

# A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO ROOTSWEB

Cass County Public Library – Genealogy Branch

## About RootsWeb

[www.rootsweb.com](http://www.rootsweb.com)

Founded in 1993, this Ancestry-owned database is free to use from any computer. It is an online community geared toward connecting users with other genealogists researching the same families. With RootsWeb's family trees, message boards, mailing lists, and user-created websites, users can collaborate with like-minded researchers to explore their shared family history.

## 2017 Security Breach

Hundreds of thousands of RootsWeb users' email, login information, and passwords were exposed externally. Over 300,000 accounts were affiliated with the database's *surname list* service that it retired in 2017, 55,000 of the user names belonged to both the free RootsWeb site and also to Ancestry. RootsWeb was temporarily taken offline to enhance its security. *Because of this, all users will have to create a new account to login in to the database.* However, it is not necessary to have an account to use the website. **RootsWeb accounts are free to create.**

## NAVIGATING THE MAIN PAGE

Library patrons who use *Ancestry Library Edition* will find the home page of RootsWeb familiar – it is visually similar to the Library Edition's home page. Using the navigation bar at the top, patrons can access all of the major features of the database.

Also like Ancestry Library Edition, RootsWeb's home page has **multiple ways to get to the same place**, (as seen below).

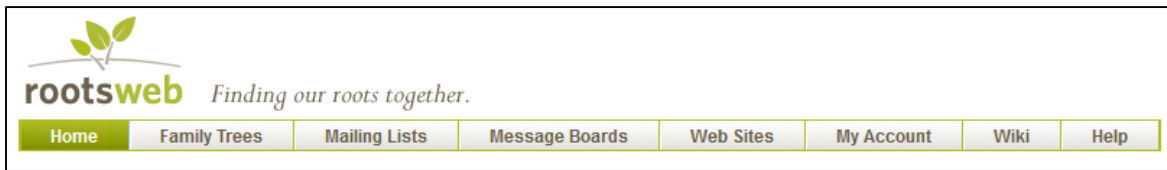
The screenshot shows the RootsWeb homepage with the following navigation elements and arrows:

- Home Page Header:** "rootsweb Finding our roots together." with a navigation bar containing: Home, Family Trees, Mailing Lists, Message Boards, Web Sites, My Account, Wiki, Help.
- Left Side Navigation:**
  - Orange arrow: "Click to search the **WorldConnect** family trees" points to the "Family Trees" link in the header.
  - Green arrow: "Click to join and search archived **Mailing Lists**" points to the "Mailing Lists" link in the header.
  - Purple arrow: "Click to browse **Hosted Web Sites**" points to the "Web Sites" link in the header.
- Right Side Navigation:**
  - Red arrow: "Click here to access the **RootsWeb Wiki**" points to the "Wiki" link in the header.
  - Blue arrow: "Click to search Ancestry's **Message Boards**" points to the "Message Boards" link in the header.
- Main Content Area:**
  - Top left: "Connect to Family Trees" with a photo of a family. Below it, text: "The WorldConnect Project allows users to upload, modify, link, and display their family trees as a means to share their genealogy with other researchers." A green arrow points to a "Begin Searching" button.
  - Top right: "RootsWeb Family History Wiki" with a photo of a group of people. A red arrow points to this section.
  - Bottom left: "HOSTED WEB SITES" with a photo of a group of people. A purple arrow points to this section.
  - Bottom middle: "MESSAGE BOARDS" with a photo of a person in a pirate costume. A blue arrow points to this section.
  - Bottom right: "MAILING LISTS" with text about the discontinuation of mailing lists and the availability of message boards. A green arrow points to this section.

## Navigation Bar

The bar across the top of every page provides direct navigation to RootsWeb's various features.

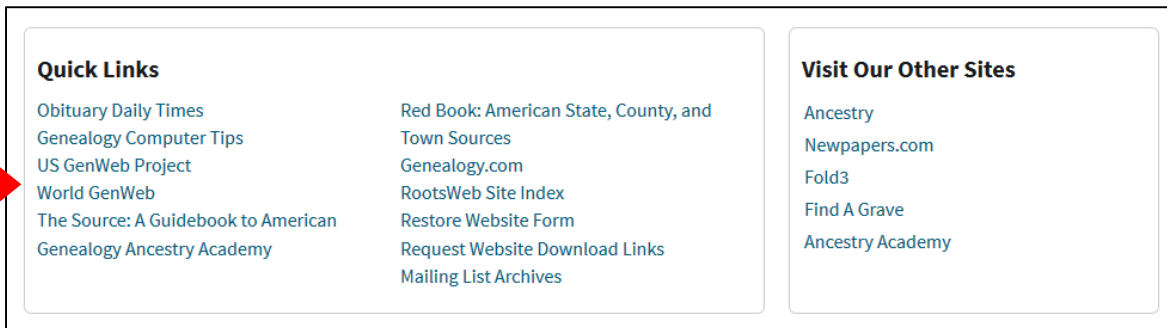
- Clicking **Home** from any page of the website will take you back to the page shown above.
- Log into your account (or view your account details) by clicking on **My Account**
- If you need help using one of RootsWeb's features, click on **Help** to view answers to basic support questions



## Quick Links

Located at the bottom of the home page are the *Quick Links* – links that provide direct access to many of the sub-sections of the database. The most beneficial links here include:

- *Obituary Daily Times*
- *US GenWeb Project*
- *Genealogy.com*
- *Red Book & The Source* (directs you to the RootsWeb Wiki)



## WORLDCONNECT PROJECT — FAMILY TREES

### What is WorldConnect?

This feature is a searchable collection of GEDCOMs submitted from users around the world. There are over 6 million surnames in this database, and over 787 million individual names.

### What is a GEDCOM?

The acronym stands for **GE**nealogical **DA**ta **CO**munication. It is a type of file that is used by genealogy software programs such as *Family Tree Maker* or *Legacy Family Tree*. Most of these software programs allow users to import and export their family tree data as a GEDCOM file.

### Searching for GEDCOMs by Name/Tree ID

This type of search is helpful when you are going directly to a family tree for which you already know the Tree ID or Gedcom Name. By default, this is the search form that appears on the WorldConnect main page.

The image shows a search form for the WorldConnect project. It has a title "Go directly to gedcom (enter Treeld or Gedcom Name)". Below the title are two input fields: "Treeld" and "Gedcom Name". Each field has a small question mark icon to its right. To the right of the "Gedcom Name" field is a green "Go" button.

### Tree ID

This is the number directly following <https://wc.rootsweb.com/trees/> in the address bar when viewing the tree.

- E.g. entering 121394 in the Tree ID search will direct you to the summary page for the main person in the “Clarke Family Tree”

### Gedcom Name

With this you are searching for the name given to the GEDCOM provided by the user who originally submitted the GEDCOM file.

- The *Gedcom Name* is often the name of the family tree, e.g. “Clarke Family Tree,” but can also be a string of numbers and letters e.g. “a10001”
- If there are multiple GEDCOMs with the same name, you are directed to the first one, not a list of all GEDCOMs with that name.

### Search for People by Name

This type of search is beneficial for users who are doing a general search of the database. Click on [search for people by name](#) at the top of the form to view. With the search form, users can search by:

- first and last names (with phonetic filters)
- gender
- birth year and location
- death year and location

**Note:** *Not all blanks must be completed to search*

WorldConnect

Click on a letter below to browse the uploaded gedcoms by name. You can also [search for people by name](#).  
We have also added the ability to [upload your gedcom](#).

Search database for a person

First Names  Last Names  Phonetic?  TreeID

Gender ☐ Male ☐ Female ☒ Unknown

Birth Year   Birth Place

Death Year   Death Place

Results:

Herman James THEROFF: Birth: . Death: OCT 1994 in Aptos, Santa Cruz, California  
Barbara Theroff: Birth: 12 MAR 1861 in Velle, Iowa. Death: 1951 in Boonville, Cooper County, Missouri  
? Theroff: Birth: WFT Est. 1847-1879. Death: WFT Est. 1873-1959  
Dieda Leona Elizabeth Theroff: Birth: 1 Dec 1924 in Missouri. Death: 16 Sept 2007  
**Heinrich "Henry" Phillip Theroff: Birth: 22 Sept 1886 in Cole County, Missouri. Death: 22 Jul 1912 in Jefferson City, Cole, Missouri**

**Example:** A basic search with a last name

Search results appear at the bottom of the page, including the birth and death information for the individual (if available).

**Click on a name** to view the summary page for that individual in their tree.

### Individual Page (*right*)

This page displays the information this family tree has for the individual, including name, gender, birth and death data, Person ID number, and Tree ID number.

Any relatives also included in this family tree will be shown below. This individual has both parents in this tree, but no spouse or children. Attached sources for the information provided may also be shown here.

**Note:** *Information contained in RootsWeb family trees is user-contributed and may not be accurate.*

**Individual Page**

**Person Info**

- Name: Heinrich "Henry" Phillip Theroff
- Sex: M
- Birth: 22 Sept 1886 in Cole County, Missouri
- Death: 22 Jul 1912 in Jefferson City, Cole, Missouri
- Person ID: P493
- Tree ID: 121394

[Search for Heinrich "Henry" Phillip Theroff in Fold3 World War I and World War II Records](#)  
[Search for Heinrich "Henry" Phillip Theroff in Newspapers](#)  
[519 Possible Record Matches on Ancestry](#)

**Parents**

**Father:**

- Adam Theroff: Birth: 1863 in Bayern, Germany. Death: 1952

**Mother:**

- Rosina Katharina Lochner: Birth: abt 1865 in Missouri.

## Viewing Family Trees

From the Individual Page (*shown above*) you have several additional options for viewing the information in the family tree. These can be accessed using the secondary navigation bar at the top of the page.

<u>Individual</u>	Descendancy	Pedigree (Text)	Pedigree (Table)	Registry	Ahnentafel	Index
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- **Descendancy**
  - Arranges descendants of a specified individual or couple vertically, often including birth and death data of each individual.
- **Pedigree (Text)**
  - A horizontal family tree that lists names and nothing else. *All names can be clicked on to view the corresponding Individual Page.*
- **Pedigree (Table)**
  - A horizontal family tree that lists names and birth, death, and marriage data for all individuals. *All names can be clicked on to view the corresponding Individual Page.*
- **Registry**
  - Similar to a Descendancy, but more narrative about the birth, marriage, and death data for each descendant in the direct line *moving forward in time.*
- **Ahnentafel**
  - German for “ancestor table.” Similar to a Registry, but starts with the individual selected and *moves backward in time.*
- **Index**
  - A list of all individuals included in the tree alphabetically by surname.

## Submitting GEDCOMs to RootsWeb

To submit a GEDCOM to RootsWeb, you must be logged into a personal account. Click on *My Account* located in the navigation bar at the top of the page.

- From the User Account page, you can view the trees you have already submitted and upload a GEDCOM file from your computer.
- Users can *delete* or *download* a previously submitted tree by clicking on the buttons provided.
- Trees cannot be edited from RootsWeb. To change any of the information, you will have to update the GEDCOM file using family tree software and upload the file to RootsWeb again.

### User Account

[Edit Profile](#) [Manage Emails](#) [Change Password](#) [Hosted Sites](#) [World Connect Trees](#) [Logout](#) [Delete Account](#)

#### Worldconnect Trees

We are in the process of importing all of the gedcoms from the old WorldConnect system. This will take some time. You may upload a gedcom if you wish.

Gedcom Name	Email	Title	Name	URL	Created	Status	Download	Delete
cmclarke	clarke@casscolibrary.org	Clarke Family Tree	Chelsea Clarke	<a href="#">View Tree</a>	03-14-2019 04:03:18	Finished	<a href="#">Download</a>	<a href="#">Delete</a>

To upload a GEDCOM, choose a file from your computer below

[Select GEDCOM from your computer](#)

## MAILING LISTS

**Note:** Beginning March 2nd, 2020 the Mailing Lists functionality on RootsWeb will be **discontinued**. Users will no longer be able to send outgoing emails or accept incoming emails. After that, mailing list archives will remain available and searchable on RootsWeb.

### RootsWeb Mailing Lists

A complete index to RootsWeb's 32,740 genealogy mailing lists!  
[Rootsweb Mailing Lists Help](#)

#### Search List Archives

[Search all list archives](#)

Search archives of messages sent to all mailing lists over the years.

Please note that we are working hard to bring mailing list archives back online, but will not be finished for some time. Thus, searching archives does not currently return complete results.

#### Popular Lists

[Join Roots](#), the first and largest genealogy list

[Join Gen-Newbie](#), for internet and genealogy newbies

[Join the Transitional-Genealogists-Forum](#), for genealogists who are looking to improve their skills. This is the place to ask questions.

#### Find a List

Type in a surname, location, or topic:

  
☐ Match Exactly ☐ Use Soundex

You can subscribe, unsubscribe, or search the archives for an individual mailing list.

### Browse to a list by surname, location, or other topics

Surnames			
A	H	O	V
B	I	P	W
C	J	Q	X
D	K	R	Y
E	L	S	Z
F	M	T	
G	N	U	

USA			
<a href="#">Alabama</a>	<a href="#">Illinois</a>	<a href="#">Nebraska</a>	<a href="#">South Dakota</a>
<a href="#">Alaska</a>	<a href="#">Indiana</a>	<a href="#">Nevada</a>	<a href="#">Tennessee</a>
<a href="#">Arizona</a>	<a href="#">Iowa</a>	<a href="#">New Hampshire</a>	<a href="#">Texas</a>
<a href="#">Arkansas</a>	<a href="#">Kansas</a>	<a href="#">New Jersey</a>	<a href="#">Utah</a>
<a href="#">California</a>	<a href="#">Kentucky</a>	<a href="#">New Mexico</a>	<a href="#">Vermont</a>
<a href="#">Colorado</a>	<a href="#">Louisiana</a>	<a href="#">New York</a>	<a href="#">Virgin Islands</a>
<a href="#">Connecticut</a>	<a href="#">Maine</a>	<a href="#">North Carolina</a>	<a href="#">Virginia</a>
<a href="#">Delaware</a>	<a href="#">Maryland</a>	<a href="#">North Dakota</a>	<a href="#">Washington</a>
<a href="#">District of Columbia</a>	<a href="#">Massachusetts</a>	<a href="#">Ohio</a>	<a href="#">West Virginia</a>
<a href="#">Florida</a>	<a href="#">Michigan</a>	<a href="#">Oklahoma</a>	<a href="#">Wisconsin</a>
<a href="#">General Purpose Lists</a>	<a href="#">Minnesota</a>	<a href="#">Oregon</a>	<a href="#">Wyoming</a>
<a href="#">Georgia</a>	<a href="#">Mississippi</a>	<a href="#">Pennsylvania</a>	
<a href="#">Hawaii</a>	<a href="#">Missouri</a>	<a href="#">Puerto Rico</a>	
<a href="#">Idaho</a>	<a href="#">Montana</a>	<a href="#">South Carolina</a>	

International			
<a href="#">Acadia</a>	<a href="#">Djibouti</a>	<a href="#">Latvia</a>	<a href="#">Sao Tome and Principe</a>
<a href="#">Afghanistan</a>	<a href="#">Dominican Republic</a>	<a href="#">Lebanon</a>	<a href="#">Saudi Arabia</a>
<a href="#">Africa</a>	<a href="#">Ecuador</a>	<a href="#">Lesotho</a>	<a href="#">Scotland</a>
<a href="#">Albania</a>	<a href="#">Egypt</a>	<a href="#">Liberia</a>	<a href="#">Senegal</a>
<a href="#">Algeria</a>	<a href="#">El Salvador</a>	<a href="#">Libyan Arab Jamahiriya</a>	<a href="#">Seychelles</a>

## Searching Mailing List Archives

Even after this feature is discontinued, users will be able to search archived messages sent through RootsWeb mailing lists.

**To Search:** click on [Search all list archives](#) or type a surname, location, or topic in the Find a List search.

## Browsing Mailing Lists

Users can also browse lists by surname, location, or topic. This may help users locate mailing lists when they don't know exactly what they are looking for or are trying to cast a wider net.

**Surnames:** Click on a letter to browse surnames alphabetically.

**USA:** Click on a state to view all Mailing Lists associated with research or resources there.

**International:** Click on a country to view Mailing Lists associated with international research and resources there.

**Other:** Mailing lists included under the *Other* category cover miscellaneous topics such as ethnic group research, record types, digitization, newsletters, and more.

**Example:** A search for name "Clemency Pipkin" brought up a message in a mailing list called KYALLEN dedicated to research in Allen County, Kentucky.

Search for a list

Search this list

Subscribe to

2020

2018

2016

2015

2014

2013

2012

2011

2010

2009

2008

2007

Re: [KYALLEN] Asa Roark of Allen County, Kentucky

Gale Carter

Asa Roark, grandfather of Asa Walter Roark was the Baptist minister. Asa, the minister, was the son of William Roark who had a large part in establishing the Puncheon Creek Baptist Church.

"This church, located in the southeastern part of Allen County, Ky., near the state line, on the waters of Puncheon Camp Creek, was organized in the year 1804. The history of the church is very meager. The minutes do not give the date of its constitution. It seems to have been gathered through the labors of Elder Wm. Roark, who came from North Carolina in an early day and entered a large tract of land on Puncheon Camp Creek. There were nine members entered in the constitution of this church. Namely: Elder Wm. Roark, Lewis Pipkins, Dea. Benj. Poe, Lovel Stinson, (?) Taylor, Clerk, Comfort Poe, Clemency Pipkins, Sarah Taylor and Sarah Roark.

Elder Wm. Roark gave two acres of land to the church and assisted in building the first house or worship for the church.

Elder Asa Roark gave the church two acres of land, making it four in all. A portion of the lands has been set apart as a burying ground."

Melody

Get your FREE download of MSN Explorer at <http://explorer.msn.com/dwn.asp>

Reply

kyallen@rootsweb.org

Contact list owner

New List

None

Welcome Message

Welcome to the KYALLEN list

PLEASE SAVE THE LIST FOR FUTURE REFERENCE

PLEASE BE CONSIDERATE

1. Questions about much detail as you

2. Interesting facts

3. Genealogy and even if they change

4. Genealogy research about their society

5. Book reviews or reasonable to post sharing a good genealogy idea

6. Links to personal genealogy. They'll Even if the topic is

7. New collections on various genealogy sites that are relevant. We don't want advertisements.

Re: [KYALLEN] Asa Roark of Allen County, Kentucky

Gale Carter

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Melody

## USING MESSAGE BOARDS

Clicking on the Message Boards link in the navigation bar directs users to Ancestry's message boards feature. It contains over 25 million posts and more than 198,000 boards covering a variety of locations, surnames, genealogy topics, and more.

### Ancestry Message Boards

Here you can view interactions between Ancestry members including research questions, volunteer look-up solicitation, and collaboration between genealogists researching the same topics, geographic regions, and families.

- A **Board** is a group of conversations in a specific category
- A **Thread** is a single conversation in that category.

**Note:** An Ancestry account is needed in order to contribute and interact with other members on these boards. Even with a free account, users can search, view, and comment on existing boards and threads, as well as start new ones.

### Searching

Enter a name or keyword into the basic search form. Search results will include boards dedicated to localities and surnames that include the keyword(s).

### Browsing

If you are unsure what you are searching for, you can try manually browsing by clicking on one of the categories listed below and filtering to more specific categories from there. E.g. clicking Canada > Alberta > Cypress will result in a list of all boards associated with Cypress County, Alberta, Canada regardless of topic.

The screenshot displays the Ancestry Message Boards page. At the top, the navigation bar includes links for Trees, Search, DNA, Health, Help, and Extras, along with Subscribe and Sign In buttons. The main heading is "Message Boards" with a subtext: "The world's largest online genealogy community with over 25 Million posts on more than 198,000 boards."

There are three main sections highlighted with red boxes:

- Search for content in message boards:** This section contains a text input field labeled "Names or keywords" with the placeholder text "e.g. John Smith or Civil War", a "Search" button, and a link to "Advanced Search".
- Find a board about a specific topic:** This section contains a text input field labeled "Surnames or topics" and a "Go" button.
- Find a board about a specific topic (expanded):** This section shows the results for the search "clarke". It includes a "Go" button and a list of boards under the heading "Boards". The list shows various localities and surnames related to "Clarke", such as "Localities > North America > United States > States > Alabama > Counties > Clarke" and "Surnames > Clarke".

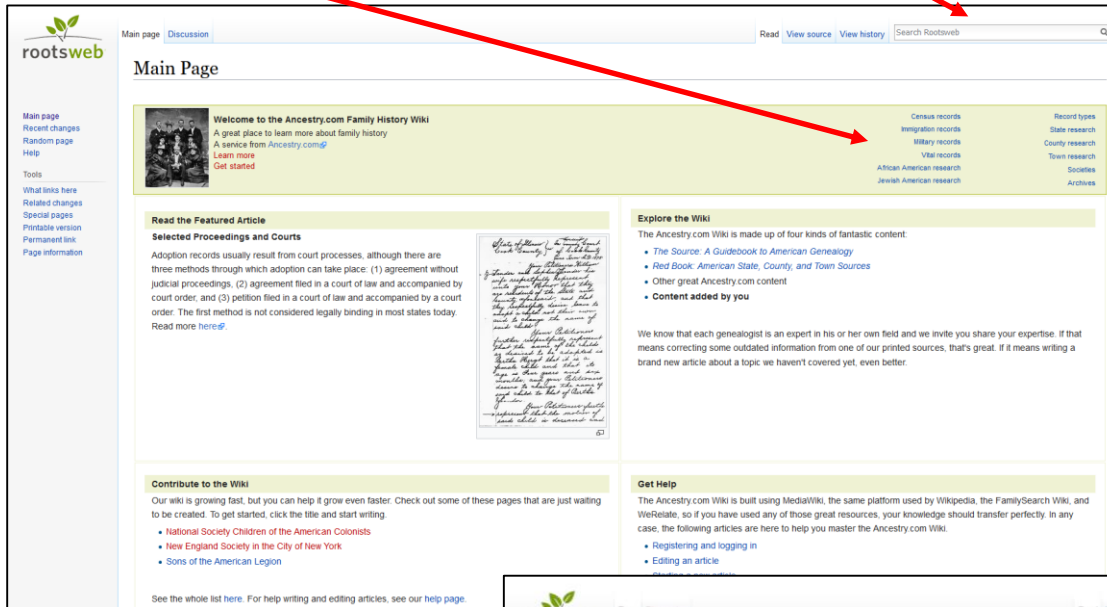
On the left side, there is a "Categories" section with a list of "Localities Categories" including Australia, Canada, United Kingdom and Ireland, United States, and Western Europe. There are also links for "More Localities Categories" and "Topics Categories".



## ROOTSWEB WIKI

Similar to Wikipedia and FamilySearch's Wiki, RootsWeb's Wiki contains genealogy articles pulled from *The Source* and *Red Book*.

- Users can access helpful information about genealogy research and resources based on location, record type, ethnic group research, and more.
- The Wiki can be searched with keywords using the *search bar* in the top right corner or browsed using the general *links* provided



### Example: Kentucky Revolutionary War Records

This page provides contextual information regarding the war in Kentucky, record and resource availability, and links to other types of records for Kentucky.



## HOSTED WEBSITES

RootsWeb hosts a variety of user-created website. Users can browse an index of these sites organized by location, both in the United States and international, websites dedicated to specific family trees, and other miscellaneous topics.

### Obituary Daily Times

This began as an obituary sharing project for genealogists. This volunteer database contains obituaries submitted from the United States, Canada, and around the world. Users can search the obituary index which provides a transcription of the information provided including: name, approximate date of birth, age, place of death, name of publication in which it was published and publication date.

**Note:** This database is not comprehensive and the level of detail provided varies.

### Search Obituaries

**Keywords**  
Example: Alfred Hitchcock, CA

Advanced Search

**SUBMIT** **RESET**

**Obituary Results**

AARON, Sylva ( ); 83; OH-Dallas TX; Dallas M-N; 1996-2-24; ksavage

ABERNATHY, Ruth (SINNOTT); 86; KY-Dallas TX; Dallas M-N; 1996-2-24; ksavage

ABRAM, Arthur J; 97;; Worcester T-G (MA); 1996-2-26; cwhee

ACORS, Etta M ( ); 84; Richmond VA; Richmond T-D; 1996-2-26; wstyles

ACOSTA, Carmen Della ( ); 65; New York NY-Casselberry FL; Orlando Sentinel; 1996-2-26; hommel

ADAMOVICH, Milan;; ; West Australian (WA AUS); 1996-2-27; tdavey

ADAMS, Ethel "Susie" (QUEIR); 95; Indio CA; Desert Sun; 1996-2-21; whugheslq

ADAMS, John Gene; 90; metro Portland OR; Oregonian; 1996-2-25; beverly

ADAMS, Wallace Leroy; 60; Kewadin MI; Traverse R-E; 1996-2-24; rnf fuller

ADCOCK, Edward;; Perth AUS; West Australian (WA AUS); 1996-2-27; tdavey

**AGUILAR, Silvino; 22; Medford OR; Mail Tribune; 1996-2-25; beverly**

AHERNS, Julius E;; Baltimore MD; Baltimore Sun; 1996-2-22; cacausey

AINSWORTH, Heldy;; North Augusta SC; Augusta Ch (GA); 1996-2-26; ifoley

ALAGNA, Anthony J; 78; Detroit MI; Detroit News; 1996-2-26; cwkirsch

ALCOCK, Albert Jr; 71; Claysville PA; Standard-Times (MA); 1995-2-21; pdg

ALIOA, Albert; 69; Lincoln Park MI; Detroit News; 1996-2-26; cwkirsch

NAME **AGUILAR, Silvino**

APPROX. BIRTH YEAR **abt 1974**

AGE **22**

PLACE OF DEATH **Medford OR**

PUBLICATION ABBREVIATION **Mail Tribune**

PUBLICATION DATE **1996-02-25**

INDEXER TAG **beverly**

## Example: Obituary Search Results

**Name:** Silvino Aguilar

**Approx. Birth Year:** abt 1974

**Age:** 22

**Place of Death:** Medford OR

**Publication Abbreviation:** Mail Tribune

**Publication Date:** 25 Feb 1996

## GenWeb Project

This is an ongoing volunteer project working to provide free genealogy help and information for every U.S. state. The goal is to have a website dedicated to every county in each state. These websites provide access to user-contributed records and resources, volunteer look-ups, research tips, and inquiry boards. *Click on a state in the map or select it from the drop-down list in the top right corner to begin.*



The USGenWeb Project

Land of the Free... Genealogy

Select A State

Click the Down Arrow

★ HOME ★ ABOUT US ★ RESEARCH ★ VOLUNTEER SUPPORT ★ WEBSITE SUPPORT ★ SEARCH & SITE MAP

Keeping Free Genealogy on the Internet



**Hello!**

*We're happy that you've found us here on the Internet.*

The USGenWeb Project is a group of volunteers working together and having fun providing free online genealogy help and information for every U.S. state and county. Our national site provides links to state sites, which, in turn, provide gateways to the counties. We also sponsor important Special Projects, gathering useful data you can access for free. I'm proud of the variation you'll see in site style and content across our many web sites. It shows the wonderful diversity of our volunteers!

USGenWeb was established in 1996 by a group of genealogists who shared a desire to create online centers for genealogical research. Each of our literally thousands of web sites have been created and are maintained by volunteers. Some of the offerings you're likely to see in these diverse and creative sites include query boards, listings of local sources for records, county and state histories, online



Visit the library's locations page ([www.casscolibrary.org/locations](http://www.casscolibrary.org/locations)) for CCPL Genealogy's location, contact information, and hours of operation. Information regarding our digital collections, access to online databases, submitting inquiries, and more, can be found on Cass County Public Library's Genealogy Resources page, located here: [www.casscolibrary.org/genealogy](http://www.casscolibrary.org/genealogy)

**Send Research Inquiries to:**

[askgenealogy@casscolibrary.org](mailto:askgenealogy@casscolibrary.org)

Cass County Public Library – Genealogy Branch  
400 E. Mechanic St. Harrisonville, MO – 816.884.6285

