealogists and family historians in mind. — Diane L. Richard



GENI AND ZOOOF

<http://www.geni.com> and <http://www.zooof.com/index.php>

LOOKING FOR A fun way to engage your family members in the pursuit of your shared ancestry? Or, need a simple way to keep in touch or make connections with extended family?

Then these two websites may be right for you. Both Geni.com and Zooof.com are blurring the line between sharing your genealogy/family history research via somewhat traditional genealogy sharing techniques (GEDCOM files, IGI, Ancestry World Tree, etc.) and the recent eruption of social networking websites (think MySpace and Facebook).

GENI.COM

<http://www.geni.com>

You can't find an easier website to set up a social network for family members than

Geni. You just enter your name and e-mail address to get started. You can then enter the names of your siblings and parents, with the option to include an e-mail address for these individuals, which will send them an invitation to the website. Once you have started your tree, you can then edit the information for any individual you have listed, including date of birth, place of birth, etc. If you add e-mail addresses, you can send your tree to family and friends, who can add their own data, thereby extending the tree. If you would like to see the process in action, there is a demo titled "See How it Works" which takes you to a video on YouTube, <http://www.youtube.com>.

Registration is free, so once I entered my information and a few names, I received an e-mail telling



The Geni.com front page.

me that my username and a temporary password had been created. You have the option to continue using this password or choose your own permanent password.

Within a few minutes, I had built a family tree for my immediate family. Given that my family has not yet jumped on the social-networking bandwagon (not even my teen children), it will be interesting to see where this goes.

For more on its background, read the press release at <http://www.prwebdirect.com/releases/2007/1/prweb497693.htm>.

ZOOOF

<http://www.zooof.com>

Zooof is different in that it is based in the Netherlands and



operates a multilingual website. It allows you to choose from 35 languages, build an interactive family tree, invite family members to a private environment, write your biography, immortalize your family history, chat, mail and share! There is a demo video available at <http://www.zooof.com/about.php>, to get a sense of how the website operates.

Registration is free and once complete, you can begin work on your profile and family tree. The interface is straight-forward and your profile is based around different modules, such as "My Internet", where you can enter your blog URL, e-mail addresses and instant messenger information. There are several other modules, such as: My music, My Movies/TV, My Languages, My Education and My Job.

When constructing your family tree, you can enter the information manually or upload a GEDCOM file.

To add children, parents or partners for a family member, you simply click on their name which will bring you to their profile.

Zooof makes it easy to start an account.

So, if your extended family is multilingual and/or geographically spread out, this website may better suit your needs.

For more on Zooof's background, read the press release at <http://www.prwebdirect.com/releases/2007/2/prweb506621.htm>.

If you have a strong interest in using social networking to keep in touch and connect with your extended family, these are the websites for you. They are both easy to use and require minimal information to get started. Zooof, with its 35 languages, has a more global focus while Geni, with its English-language interface, is more limited. Otherwise, they both allow you to share as much information about yourself as you wish and provide a private family environment where invitees can continue to build a shared family tree.

As far as genealogy or family history research goes, these websites are currently not where you would post your documented research or look for original source information — these are places where you might learn who else shares a common family line and where you can make a connection!

— Diane L. Richard

