Family History Newsletter

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As we begin our Family History Newsletter, it is important to note that there are many different Family Search skill levels within our ward, ranging from beginners to advanced levels of Family History researchers. Not knowing each individuals competency levels, this newsletter is intended to provide training and various topics and inspirational thoughts and stories. As we do so, we will be referencing the basic tool and work horse of Family Search, the Family History Guide; https://www.thefhguide.com. We will not attempt to rewrite the Guide, but rather, reference different topics that will help you navigate the Family Search program. We would invite you to take a few minutes to review the Family History Guide and familiarize yourself with this important tool. Below is this week's topic.

Adding Names, Dates and Locations to Your Family Tree

The Family Search program uses the information that you have entered to your pedigree in family tree, along with the information gleaned through indexing legal and church documents. A computer program then looks for possible matches that help you to grow your personal tree. These possible matches come to you in the form of record hints or suggestions.

In order for this computerized matching program to work at its best, names, dates and locations must be entered into your pedigree in a standardized manner. If you deviate from this prescribed method, the computer will not be able to provide you with as many suggested record matches. You might miss out on some valuable records and information.

Adding a name:
- Use normal capitalization, John Smith, not John SMITH.
- First name and all middle names are entered in the **First Name** box.
- Use only the last name in the **Last Name** box. Do not add Jr. or Sr. in this field.
- Women are entered using their Maiden Name.
- If a person has legally changed their name, use the newer name.
- If the person has no last name, leave the **Last Name** field blank.
- Suffix, enter words like Jr. or Sr. in the **Suffix Field**. If a person lacks a suffix, leave this field blank

Adding a date:
- Dates should be entered in the following format:
    20 January 2021 (always spell out the month – do not abbreviate)
- Once you have entered a date, a standardized date will pop up below your entry. Select the appropriate standard.

Adding a location:
- Use normal capitalization.
- Start with the city, followed by the county, followed by state, followed by country.
    Bountiful, Davis, Utah, United States
  If you are missing information, for example the county, leave it out. Do not fill in extra commas.
- Once location is entered, a standardized place will pop up on your screen, below your entry. Select the appropriate standard.

In reviewing entries on your Family Tree pedigree, watch for red exclamation points. These may indicate that the name, date or place is not in the standardized format. When you find these errors, correct them to provide the best record matching possibilities.

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