
News, Updates, & More

Varner Family Genealogy

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FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

You will find copies of this newsletter and more genealogy information downloadable from the Varner Family website.

<http://brucevarner.com/VarnerGenealogy.htm>

Need individuals to please provide ideas for future newsletters. I need to have the input of others so that all different subjects and different perspectives can be covered.

QUESTIONS / NEWS

Q: From Vicki Newton Carter. ...you showed up as a 3rd- 5th cousin (DNA) match to my brother Rick (Harry Richard Newton). Which means since you are actually a Riggs, somehow my Newton's have matched with Riggs. So now I have to figure out where the connection is.... Would your ydna also carry some Newton genes?

A: For a while we were all confused, I thought we were talking Y-DNA when in

fact this was an atDNA (Autosomal) match.

The question ballooned into an answer that requires more space than this Q/A section allows.

Therefore the information and possibilities surrounding this issue have become this month's main discussion. See further down for the detailed article.

Q: From Fred Riggs. Came across this name, Amos Riggs, in my SAR (Sons of American Revolution) magazine. I have no record of that name and wondered if you might in your records. May have been in Missouri, not positive. Have not yet met the person who is using Amos as his Patriot to join the SAR, but I will.

A: I looked through the Riggs data I have found nothing in my records, nor on the Riggs genealogy website. No one by that first name was found. I did not look nationwide, just in Missouri without success.

If anyone else has come across anyone named Amos Riggs, please let me know.

George Varner of Missouri Direct Line DNA

Now that the holidays are over, I will have more time to study the results of Billy Joe Varner's DNA testing. With the additional possibilities that surfaced via the above question from Vicki Newton

Carter, I have submitted Bill's DNA for the FamilyTreeDNA Family Finder Test. Will likely take a couple of months for the results. Hope to have this provide additional leads & matches.

Bill has moved from his longtime home outside of Versailles, to a temporary location inside the city limits of Rolla. He intends to build a house in the near future, on a piece of property he has purchased outside of Rolla. This move places Bill closer to his other family members.

Bill said he and hopefully some of his family are planning on attending this year's reunion. Great!

It is also hoped that some members of Cheryl Varner Walker's family in Oklahoma will attend. Maybe even William Virgil Varner who is the sole person to this point that we have found who matches Billy Joe Varner (George Varner line). I will be sending them a personal invitation in the near future.

Do the Newtons & Varners Really Both have Riggs DNA?

Now that I have your attention. No big bombshell, just new DNA evidence that has come to light as the result of ever increasing DNA testing.

This month we will delve into a possible DNA match that has surfaced between Harry Richard Newton, and me, Bruce Thomas Varner.

Before I go into what we know, there is some explanation required so that everyone can more easily follow the discussion. Sorry, but that is the nature of DNA. Complicated, hard to understand, and detailed.

Point of clarification: I am in no way an expert on DNA. Far from it. So if you find I am not providing correct information in any of my explanations, please let me know. I do NOT want wrong information to go unchallenged.

If you have an internet connection, I strongly suggest that you go to this link (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lvMsT0O8kJ8>) and watch the four short videos, which do a very good job of explaining the different types of DNA testing. You might even do so before reading this article if possible. It will make understanding this discussion much easier. Each video is about 15 minutes in length. So for about an hour out of the day, you can become more knowledgeable on this subject. These videos are on YouTube. If anyone has any problems understanding how to watch such videos, please let me know and I can walk you through the steps.

Some overview of DNA is required to better understand this discussion. In a very short explanation, that leaves out many of the details, I will attempt to hit the high points.

For our purposes there are 3 forms of DNA testing for genealogical purposes. Y-DNA tests. mtDNA tests. atDNA (Autosomal) tests.

Y-DNA testing finds possible matches for the Y or male chromosome. Therefore it is only good for matches between male family members. Son to father, father to grandfather, and so on. This is an important test because in our culture, surnames are passed down on the male or paternal side of families.

mtDNA testing finds possible matches for the female only chromosome. Therefore it is only good for possible matches between female family members. Daughter to mother, mother to grandmother, and so on. Less useful because females for generations have tended to take the husband's surname.

atDNA or Autosomal testing obtains results from those other chromosomes that do NOT determine a person's sex. Therefore it can find possible matches for both sexes. It is good for suggesting matches between any combination of male and/or female family members.

Why not just do the autosomal testing then? Because autosomal DNA is passed down equally from mother and father and is more quickly diluted. Every new generation has 4 times less DNA from each ancestor. Therefore it loses accuracy after only a few generations.

You receive about 50% of your autosomal DNA from your father & 50% from your mother. But you only have approximately 25% autosomal DNA from any one of your four grandparents. You then will have approximately 12.5% autosomal DNA from any one of your eight great Grandparents. Watch video #4 from the above link, for a more visually understandable explanation of autosomal DNA. I have also provided a map [below](#) that lays out the general DNA percentages with Autosomal DNA testing.

Now on to the story that Vicki Newton Carter discovered.

Harry Richard (Rick) Newton [Vicki's brother] and I do not match through mtDNA. Why, because we are not female.

Rick Newton and I do not match through Y-DNA. Why, because we do not have a common male to male ancestor. Then why are we both R-M269 Haplogroup?

My Y-DNA testing and supporting evidence has sufficiently proven that genetically I am a Riggs. Rick's Y-DNA testing has revealed that he is of the same Haplogroup (R-M269) as me. So, we match, right? We must both be related to the Riggs because we have the same Haplogroup, correct?

Not so fast. R-M269 is common to many, many people. The R Haplogroup splitting into the M269 sub-group

occurred many years ago, maybe several thousand years or more. So having the same R-M269 does not really mean much from a Y-DNA standpoint unless the match is very close. Autosomal (atDNA) however, can be a different story, as we will see later.

I have submitted for SNP testing. Actually they use the DNA they already have & just conduct the additional tests. SNPs is a more in depth test that further refines the closeness of any Y-DNA genetic match. If for instance Rick submits for these SNP tests (of course it costs money), it would provide additional detail about why our Y-DNA does not in fact match in any genealogical timeframe. Sub-sub Haplogroups continue to mutate down distinct paths. This level of detail only really is of benefit however, if there is someone you closely match.

Remember that DNA probabilities are based upon the match occurring since about the time surnames came into use. We all have common ancestors on back from that period. So Y-DNA results do trace back thousands of years, but distant matches that actually occurred before a genealogic timeframe do not help in determining family genealogy. Everyone's DNA eventually tracks back to anthropologic Adam & Eve.

Rick Newton and I do indicate a match through atDNA (Autosomal). The possible match is at a suggested 3rd to 5th cousin. However the threshold to

constitute a possible match through atDNA is very low, only about 5%-7% matching DNA is needed for the possible match to show up. I had said that passed down autosomal DNA dilutes very quickly from generation to generation. By the time you reach back to a great-great grandparent, the percentage of atDNA from that ancestor is down to approximately 6.25%, more or less. Also, every descendant does not always receive the full percentage of each ancestors DNA. So as generations pass, possible matches through autosomal DNA is very speculative by themselves, and are believed to be of no usefulness past 7 generations. atDNA really helps in pointing a person in the right direction. Additional supporting evidence is always required.

Now detective work is needed to try and validate or disprove the above Autosomal DNA match.

The Newtons and Varners are known to have been near each other over the years (We have a joint reunion for heaven's sake). There have been marriages between Varners and Newtons. But to look at the ancestry of Rick Newton, does not seem to show a blood connection using his direct bloodline.

We will have to see in the future how this new piece of information fits in with what we learn as time passes.

It would be interesting to have additional Newtons complete DNA testing to see if this same Haplogroup appears throughout their lines.

So what does all this mean? It means that there are always going to be surprises in genealogy. It means that there is always more research to be done. It means that if you are interested in genealogy, you need to participate as much as you can comfortably do. Whether this involves doing research, or volunteering and paying for DNA testing.

Now with the growing importance of the atDNA (Autosomal) testing that processes chromosomes of both men and women, it is no longer just important for men to be tested. Women need to step forward. Don't wait for the younger generation to participate. Probabilities reduce quickly with each passing generation.

2016 Newton/Varner Reunion

Details have been finalized for this year's reunion. The reunion will be held on Saturday, May 28th, 2016. The location has changed and the event will be held at:

Macks Creek Baptist Church
Fellowship Hall
Macks Creek, MO. 65786

The hall will open at 10:00am with most folks arriving sometime before lunch.

With this change of location to Macks Creek, there should be a number of additional folks in attendance.

You will notice that I have not provided an exact address for the church. This was done on purpose. It appears that the address for this church directs you to a location about 3 miles south of the actual church, when using Google Maps or Google Earth. So please use your navigation system or any other method to find your way to Macks Creek, not the church itself. Then follow the below directions. The church is only about a block east of downtown Macks Creek on Highway 54 at N Road.

Directions are as follows:

The Baptist church is located at the junction of N Road & Highway 54. On the south side of the Highway.

If travelling west on 54, the church will be just before you reach the Mack Creek turn off, on the left (South) side of the Highway.

If travelling east on Highway 54, come east on Highway 54 into Macks Creek. The church will be on the right (South) side of the Highway, just after you pass the town.

Please contribute to the discussion. Even if you think that your detail or input might not be important! The smallest detail might the bit of

information that allows other researchers to fine a missing link!

Spring Is Around The Corner.....

Bruce Varner

/See Chart Below/

Start	parent	grandparent	1st great-grandparent	2nd great-grandparent	3rd great-grandparent	4th great-grandparent	5th great-grandparent	6th great-grandparent	7th great-grandparent
parent	Sibling 50.000%	25.000%	12.500%	6.250%	3.125%	1.563%	0.781%	0.391%	0.195%
grandparent	25.000%	1 st Cousin 12.500%	6.250%	3.125%	1.563%	0.781%	0.391%	0.195%	0.098%
1st great-grandparent	12.500%	6.250%	2 nd Cousin 3.125%	1.563%	0.781%	0.391%	0.195%	0.098%	0.049%
2nd great-grandparent	6.250%	3.125%	1.563%	3 rd Cousin 0.781%	0.391%	0.195%	0.098%	0.049%	0.024%
3rd great-grandparent	3.125%	1.563%	0.781%	0.391%	4 th Cousin 0.195%	0.098%	0.049%	0.024%	0.012%
4th great-grandparent	1.563%	0.781%	0.391%	0.195%	0.098%	5 th Cousin 0.049%	0.024%	0.012%	0.006%
5th great-grandparent	0.781%	0.391%	0.195%	0.098%	0.049%	0.024%	6 th Cousin 0.012%	0.006%	0.003%
6th great-grandparent	0.391%	0.195%	0.098%	0.049%	0.024%	0.012%	0.006%	7 th Cousin 0.003%	0.002%
7th great-grandparent	0.195%	0.098%	0.049%	0.024%	0.012%	0.006%	0.003%	0.002%	8 th Cousin 0.001%