

THE PASCO COUNTY LINE

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IMPROVE YOUR E-MAIL

By Tom Santa Cruz

Back in grade school we learn how to write letters. Do you remember the heading, salutation, body, and closing? Some of our junk mail is in the form of a letter but it wouldn't pass in grade school. The letters of some of the significant families in American history are documented by their correspondence. For example the Adams family besides giving us two presidents also contained a number of prolific and insightful letter writers, like Abigail Adams. And I am straying from the topic. Your email is similar to a letter but it isn't. Sometimes it is directed to a single individual and sometime to the world. Email is less formal than a paper letter. More people may see your email than any letter you write. In our genealogical questing email can be an important tool.

To start with, I suggest you take a class on **Writing Email**. I did it online. I took a course at the Virtual University, www.vu.org. The Virtual University offers classes on a range of topics and will cost you \$15 to take 3 classes per semester. They consist of about five sessions with some homework. You may have another place that you prefer for taking online classes or you may want to go to a good old-fashion classroom.

The class needs at the very least to help you learn or re-learn how to maintain context and content, how to quote someone else's email, how to test your use of pronouns, how to include weblinks, how to control line lengths, how to work with intonation and emphasis, what a signature is, what can be gleaned from "domain names", and what a common "acronyms" mean.

Here are a couple of DON'Ts:

Don't type an email all in CAPITAL LETTERS. It is hard to read and most people will not read through it.

Don't use html-letters with stationary, colored background, fancy fonts or graphics, especially if you are writing to a broad audience. A lot of peoples' computers will convert your neat email page into a not so pretty computerese mess.

Don't leave the Subject line blank. Never leave it blank, some people won't open this kind of email. Make it specific. Not general like "Jones Genealogy", but specific like "John Z. Jones of Williamsburg, ME"

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"GenSmarts," A HELPFUL PROGRAM

By Don Merrill

An interesting newer program has been hitting the genealogical news lately. This is one named "GenSmarts" developed by Underwood Innovations, LLC, of Long Grove, Illinois. According to the reviews, it will check the data in your existing program, and give you suggestions on where to find missing information. It also is supposed to point out glaring errors, such as children born to ninety-year old parents, or a person living to be over two hundred years old.

To give this program a trial, a demo version can be downloaded from <http://www.gensmarts.com>. I did download the demo, and gave it a brief trial. It is interesting, and I believe it has a good potential use, as long as a person does not expect it to tell them where to find every last bit of information they need. That would be impossible. Even the most expert genealogists couldn't do that.

The demo version has five major options. The first is a listing of everyone in your database, with comments on any individual you highlight. An estimate is given for dates and locations, based on other data related to that individual, the spouse, or other family members. Reasoning for this estimate is given in detail. The estimate may be incorrect, but it does emphasize the missing detail, and may be not far from correct. For example, it showed my great-grandfather's death as possibly being in Iowa, since my grandmother was born there. My information doesn't give them the hint that my grandfather came back to New York State before he died. The list can be shortened up to include just a few individuals, or a tagging option can be used for a selection.

The second option is a To Do list. For every person shown, suggested references, such as the 1850 Pennsylvania census, or Connecticut marriage records, are recommended. The full version gives the microfilm

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GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT,

When you first get excited about genealogy, the prospect of finding out about family, your very own flesh, blood and genes, who died before you were born on this planet, becomes a driving force. But after checking with Mom and Dad, Aunt Mabel, and the cousins you knew in childhood, and making note of all the family stories, where to turn? When I started, the obvious place, about 30 miles away, was the National Archives. Many go to their LDS or public library. And then there are the dozens of letters you write to county governments, town clerks, vital record registrars, cemeteries, and fellow researchers. Everything in longhand in those days, or on typewriter, and painstakingly done. If you had a job, or a family - and who doesn't? - your genealogy was a hobby for weekends or those occasional evenings when the house was in order and you still had energy. Files accumulated, mountains of paperwork everywhere, and somehow you stumbled doggedly on, piling fact upon fact and occasionally hitting a treasure trove such as a closet full of old photographs, or a family history that some kind great-aunt had written up, often without much research.

Since the 1990s and the explosion of the internet, the help of search engines and the stunning array of websites to provide searchable data, direct you to data resources, or connect you with other researchers to share data, our problem - in addition to the time-consuming demands of real life such as raising the kids and making a living - is how to take advantage of the available riches right there on your desktop.

There is loads of practical advice available. Meeting with friends who share your interests is the best way, attending the Genies meeting on Friday morning, and coming to our monthly meeting. Listening to speakers. Attending seminars. Using our own library. And I'm always astounded by the impact of just sharing here at our own Society meetings. The personal connection is definitely the most rewarding.

One of my greatest joys in my 60s is visiting the ancestors in my head. It's getting to be pretty crowded up there, and sometimes it seems my "hard drive" is nearly full. But at a quiet moment, often just at bedtime, a king or a cavalier or a poor housewife or a struggling bankrupt farmer or a young Dutch boy held captive by Indians will appear, tell me their story. These quiet visitations enrich me and enlarge my life. That's a heck of a payoff for a few years invested in a genealogy hobby.

Pat

PINELLAS GENEALOGY SOCIETY WINS AN AWARD

By Virginia Britten

PCGS sends congratulations to The Pinellas Genealogy Society, with partner Pinellas Heritage, for recently winning the prestigious Organization Achievement award from the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation for the Society's work in the restoration of Historic Greenwood Cemetery in St. Petersburg, Florida.

Pinellas has won many awards for their community involvement during the past years. Many of us have participated in their workshops held annually, and have appreciated their dedication to preserving family history. The society has a very nice website located at

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SONG OF A GENEALOGIST

By Patricia Merrill

I've told my stories over,
A hundred times or more.
But the years have so improved them
Like you've never heard before.

Don't tell me you won't listen,
That I've become a bore.
For when I'm gone you'll write them,
As part of our family lore.

PCGS UPCOMING EVENTS

Very interesting subjects are planned for the general meetings for 2004. The following are the speakers we have lined up for our fall meetings.

Sept. 11 - Our fellow member, "Mike" Shires will discuss the Presidents' wives in a review of their background, activities and their functions as the wife of our nation's Chief Executive.

Oct. 9 - Juanita Reek, also a Society member, will lead us down the path toward finding if we have royal ancestors, and how to proceed with the research to prove our descendants.

Nov. 13 - George Morgan, well-known speaker at seminars and meetings, will make a presentation on the subject of "Planning a VERY Successful Genealogical Research Trip." Nominations for Officers and Directors will also be held.

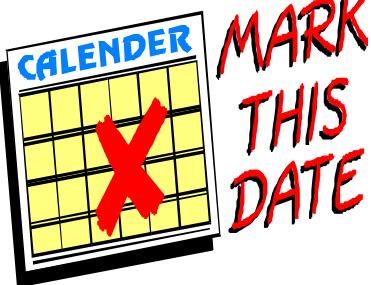
OUT OF AREA EVENTS

There are many Florida genealogical groups holding seminars and conferences this season. Some are listed here, however many more are on the Florida State Genealogical Society web site at <http://www.rootsweb.com/~flsgs/events.htm>. The speakers topics are also shown on the web site.

Nov. 6 - The Charlotte County Genealogical Society, Inc. presents Ann Mohr Osisek, 8:30am-3:30pm at Port Charlotte. Several topics will be presented. Cost (including lunch) is \$30 for non-members. Advance registration only. Registration form at www.rootsweb.com/~flccgs. For info, contact Bill Ferrigno (941-505-0050, pmbill@earthlink.net), or Joanne Ryder (941-625-6443, joannagram@comcast.net)

Nov. 13 - The Florida State Genealogical Society (FSGS) will host their 28th Annual Conference in Melbourne, Florida. The featured speaker, Sharon Tate Moody, CGRSsm, will present four lectures on various subjects. There will also be nine additional speakers during the two-day conference. Registration form and conference schedule are online at <http://www.rootsweb.com/~flsgs>. Further information, contact A. Staley, P. O. Box 441364, Jacksonville, FL 32222 Email: astaley@comcast.net. NOTE: This is the weekend of our regular meeting, when George Morgan will be speaking to us.

Nov. 19-20 - The Laura Riding Jackson Foundation presents the Vero Beach Book Fest, 9am-5pm, in Historic Downtown Vero Beach, featuring George G. Morgan. Check Web site for specific time and locale.



Presentation is free. Food available from vendors. For information, e-mail Sally Daley, Festival Director, at info@verobeachbookfest.com, or visit www.verobeachbookfest.com.

Nov. 20 - The Florida Genealogical Society of Tampa presents Melody Porter, 12 noon, at the John F. Germany Public Library Auditorium, 900 N Ashley Drive, Tampa. Parking available at William F. Poe Parking Garage on Ashley Drive just south of Cass Street next to the library. She will present how to obtain FSGS Pioneer Certification for descendants of Florida state and county pioneers and will also discuss a Researcher Certification for genealogists interested in researching a Florida pioneer. The meeting is open to the public and free of charge.?



E-Mail (*Continued from page 1*)

instead.

Don't use sarcasm in your email that goes to a large audience. Sarcasm is like a joke; some people don't get it and other people get the message wrong.

And here are a couple of DOs:

Do ask in a query for a single item. Don't produce a shopping list.

Do list what vital information you have. This lets the reader know that you have done your best. It gives them a time when your individual lived and where some events happened in your individual's life. In follow up correspondence you certainly can expand what information you have. By then you have gone from a large audience to a small one.

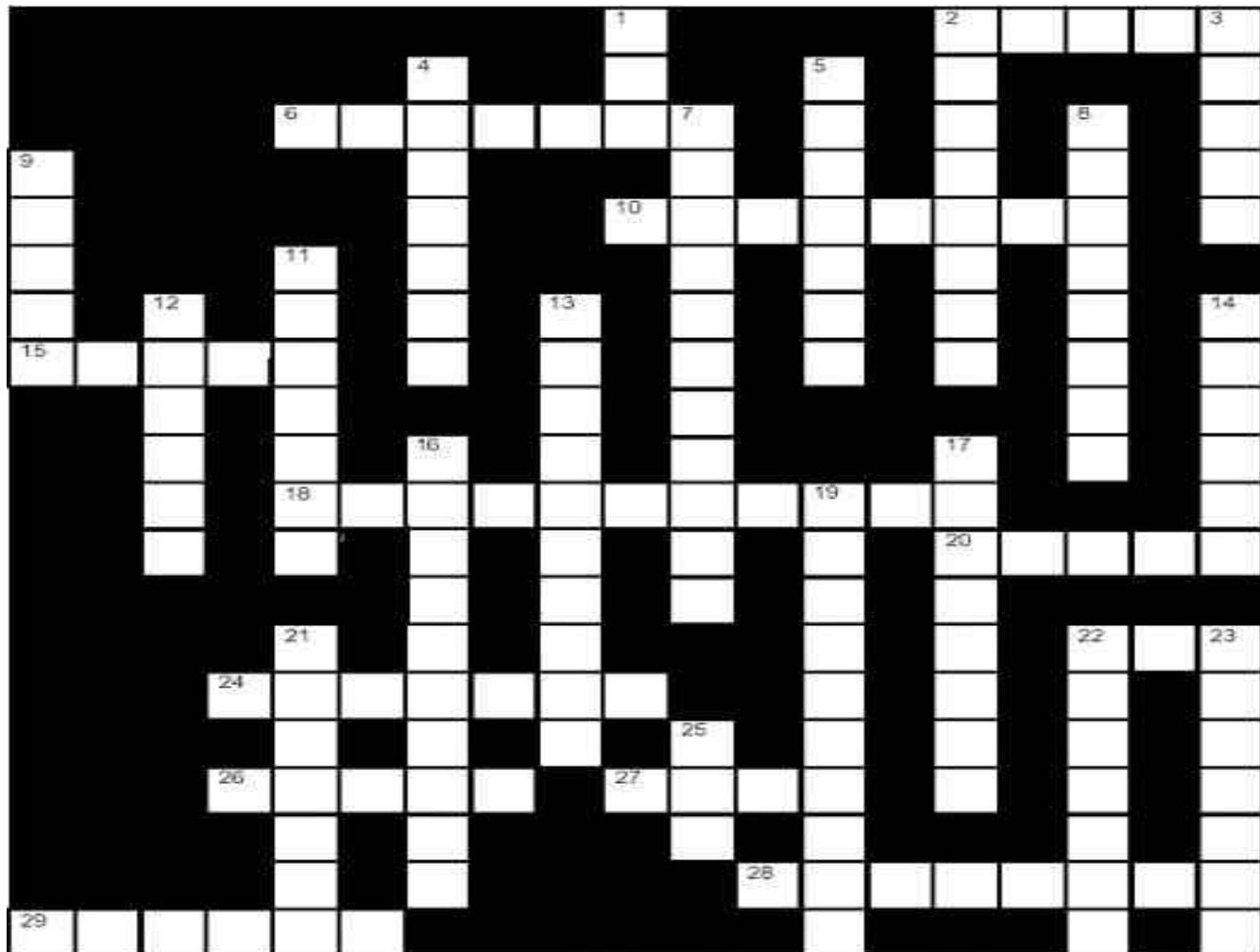
Do CAPITALIZE SURNAMES. This makes surnames easier to spot. Many people scan their mail for keywords and phrases and they don't read all of their emails.

The Internet has been a goldmine for those doing genealogies. Yes, there are great websites and wonderful databases. But email lets us find people (cousins) looking at some of the same ancestors as we are. I have brought some cousins up to speed and also been brought up to speed by others. I have been led in by cousin's emails to some primary documents. Similarly, I have been directed to the cemeteries I would never have found.

As I wrote above, a class might run five sessions long and make a more lasting impression on how you should write your emails, than I have in the above lines. So seriously consider taking a class on email writing. The value of such a course is more than a 16 generation chart or a book on making a genealogical website.?

GENEALOGY CROSSWORD PUZZLE

By Tom Santa Cruz



Across

- 2: Most recent New England state
- 6: Religious founders of Pennsylvania
- 10: County seat
- 15: First father and son presidents
- 18: Vital statistic record
- 20: Wrote "Evidence!"
- 22: Interested in Temple Records
- 24: Gathering of cousins
- 26: Vital statistic
- 27: Acronym for National Archives
- 28: Ancestor Chart
- 29: Road to PCGS Meetings

Down

- 1: Builders of Zephyrhills American Legion Hall
- 2: Vital statistic
- 3: Famous island for immigration between 1892-1954
- 4: Other an alternative to a birth record

- 5: Society requiring members to be a descendent of a particular group.
- 7: Oldest City in USA
- 8: Famous rock in Massachusetts
- 9: About a certain date
- 11: PCGS president
- 12: Wrote "Cite Your Sources"
- 13: Location of National Archives
- 14: Collected every 10 years
- 16: Ancestor or forefather
- 17: Burial place
- 19: Chart of ancestors where unique numbers are assigned
- 21: War between 1846 & 1848
- 22: Good place to look for genealogical info
- 23: Codifying and grouping names according to sound
- 25: Descendents of Revolutionary War Soldiers

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GENEALOGY....A COURSE IN SCHOOLS?

By Virginia Britten

Why couldn't this have been the curriculum years ago? In Canada they are teaching students to "Map Their Roots", according to an article in the Summer issue of FGS's 2004 **FORUM** journal. In Millville Elementary School in New Brunswick they have embarked on a genealogy project to pique the children's interest, and at the same time involve family members with the children's project.

According to the project leader, the challenge was to make it personal, yet learning skills in Social Studies, History, Language Arts, Math and Computer Technology, and to keep them interested.

The project has been a complete success. Throughout the project, students participated in choosing and organizing the information to be displayed on their own website. To learn more about the completed project go to their web site http://millvilleelementary.nbed.nb.ca/family_history.htm



Wouldn't you say that was a novel approach? Many of the students found they were related to each other, since Millville was a small town. Not only do they now know from whom they came, but from whence they came, a great Geography lesson. The project provided, "adventure, stimulation and success greater than any video game and no violence. And it was personal." Said the project director. I was impressed the class trips were to the cemeteries in the area. Just imagine a 9 yr old asking Grandma, "Can you please take me to the cemetery?"

It would be very nice if this project gets national attention and is replicated in Pasco County. Know any school personnel to whom you could relate this story? Be sure to read more about it.?

GenSmart (*Continued from page 1*)

roll number, or other reference to research, and tells where to obtain it.

The third option is a list of locations of the references. As you highlight a location, a list appears, giving the reference material in that location for the persons on your file, such as "Connecticut 1860 Census for Thaddeus Stone" Thus, the list could be printed out before you go to that location on a research trip. Needless to say the Allen County Library in Ft. Wayne, IN, has something needed for researching most people on your list, whereas a Texas library may have nothing listed. All of us have come away from a library trip mad at ourselves for forgetting to look up Aunt Betsy's name on a census while we were there, so this could be helpful.

The fourth option is the embarrassing one. This is Data Clean-up. It tells you that you forgot to enter the county name in the record, or there is no such county in that state. It will review place names and suggest possibilities, or will tell you the county in which a city is located. Or remind you of missing dates or other boo-boos. For instance, I accidentally recorded my great-niece as born in Carlisle, Cumberland County, NY, when it should have been in Pennsylvania. I spelled Carlisle three different ways in three records, too. Many other details are also checked and suggestions made.

The final option is a form where you can fill in a few blanks about a person, then click on a query button. The program will attempt to tell you where to obtain the missing information about that person. Sources of the data, including microfilm roll, library, web site or other location are suggested. Some ideas are good, others are wild, but, with what information you can give, they do a credible job.

There are many other features in the program, many of which appear only in the full version, but the free demo can give you a good idea of the capabilities. The demo is free at the web site mentioned above, so it worth a look-see. It should be emphasized that the program can only do so much, and cannot go out and read your mind. I am sure that improvements will be made in the future, especially in the number of potential reference sources it can recommend.

GenSmart will work with any genealogy program which has a Gedcom output option, available in almost all modern programs.

The program is available from Underwood for \$24.95 for a licensed downloaded version, and you can buy a CD for an additional \$10.00. Information and the order blank can be found on the web site <http://www.underwoodsoft.com>

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GenSmart (Continued from page 5)

gensmarts.com. Or, you can purchase it from Heritage Creations for \$35 plus shipping. Subscribers to Heritage Quest magazine or Genealogy Bulletin get 10% off, making it about \$36 total cost.

Their web site is www.heritagecreations.com, and their toll free line is (866) 783-7899. I have ordered the full version from Heritage Creations, and am regretting not ordering it earlier. If I had, I could have taken a much more complete list of missing information to our family reunion?

FAMILY HISTORY MAGAZINE

A Eulogy

By Don Merrill

Many of us were very surprised and disappointed when we heard that Everton's Family History Company have gone out of business. The company, and its original magazine, "The Genealogical Helper" have been a major part of our research tool for many years. Their "Bureau of Missing Ancestors" in their bi-monthly magazine has been a mainstay for genealogical research since back in the 1940's.

Time has passed, however, and, with the proliferation of genealogical publications and especially the advent of the internet, the queries, notices and subscriptions fell by the wayside, and the company lost a lot of ground. They did try to recover by completely revamping their magazine format in the early 2000's, and, by appearances, made a successful transition. It was not to be, and the magazine and the whole company has closed its doors.

According to Kimberly Powell in her newsletter from Ancestry, Evertons donated the company's assets to the city of Logan, Utah, where they have been located for many years. These include a large genealogical library, the "Handybook for Genealogists," the online network, and the "Family History Magazine." As of this time, details of the future of these items have not been announced. Also, any plans for the current Evertons subscribers have not been solidified.

Throughout the years, many genealogical publications have started, run for a short time, and usually, when they ceased, the subscribers never heard anything

We can hope that the city of Logan does make effective use of this generous donation and utilizes it for the benefit of the many interested genealogists, as well as for their own worthy causes

A final note: There are many, many web sites advertising subscriptions to "Family History Magazine." Some may be legitimate sites which have not been updated, but we must be very wary of the opportunists who will take our money even though the magazine is already discontinued.?

IMMIGRATION & NATURALIZATION

By Don Merrill

Since the time an early cave-man said "I wonder who my grandparents were, and where they come from," there probably have been a zillion articles, books, web sites, and other sources of advice produced on the subject of immigration and naturalization research. Back then, of course, all the cave-man did was wander over to a neighboring cave, whop the resident over the head, and drag that guy's wife home by her hair to do his own hunting, gathering and cooking. No INS agent came around and made sure she was a not an illegal alien, and nobody did a good job of documenting who their ancestors were.

Nowadays, we have changed our ways. The sources available to do our research have greatly multiplied, not only through computers and indexing of information, but also by locating and publicizing forgotten information which has been gathering dust for many years in a remote church closet or town clerk's attic.

The May/June 2004 issue of ANCESTRY magazine featured three good articles on immigration and naturalization. Also included with the articles, are several examples of forms, and also listings of sources for individual research.

The first, by Megan Smolenyak Smolenyak, reviews the Ellis Island Database and Steve Morse's search tools. Steve is the wizard who developed an improved method of searching the Ellis Island site. Also included is a discussion of the U. S. Immigration Collection at Ancestry.com. Megan shows research results for Bob Hope, Andy Warhol and Henry Steinway as examples to illustrate how these sources are used to find immigration records.

The second article was written by Erica Dreifus, Ed. M., M.F.A., Ph.d. who is from Boston, where she was able to take advantage of the free lectures at the New England Historical and Genealogical Society. She discusses several sources of instruction on how to research immigration and naturalization records. She uses members of her ancestry to show the information which can be found by a typical genealogist.

The third writer, Loretto Dennis Szucs, FUGA, gives a history of the naturalization acts, starting with the first one in 1790, and continuing with the ones in 1795, 1798, 1802, 1906 and 1922. She touches on the information included in the records generated by these acts. An important point she brings out is that very few women or children are listed in the records prior to 1922. The reason is that, prior to the changes in the Naturalization Act in 1922, married women derived their citizenship from their husbands, and children un-

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Immigration (*Continued from page 6*)

der twenty-one from their fathers.

Although these three articles cannot discuss all phases of research into immigration and naturalization records, they are up-to-date, and may bring out some valuable new points or new resources for a person looking for these records. One of the newer web sites also may be the key to breaking down a brick wall which has plagued us for years.

As a point of information, Erica Dreifus tells us that the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) is now a part of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). A further breakdown of the department makes the INS now part of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). The reason for mentioning this is that the old INS web site of www.immigration.gov is no longer available. According to Erika's article, the place to start searching is the History, Genealogy and Education section of the Department of Homeland Security, at <http://uscis.gov/graphics/aboutus/history/index.htm>

NOTE: The magazine article shows the above web site with a slash (/) between the "uscis" and the "gov" part of the address. This should be a dot (.). ?

ANOTHER SCAM!

Submitted by Don Merrill

The following has been excerpted from an article by Ed Criscuolo in the RootsWeb Review:

For many years, we have heard of the so-called "Nigerian Scam" where we get a letter or e-mail message that a wealthy foreigner needs your help moving millions of dollars from his homeland to yours and will reward you with a hefty percentage of this fortune if you agree to assist him. Of course, in order to do this, he needs your bank account numbers, so he can deposit the money in there. Or else he needs some money to pay off the politicians so he can make the transfer.

Now there is a new variation, specifically targeting genealogists. In it, the scammer claims to have the same surname as you, and wants you to pose as his uncle (or other family member) in order to assist in claiming, releasing or transferring a large sum of money left by his late family, which he will share.

Clearly this has been designed to prey on our usual eagerness to help out anyone with the same surname. After all, they might really be family.

Should you agree to participate in this international bail-out, something will go wrong. Paperwork will be delayed. Questions will be asked. Officials will need to be bribed. Money from you, an insignificant sum, really, in light of the windfall about to land in your lap, will be required to get things back on track. You pay,, you wait for the transfer.....and all you'll get in return are more excuses about why the funds are being held up and assurances that everything can be straightened out if you'll

just send a bit more cash to help the process along. Once your bank account has been sucked dry or you start making threats you'll never hear from these scammers again. As for the money you've thrown at this -- it's gone forever.

Information on this scam can be found at the 419 Coalition web site: <http://home.rica.net/lphae/419coal/>

Previously published in RootsWeb Review: Vol. 7, No. 14, 7 April 2004.?

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<http://www.rootsweb.com/~flpgs/> and I encourage you to take a look.

You can read more about the awards they have been given by clicking the Society button, then click on the Award link. Click on the Fundraising button to learn about their new campaign and about the exciting new developments in the Genealogical room of the Largo Library. They also have a lot of links for genealogy research especially helpful to beginning genealogy.

More information can be found about this award by reading Federation of Genealogical Societies' journal "FORUM", Volume 16, Number 2, Summer of 2004 issue, page 19.?

Answer to Crossword Puzzle



LOCAL AREA TIDBIT

Submitted by Connie Delaney

"1539 - Tocobaga Indians inhabited the Tampa Bay area about the time that Hernando de Soto and army marched through Florida. These Indians just disappeared through the years. According to a map in British Colonial Office in London, Tocobaga were wiped out in 1709 from raids, disease or joining other tribes. Archaeological remains (spear points and stone tools) indicate that people lived in this area as early as 10,000 B.C. Also, some historians have said Timucuan Indians had encampments in the Tampa Bay area and to the south, also. Later Creeks, intermingled with blacks, migrated southward into Florida from Georgia." - from *Days Gone By* by Genevieve L. Smith ?