



# MIDWEST GENEALOGY CENTER

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## NEWSBYTES

### News Bytes is Changing!

In 2012, the Midwest Genealogy Center News Bytes newsletter will be renovated. Rather than a monthly series, MGC will be producing News Bytes on a quarterly basis - that is, four times a year. The first issue will roll out in March 2012, followed by the remainder in June, September and December.

The focus of the new, stream-lined version of News Bytes will be on the Midwest Genealogy Center and how you can get more out of it. Articles will concentration on MGC's collection, classes, databases and research helps. Many stories, like 2011's Famous Missourians series, will be appearing on our blog - [mymcpl.org/blog/genealogy](http://mymcpl.org/blog/genealogy).

So keep your eyes peeled for the new News Bytes and check out our blog while you wait!

### Walter Elias Disney Uncovering His Family in Census Records

*Twila Rider*  
Reference Assistant

Walt Disney is a name synonymous with well-respected children's movies and theme parks. Where did the gentleman behind this empire come from? Where is his Missouri connection?

In compiling family history information, the first step is to gather known family information and materials and make a compilation of facts: who, what, where. Since I am not part of his family with access to this information, I will begin by checking online for general sources to find some facts to check out. First, I googled "**Walt Disney**" genealogy and found several sources, including two to investigate further:

Genealogy.com: Ancestry of Walt Disney -  
[genealogy.com/famousfolks/waltd/index.html](http://genealogy.com/famousfolks/waltd/index.html)

Geni webpage for Walter Elias Disney -  
[geni.com/people/Walt-Disney/6000000005291270001](http://geni.com/people/Walt-Disney/6000000005291270001)

From these websites the basic information indicates that he was born in Chicago in 1901, with a brother named Roy and father and mother Elias and Flora Disney, so next I will check the 1910 census records for Walt Disney, born in 1901 in IL, with these people, since it is the closest census to his birth.

1910 – He is listed as 8-year old Walter E. Disney, living in Marceline Twp./

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### Good Ol' Fashioned Genealogy Research

*Tiffany Wright*  
Reference Assistant

It has been a blessing for genealogists that the computer and internet came into existence. No more using a typewriter for an entire book, using white out until the fumes get to you. It's easier to post queries where people can read them from many cities as opposed to one specific area. Finding living people can prove to be an easier task as well. However, there are sometimes when the computer just isn't enough. Not everything in this world will be digitized or microfilmed. Sometimes you just have to roll up your sleeves and slave away writing a letter and digging through records at a repository. I was at this point in my own genealogy.

I am lucky to have as many family oral histories as I do, but there

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Linn Co./MO; his parents had been married for 22 years; father Elias (a 51-year-old farm employee) was born a French Canadian, but was naturalized in 1878, mother Flora (age 41) was born in Ohio; paternal grandfather was listed as French Canadian, and grandmother was born in Ireland; maternal grandfather was born in New York and grandmother was born in Germany. If this is correct, what a varied cultural background in his heritage! Besides his older brother Roy (age 16), he had a younger sister named Ruth (age 6), and since his parents were older, I would suspect there may be older siblings who had already left home (check this by visiting the 1900 census).

1900 – Stepping back 10 years before Walt was born, I found the family in Chicago with two other sons besides Roy (age 7), Herbert (age 11) and Raymond (age 9). Both of Elias' parents are listed as being born in Ireland, his father's birthplace a discrepancy from the 1910 census. Elias is supporting the family with carpentry work and this census indicated he immigrated in 1880 (20 years previous).

1880 – Going back to the census year that Elias (Walter's father) may have immigrated (as noted in the 1900 census), I found he and his family of origin in Ellis/Ellis Co./Kansas of all places! Elias' parents were Kepple Disney, a farmer and born in Canada of Irish immigrants, and Mary, born in Ireland, confirming the information in the 1910 census. Elias was the oldest of ten siblings named in this census.

1920 – Walter E., now 18, is living at 3018 Bellefontaine, Kaw Twp./Kansas City/Jackson Co./MO with his brother, Herbert A. and wife Louise, and their daughter Dorothy. Walter's brother Roy is also living in this household. Walter's profession at this early age was already listed as a commercial artist, specifically a cartoonist, working on his own account. His parents and sister Ruth had moved back to Chicago by then and his father's first name was listed as Charles in this census [why Charles and not Elias?]. In this census "Charles" had immigrated to the US in 1881 and then was naturalized in 1885, a discrepancy from the 1910 census. Another conflicting bit of information in this census was Elias' [Charles] grandfather was listed as born in Ireland instead of French-speaking Canada.

1930 – This census finds Walt in California living with his bride of four years, Lillian B. (born in Idaho), next door to his brother Roy and his family on Lyric Avenue in Los Angeles. Both Walt and Roy list their industry as "motion pictures" with Walt being a producer and Roy being a sound recorder. They both owned a radio and their own homes, Walt's being valued at \$8000, and Roy's at \$7500.

As you can see, census records are very rich in information, and using them alone, a picture can be created of a family that is quite descriptive. More facts can be added by continuing to search on his other family members in the various census years. And I will look forward to seeing what there is about him in the 1940 census to be released in April 2012. Searching census records is an excellent beginning, and, just the tip of the iceberg!

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All records for this article were taken from *Ancestry Library edition*, the U. S. Census Collection.

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was one that got away. I let too much time slip by before contacting a distant relative that had information for me. He died a couple years ago. I found his obituary and it listed his children along with their location at the time. I found addresses for most of them. Some also had phone numbers, but each person has to determine when it's right to call and when you need to write. Since I did not know any of them and vice versa, I decided a letter was the way to go. I typed out letters with all of my contact information and how I am related to them. I also let them know how I was related so they knew I wasn't trying to solicit any information. Two days later I received a phone call from one of the children! They were very excited to hear from our side of the family and we started trading stories. By the next week we had traded family information and we are planning a get together soon. Two of her sisters actually live near me!

After looking through my research I discovered a few gaps. I needed divorce records, court records, military discharge papers and some vital record certificates. All of these things for my ancestor were all tied up in the county courthouse. I wrote down everything I wanted to look for and called the courthouse to find out their hours, which offices I needed to visit and how much copies cost. When I got to there, my work ahead of time paid off making my time more efficient. The first thing I asked for was a WWI military discharge paper for my great great grandfather. The records at the National Archives were destroyed and this was my last chance of finding out about his service. I was in luck, they had his record!! I danced around the room. Then going to the clerk's office I was able to heave through heavy, dusty indexes. I found so much more than I was looking for. I was really lucky because the clerks were so nice and they pulled everything I needed. In most cases I was looking at the original records and a few on microfilm. They made copies for me and were very patient with me. They closed for lunch so while I was out I bought them some chocolate. You can never go wrong with giving them something nice for their time. That was the best research time I have spent. So in conclusion, use any and all means to find information for your family history.

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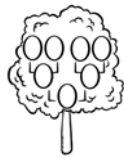
Find old editions of News Bytes on our website!  
[mymcpl.org/genealogy/news-bytes-newsletter](http://mymcpl.org/genealogy/news-bytes-newsletter)

That page will show you the current year's News Bytes, but there is a link to see all of the past News Bytes newsletters. Now read and enjoy!

# News Bytes Websites

## Websites for December:

### Web Ornaments for Your Genealogy Tree



Twila Rider

Reference Assistant

Certain websites are jewels, bringing information gifts over and over. This list is our gift to you to enjoy during the winter months. You can also re-visit the Websites column in previous issues of **NewsBytes** at: [mymcpl.org/genealogy/news-bytes-newsletter](http://mymcpl.org/genealogy/news-bytes-newsletter) (current year) and for even earlier issues click on **Newsletter Archive** in the left column.

#### **For free websites that contain lots of data:**

\* **FamilySearch** - [familysearch.org/](http://familysearch.org/) - Click on USA, Canada & Mexico for a list of data by state, even U.S. census records – now added to continually – check back frequently.

\* **Rootsweb** - [rootsweb.ancestry.com](http://rootsweb.ancestry.com) – Click on “State Resources” to see information by geographical area, OR click on MetaSearch to search for a specific person.

\* **USGenWeb** - [usgenweb.org/WorldGenWeb-worldgenweb.org](http://usgenweb.org/WorldGenWeb-worldgenweb.org) (for U.S. go to the state page, then county)

\* **250+ Killer Digital Libraries and Archives** - [oedb.org/library/features/250-plus-killer-digital-libraries-and-archives](http://oedb.org/library/features/250-plus-killer-digital-libraries-and-archives) – A collection of places to look for digitized full-text information.

\* **Digital Collections for Genealogy Research** (Princeton Public Library) - [princeton.lib.nj.us/research/links/genealogy-digital.html](http://princeton.lib.nj.us/research/links/genealogy-digital.html) – Another list of digital sources.

\* **Missouri Digital Heritage** - [sos.mo.gov/mdh/collections.asp](http://sos.mo.gov/mdh/collections.asp) – (much information for Missouri people)

#### **For online books and newspapers:**

\* **Google Books** – [books.google.com](http://books.google.com) - You can search for a word/name to find in all digitized books.

\* **Internet Archive Books** - [archive.org/details/texts](http://archive.org/details/texts) - Many historical books are available full-text here.

\* **County & Town Histories** - [learnwebskills.com/patriot/](http://learnwebskills.com/patriot/)

[countyhistories1.htm](#) - If you are looking for a specific county history, search by state, then click on the county for the available years of printed histories.

\* **Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers** - [chroniclingamerica.loc.gov](http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov) – Great for looking for a specific area newspaper to know titles and where it may be held. Also, early newspapers that have been digitized are being added to this web site, searchable by word or name.

#### **For links:**

\* **Cyndi's List** - [cyndislist.com](http://cyndislist.com) – Here are links to genealogy sites that go on and on.....and on.....

\* **Genealogy Articles, Tips and Research Guides** by Joe Beine [genealogybranches.com](http://genealogybranches.com) – Each link takes you to tips and sites you can click on for that topic.

\* **Linkpendium** - [linkpendium.com](http://linkpendium.com) – links to surnames and also individual states

#### **For maps:**

\* **Atlas of Historical County Boundaries (US)** from the Newberry Library - [publications.newberry.org/ahcbp](http://publications.newberry.org/ahcbp) – A common question of genealogists is how & when state and county boundaries changed, which this site addresses.

#### **For searching and how-tos:**

\* **About.com: Genealogy** - [genealogy.about.com](http://genealogy.about.com) – In blog format -- many, many genealogy searching tips.

\* **1-Step Webpages** by Steve Morse - [stevemorse.org](http://stevemorse.org) – Steve Morse soups up the original site's search engines to produce better results.

\* **Best Web Search Sources for Genealogists** - [hvcn.org/info/gswc/search.htm](http://hvcn.org/info/gswc/search.htm) – An all-in-one-page list of links!

## Periodically Speaking

Cindi Fournier  
Reference Assistant

I'm sure everyone knows by now that Bill Tresenriter passed away in October. For the past 1 1/2 years, Bill has been in charge of Periodicals at Midwest Genealogy Center. One of his many duties during that time was to write the monthly column for Periodically Speaking. It's pretty much impossible to follow in Bill's footsteps. He set the standard in customer service. He put 100% into everything he did. Bill had a lot to say about periodicals and he wanted our patrons to be informed. He usually had two to three times as much material as needed for his articles.

Another service that Bill excelled in was the fact that he was our Native American expert. You might want to look at the periodicals in our library about Native Americans: *American Indian Quarterly*, *Cherokee Blood Newsletter*, *Cherokee Family Ties*, *Columns*, *Going Snake Messenger*, *Journal of American Indian Family Research*, *Journal of Cherokee Studies*, *Journal of Chickasaw History*, *Northern Cherokee News*, *Tobucksy News* and *Wind River Rendezvous*.

The periodicals team at Midwest Genealogy Center wants you to know that we are committed to giving you the same kind of service that Bill would have given and the best genealogy periodicals we can find. We miss Bill, not periodically, but every day.

# CLASS CALENDAR

## JANUARY 2012

*To register, please call 816-252-7228.*

### **January 5, 2012, Thursday at 7:00 PM** **Tell Me About the Good Ol' Days**

Stories from your relatives can be a wonderful addition to your genealogy. They add such flavor and history to pass on to the rest of the world. This class gives you ideas on what questions to ask, how to record their stories, and how to make the interview go smoothly. We will also discuss how to extract genealogy clues from their stories.

### **January 7, 2012, Saturday at 10:00 AM** **Heritage Scrapbooking**

Scrapbooking is a way of preserving memories using photographs, printed media, memorabilia, and embellishments in decorated books. Heritage Scrapbooking is a way of maintaining and recording family history in a creative way. Come and exchange ideas, get tips from guest speakers, and just have fun! Bring your own scrapbooking "stuff"! This program runs for two hours.

### **January 7, 2012, Saturday at 1:00 PM** **Dear Jane Quilt Group**

Dear Jane is the name of a quilt made in 1863 by Jane A. Stickle. There are 225 different blocks in her sampler quilt. Come make your own version of "Dear Jane.". It is said, "Jane's quilt is the mother of all quilts, and all of the quilts which we make are her babies." We invite all quilters and non-quilters to join us on the first Saturday of each month.

### **January 10, 2012, Tuesday at 10:00 AM** **How to Use the Midwest Genealogy Center**

This tour of the Midwest Genealogy Center is conducted by a staff member. The participants will learn about the genealogy databases on the Library computer, and about the microfilm and microfiche collections found in the Library.

Registration is limited; call the branch (816-252-7228) for details.

### **January 12, 2012, Thursday at 7:00 PM** **Census Research**

Join us for a trip through time using census records. Learn how to search effectively in Ancestry.com and Heritage Quest, as well as print indices and soundex. See what information our government thought was important about our ancestors and how we can apply that to our genealogy research.

### **January 14, 2012, Saturday at 9:30 AM** **Cool Tools at Midwest Genealogy Center**

It's a big library with lots of materials! Make the most of this valuable repository by attending this class. You'll learn what's at the library, where to find it, and how to use it. Plus pick up a few insider tips. Excellent overview for all skill levels.

### **January 17, 2012, Tuesday at 10:00 AM** **Beginning Genealogy**

This class focuses on procedures, skills, and techniques needed for beginning a search of your family genealogy.

### **January 19, 2012, Thursday at 7:00 PM** **Using Family Search**

Find out how to get the most out of using the FamilySearch website. Learn tips on searching records, using the research wiki, finding family trees, using the Family History catalog, and more.

### **January 24, 2012, Tuesday at 10:00 AM** **Writer's Block**

You've gathered records, stories, and pictures. You've talked to every living relative and a few dead ones. What's next? PUBLISH! This group will discuss the writing and publishing process with guest speakers and each other. Time will be set aside at each meeting to share your writing with other struggling authors. One-and-a-half hour.

### **Join the MGC's Email List**

Do you want to get News Bytes by email? Or how about updates on classes and events here at the Midwest Genealogy Center?

Well, now you can! All you have to do is sign up at the Information Desk at MGC or email [ge@mymcpl.org](mailto:ge@mymcpl.org) and put "News Bytes Subscription" in the Subject Line!

Questions? You can email us or call (816) 252-7228. You can also find MGC on Facebook! Become a fan to keep up-to-date on library happenings.

Don't forget, you can now find the Midwest Genealogy Center on Facebook. Make sure you 'Like' our Facebook page to keep up-to-date with what's going on in your favorite genealogy library.

