

## Genealogy Rocks!

### A Genealogist's Dream Tool: Message Boards & Forums

Many of you have been doing genealogy so long you actually remember Writing Letters! Writing is still a good tool, and hopefully, we haven't lost that skill by using the Internet. But let's discuss what great new tools we have to get almost instant results and answers.



**Pat Johnson**

Message boards are on the Internet that genealogists can ask questions on ancestors and sometimes receive transcripts of records. One of the more popular message boards is on Rootsweb. On the Internet, select <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/>. Scroll down to "Message Boards Home Page." From this page you can enter a surname or location or search for a surname or location board by alphabetical listing. If I type in "Smith," I immediately see messages posted by folks interested in that name (thousands

of them). To make it manageable, narrow the search and enter "Leicester," in the "Smith Message Board" and see only messages that have Smith and Leicester in them.

Forums are similar to message boards. Sound familiar? Yes, message boards and forums are basically the same tool, just a different look and a different owner. The easiest one to use is GenForum at <http://genforum.genealogy.com/>. Genealogy.com operates this free service and basically provides the same benefits as Rootsweb Message Boards.

I use both tools as you may have a different audience with each program, and I like to reach as many folks as I can when I need an answer. These two tools are invaluable in your genealogy work and the best bargain is they are free. *Happy Holidays!*

❖ *Visit our website at [www.lcgsco.org](http://www.lcgsco.org) for more information. Pat Johnson is the Family History Center coordinator and member of the Laramie County Genealogical Society. Check our website at [www.lcgsco.org](http://www.lcgsco.org) for 2011 society events.*