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Submitted by Barbara Barr

Have you ever gotten stuck researching your roots? Have you ever wondered what your ancestors were really like, or who shook your family tree? Do you feel like you really understand your ancestors as they lived, worked, and parented? Thanks to the expertise of Barbara Vander Leest, Ph.D. (Dr. Barbara), members and guests of the Saddlebrooke Genealogy Club learned some of the keys to unlocking such mysteries at the March meeting.

For Dr. Barbara, the discovery of the missing links began with a search for a bloodline connection to the Revolutionary War. Finding herself stuck in her probe, she researched collateral lines to find that critical linkage. The use of this technique not only uncovered hidden relationships, but also opened up a fascinating world of history and family ties that she had never known before. Dr. Barbara captivated the club's members and guests with her journey researching collateral lines.



So just what is collateral line research, or whole family research, all about? Dr. Barbara explained that this is the study of those not on your pedigree chart. Collateral lines consist of uncles, aunts, cousins, and distant relatives. Collateral lines might also include in-laws, neighbors, and similar resources. Using sources such as deeds, probate records, obituaries, wills, military records, tax records, and death records of collateral lines can lead to finding lateral relationships by going sideways. However, collateral line research can lead to so much more.

As Dr. Barbara described her journey with collateral line research, she illustrated the power and benefits of the technique to our organization. The speaker's collateral line research not only revealed the linkage to the Revolutionary War, but also introduced her to a family she had never known, and guided her to new insights and understandings of her ancestors. Thus, her research lead her to really feel like she knew her family.

The March 2nd meeting closed with announcements. On the technical side, there are up-dates about family tree software on the website, and a new class on genealogy software will be formed at the Ranch. Additionally, the club will be organizing an up-coming beginners class for those who are new to genealogy. Lastly, the club is looking for people interested in a leadership role with the organization. There are a couple of openings on the slate of officers for next year.

The next meeting will be a luncheon for membership recognition at the Mountain View Clubhouse on April 6th. The sign in is at 11:30 and the slate of officers and board members will be announced at the luncheon. Members can find a downloadable reservation form to print and more information on the website. Payment and reservations are needed no later than March 25th.

If you are interested in finding out about your roots, please join us the first Thursday of each month (except April) at 1:00 in the Coyote Room at HOA1 Clubhouse. All SaddleBrooke residents, SaddleBrooke Ranch residents and visitors are welcome.