

Fall 2014

# CHAP

CHRISTIAN HOMESCHOOL ASSOCIATION OF PENNSYLVANIA



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# On Board with CHAP

**“If I have seen further it is by standing on the shoulders of giants.”** - Sir Isaac Newton c. 1676

Think about it. A little over 25 years ago, homeschooling was not mainstream. We have the privilege of working with parents (who are now grandparents) and first generation homeschoolers who suffered persecution and fought because they were convicted by God to homeschool their children – in some cases before it was legal. These were the pioneers of the American homeschool movement. They fought hard to get the first homeschool law of the land. They did what they were called to do, as they followed their consciences. They exercised religious liberty as the homeschool pilgrims of our time and paved the way for those that followed. Did you realize some of these people are still serving CHAP today?

Today we live in an exciting time because homeschooling is so widespread, yet we are on the brink of losing our unique identity. There are so many choices and ways to home educate that it can make your head spin, but are we getting too comfortable and complacent? We think private homeschooling will always be an option available to us, our children, and our children’s children, but will it?

How can we ensure the liberties that we enjoy today will extend for our children into the future? Are we watching to be sure that Uncle Sam and our state governments don’t trample our liberties when amending the law?

While you are involved in the daily grind, CHAP has got your back!

CHAP’s Mission states: In order to bring glory to God, the Christian Homeschool Association of Pennsylvania (CHAP) is dedicated to:

- Promoting Christ-centered, parent-directed, privately funded, home-based discipleship.
- Providing resources which inform, encourage, and equip homeschool families.
- Protecting the God-given right of parents to homeschool.

## **The Goals of CHAP are:**

- To inform and educate the general public on the benefits of homeschooling.
- To strengthen and equip home educators.
- To foster homeschooling in local churches.
- To inform current and potential homeschoolers of regulations which affect them.
- To strengthen and equip support groups and their leaders.
- To foster homeschooling by educating political leaders on the local, state, and federal levels.

CHAP also works closely with HSLDA (Homeschool Legal Defense Association) and NHERI (National Home Education Research Institute); both defend and protect homeschoolers nationally and internationally. Our CHAP Board Chairman, Dr. Bruce Eagleson, is also the Chairman of the National Alliance of Christian Home Education Leadership. CHAP volunteers are well networked and working on your behalf throughout the nation and the world.

Who is CHAP? CHAP is composed of individual families like yours and mine. We all have something to contribute. To achieve the above goals, it takes many hands and commitment. It takes stretching our limits and trusting God with our resources (such as time, talent, and treasure) to make this mission not just survive, but thrive!

## **How can you get involved?**

- Pray about what God would have you do.
- Stay informed. “Like” on Facebook. Don’t let Facebook hide CHAP from your newsfeed. After you “Like,” click the dropdown arrow next to “Liked” and then click “Add to Interest Lists.” Thanks for sharing the posts!
- Volunteer. Look for opportunities at [www.CHAPONline.com](http://www.CHAPONline.com) and in this magazine. If you are not sure where you gifts might fit, call the CHAP office to inquire about where you can help.
- Support events. Finance CHAP by attending the Convention held annually on the second full weekend of May at the

Pennsylvania Farm Show Complex in Harrisburg. The Convention helps to fund the mission and vision of CHAP. (There are for-profit conventions, but they do not make effective change in Pennsylvania. Do your research and use your dollars wisely.) Attend other events as you are able.

- Support CHAP by ordering from the online store. CHAP retains a portion of the fee, and it is a good way to spread the news that CHAP is here as a support network. You can also purchase mp3s or CDs from previous CHAP Conventions. Did you know that CHAP has a license plate?



As individuals, we have had the honor of serving CHAP as Convention volunteers for the past eight years and more recently as Advisory Board members. We have attended the HELP (Home Education Lobby Program) Day in Harrisburg with our kids and lobbied for House Bill 1013.

CHAP volunteers are on the front lines supporting, defending, and expanding the possibilities for Christ-centered, parent-directed, privately funded, home-based discipleship and education in Pennsylvania.

Do whatever you can do, but no matter what, get involved with CHAP!

*Patrick and Maria Pietrak live in Southeastern Pennsylvania and are first-generation home educators for over 11 years. Their four children range from twenty-something to early teens. As a family they experienced the educational options of private, public, and cyber charter schools prior to learning about privately-funded, home-based discipleship in 2003. By the grace of God home education has transformed their family life. Patrick and Maria currently serve on the CHAP Board.*

# Side by Side in Pennsylvania

**Parents:** Ryan & Danielle Fasnacht

**Children:** Truth, Quinn, Graham, Everett, Israel, Aurora, Selah, Jeziryah

**Hometown:** Mount Joy, PA

## **How long have you been homeschooling? What was one of the main reasons you chose to homeschool?**

We had a couple false starts to our homeschool journey. We would homeschool part of a school year then end up enrolling the children in public school. Last year was our first official full year. The main reason we decided to homeschool was to better accommodate our children's extra needs.

## **In what activities does your family participate?**

Our children enjoy organized sports, camp activities, and group play dates. They also love being involved in our church environment.

## **What have been your most helpful resources?**

Other homeschooling families! Knowing that we can turn to them with any questions or concerns about how our year is going is just fantastic.

## **What educational philosophy/curriculum do you follow?**

We do not follow a curriculum. We prefer to allow our children to explore their interests and do much more hands-on learning. We work a lot with future life skills and concentrate on their ability to form meaningful, healthy relationships.

## **What has been one of the highlights for you in homeschooling your children?**

One of the highlights for us in homeschooling our children is getting all that time with them! Yes, it can be draining and occasionally overwhelming, but it is an amazing opportunity to see our children grow right in front of us.

## **What was your favorite field trip?**

Our favorite field trips of this past year had to be

exploring what the cities around us had to offer.

## **What are some of your best homeschooling memories?**

One of my silliest memories from this past year was watching our son Israel (5) struggle with a Bible assignment. We were discussing Noah's ark and he was just so confused how the animals got onto the ark. We thought this was a great question until he went on to say, "See, look at the picture. The elephants are NOT walking!" He was confused because the illustration showed elephants standing outside the ark. His little mind could not figure out how we had elephants today because they had not gotten into the ark.

## **What have you found to be a challenge in homeschooling? Any tips in dealing with that challenge?**

The most challenging aspect for our homeschooling day is accommodating our children's extra needs. All six of our school aged children have some form of a special need, all resulting in educational difficulty. Finding enough of me to teach them on their level is often a struggle. Without a large dose of Jesus, this could not be our path.

## **What advice would you give someone who has just begun homeschooling?**

It is perfectly acceptable to do it differently from everyone else around you! Do not allow yourself to compare your system to your friends' systems.

— *Compiled by Rebekah Burcham*



# Using 3-Ring Binders To Tame The Paper Monster



**If you're like me, managing the piles of papers that accumulate can be a challenge.** I find that having order in my home helps me accomplish a lot more and stay sane! One solution I really like is using 3-ring binders.

A favorite saying at my house is: *A place for everything and everything in its place*

I like having all of the papers I need for a particular activity in one place, neatly organized, and easy to access. If you have a place to put papers, it's easier to deal with them when more come in. Be sure to label the spines of each notebook so you know at a glance what is in each one. If you're using clear view binders, you can also create a personalized cover for each notebook on the computer or have your kids draw pictures to create their own covers.

Here are a few ideas for using this great organization tool to help you tame the paper monster in your home:

## **SCHOOLWORK**

Create a notebook for each child's schoolwork with a divider tab for each subject. A large 2.5" or 3" binder works well for this. Or create a smaller notebook for each subject. Older children can even do their own filing!

## **HOME MANAGEMENT**

Create a notebook for yourself with divider tabs for things you deal with on a regular basis: to-do lists, home repair list, errands you need to run, important documents, etc. We even have one larger notebook for all of the manuals that come with household items we've purchased.

## **MEAL PLANNING**

Make a notebook for menu planning, grocery shopping lists, and coupons. I find that having a 3-ring binder for recipes is

incredibly helpful. I keep one in the kitchen that has a bunch of extra plastic page protectors in it. This gives me a place to quickly and easily store recipes that I come across in magazines or online that I print out.

## **EXTRACURRICULARS**

Make notebooks for your extracurricular and church activities.

## **ADDRESS BOOK**

Include a printout of your friends and family with their contact information. Before I got a smartphone, my address book was a great place to keep MapQuest or Google maps that I had printed to people's homes or businesses so I had directions stored in one easy-to-find location. Now Siri helps me get to where I need to go, but when I need a printed map that I might use again, I do file it in my address book. I also keep business cards I want to save in this notebook using special business card plastic page protectors.

## **PLACES TO GO**

Keep brochures and information from local attractions like museums, amusement parks, ice skating rinks, etc., in plastic page protectors in a 3-ring binder. This becomes a great reference when you're looking for a fun place to take the kids or when planning birthday parties or field trips.

The possibilities for using 3-ring binders are endless!

*Nancy Manos and her husband James live in Chandler, Arizona, and have two daughters whom they homeschooled through high school. The Manos' home education journey was a rich, rewarding, sometimes challenging experience, and Nancy is passionate about encouraging others in the home-school adventure. Nancy and James have served on the board of directors for Arizona Families for Home Education (AFHE) since 2004.*

[www.nancymanos.com](http://www.nancymanos.com) - [www.afhe.org](http://www.afhe.org)

# Honor:

## More than Just the Fourth Commandment



**Honor changes families.** It changes how they think, how they feel, and how they act. In fact honor provides the ground rules for any homeschool. The story of Kathy McDonald illustrates it well.

Kathy has a four-year-old daughter named Jill. Although Jill is bright and Mom is already teaching her how to read, Jill had a problem with complaining: “I can’t find my jump rope,” “I’m bored,” “Nobody wants to play with me,” “I don’t want this sandwich,” and on and on. Kathy also developed a bad habit of nagging. “You’re going to be late,” “Close your mouth when you eat,” “Your shirt’s dirty.”

Kathy didn’t like what she saw in herself. “I focused so much on my daughter’s complaining that I didn’t realize how much I was nagging. Seeing our negative patterns discouraged me. I began to make changes, though, and became a more honoring mom without sacrificing my firmness with my daughter.” Kathy set limits for Jill, gave clear instructions, and followed through. As a result Kathy was able to stop nagging. “I could then show Jill how to honor me in return. I explained to her that complaining is dishonoring and that no one wants to listen to that kind of moaning and groaning. I taught Jill how to talk about problems in a more constructive way. Honor’s done a tremendous amount for our relationship.”

Maybe you’re a little like Kathy. You recognize that teaching children to follow directions and develop good manners isn’t enough. You want something that goes deeper and has lasting results. Likely you can see some ways that relationships in your family could improve. We like to say, “Honor is like the oil in a machine, making it possible for the job to get done with less friction and less conflict.”

Honor can be defined this way: Treating people as special, doing more than what’s expected, and having a good attitude.

Honor adds that little bit of grace that transforms family life. It focuses on others and produces stronger relationships. Honor

motivates parents to treat children differently. It gives children more constructive ways to interact with parents. It helps siblings develop tolerance, patience, and thoughtfulness. Honor builds strong bonds that, in turn, benefit all members of the family.

### Why Honor is Needed

Parents may think that the negative behaviors they see in their child are indications of simply a stage the child will outgrow. Unfortunately instead of growing out of bad patterns, children actually grow into them. If not counteracted, selfish habits will simply become more common.

Of course children are not the only ones who struggle with selfishness. Parents are often surprised by their own selfish tendencies. One dad put it this way, “I used to think I was a pretty good person, then I got married. That required sacrifice and revealed a lot of my own selfishness. But that was nothing compared to having kids! I now wrestle with selfishness on a much larger scale!” When self-centeredness increases, it’s no wonder that certain behaviors like yelling, arguing, teasing, defiance, bad attitudes, bickering, and anger become a lifestyle. Unchecked selfishness creates multiple problems resulting in tension and distance in relationships. Honor counteracts that because it focuses on others, recognizing their value.

One father of six children said this, “Families are made up of imperfect people. From infants to adults, each person has a tendency to make selfish choices. We’ve learned, though, that for every form of selfishness in a family there’s an honor-based solution. Honor values others in tangible ways. Sure confrontation is still necessary, and discipline still takes work; but we’ve discovered that honor is an excellent and refreshing way to motivate children, enhance family life, and bring closeness to relationships.”

Success is more than just having two cars, a nice house, a dog, and 2.5 children. It has to do with character development and how equipped family members are to relate to others outside the family. It involves creating homes where children and adults



are able to make mistakes and learn from them, to grow emotionally and relationally with each other. Even families that have split apart or suffered significant wounds can develop the qualities necessary to be successful. Single-parent families, blended families, and reconstructed families are all finding real solutions through honor.

Eight times the Bible tells children to honor their mother and father. That's because God wants honor to be learned in family life. In fact God has hidden within family life the secret ingredients that help children be successful both now and for the future.

### **Honor is More Than Just Respectful Behavior**

When families think about honor, they often restrict their thinking to respectful behavior: being polite, courteous, and having good manners. This is a narrow understanding and is only a small portion of what honor actually is. Respectful behavior, although a subset of honor, is incomplete by itself. For example, Susie learned manners at an early age. "What a nice girl," people said. Susie learned acceptable behavior, but as she got older she rebelled against the rules, finding them empty and overly restrictive. Teaching respect is not enough. When only respect is emphasized in family life, it leads to outer conformity, false intimacy, and eventually distant relationships.

It's one thing to obey a crossing guard out of respect for the position; it's yet another to show honor to that crossing guard because of friendship.

Respect acknowledges a person's position; honor attaches worth to that person as an individual.

Respect teaches manners and proper behavior in the presence of others; honor teaches an appreciation of that person.

Respect can become a technique to make a family look good on the outside; honor builds the hidden bonds that provide strength and lasting unity.

Both honor and respect have their place. When children are young, they learn respectful behavior. As they grow older, they can develop a heart response of honor as well. It's good to teach respectful behavior, but it's important not to stop there. Honor adds a deeper dimension to relationships.

### **It Means That We Think Differently**

When families catch a vision for honor, they begin to think differently. The dad who gets up in the morning and sees his son's underwear on the bathroom floor again, stops to think before he starts yelling. "How can I respond with honor here?" he asks himself. Yelling is not honoring. A teenager begins to see that disrespect and sarcasm don't feel right anymore. Those methods of communication aren't consistent with who he is now. As individuals learn to honor one another, they begin to see life differently. Every situation is now an opportunity to value others. Honor and dishonor begin to stand out, and family members choose their actions and responses more carefully.

Honor changes *how* family members interact. Emotions are handled differently. The family develops new conflict-management skills. Teasing and joking are limited when they become hurtful. The family becomes a place where people value each other and appreciate strengths. When individuals show weaknesses, they receive encouragement instead of ridicule or harsh criticism. Honor teaches us to view our families differently. We just can't live those old ways anymore. We've learned that each person has value and that we all do better and enjoy life more when honor is demonstrated.

*Dr. Scott Turansky and Joanne Miller, RN, BSN are the co-founders of the National Center for Biblical Parenting. Both the Millers and the Turanskys homeschooled their children who are all grown now. They have published several books; one in particular is all about teaching your family honor. It's called, Say Goodbye to Whining, Complaining, and Bad Attitudes...In You and Your Kids. You may reach them on the web at [www.biblicalparenting.org](http://www.biblicalparenting.org).*

**I have to confess, I never wanted to homeschool.** The thought never entered my mind. I anxiously anticipated the day my girls would enter school. I daydreamed over what I would do with myself during that time. I happily waved as the bus drove away...

Both of my older girls were developmentally delayed and qualified for early intervention services. I attended the IEP meetings and sat in on the testing. I became versed in the process. I thought that it was the right way. I played the watchdog, I volunteered, and I wondered why they weren't doing better academically. Once I spoke to the principal and he strongly suspected that my oldest daughter would never read. I was devastated! It just didn't make sense to me. Despite her autism she seemed so bright.

*"For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength." (1 Corinthians 1:25)*

Fast-forward several years. My daughters were now in fifth and second grade, in a different school, in a different state. I met my very first homeschooler in Virginia. I thought the idea was strange and that she was slightly weird...yet intriguing. She

informed me of this strange and growing movement called homeschooling, where parents actually kept their children home to educate them!

I asked all the questions that homeschoolers detest (i.e: "What about socialization?"). I watched her children closely. They seemed like normal children, but the idea scared me. I said to the mom that it was commendable that she could do that, but I never could – I just didn't have enough patience. Yet the idea nagged at me. I began to argue with God: "Was He crazy? Did He know that I was a poor student? I graduated from high school with mediocre grades; did God remember this?"

I talked to my husband about homeschooling; surely he would bail me out. No, he thought the idea was wonderful. Of course it would sound wonderful to him! I would be the one who just might ruin our children! By this time I was wondering if I would have to purchase a referee shirt because of all the fights I'd have to break up! I wistfully thought about the big yellow bus...

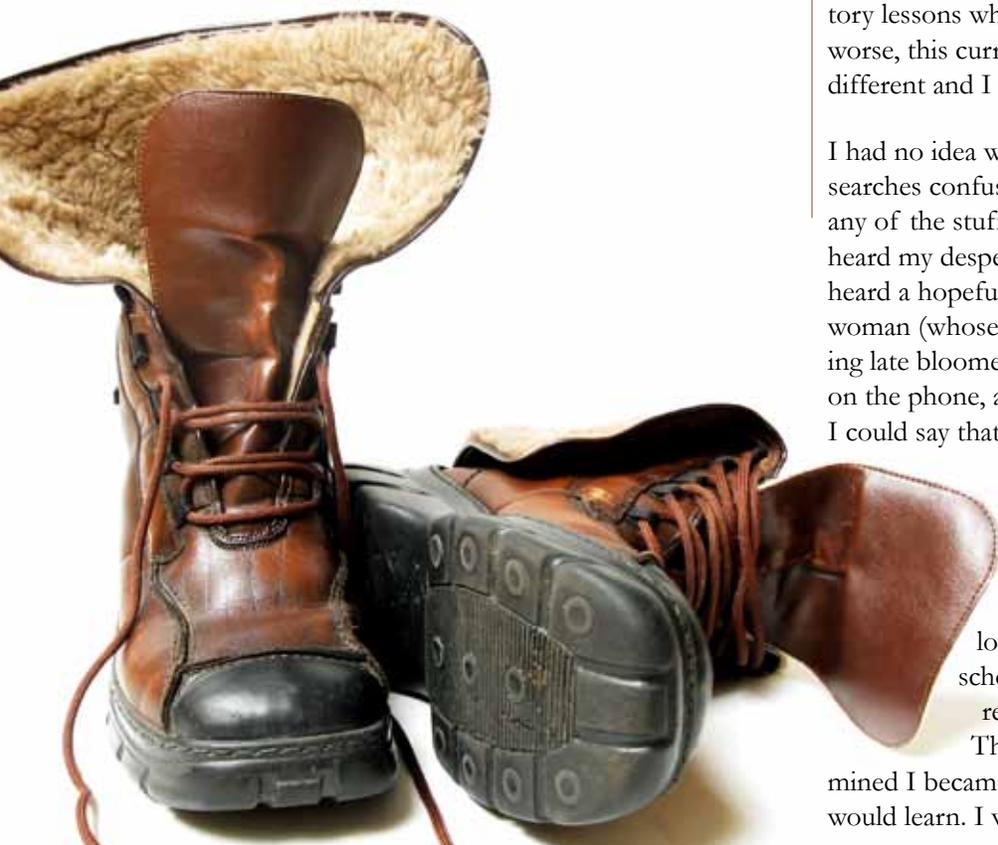
It seemed plausible that I wouldn't do any worse than what the school was doing. I was given my first curriculum. It was a disaster! My daughters were not ready for third grade by any stretch of the imagination. It is very difficult to complete history lessons when you are unable to read, and to make matters worse, this curriculum was workbooks. I needed something different and I needed it fast.

I had no idea who to call and no idea where to turn. Google searches confused me more. Moreover I had no money to buy any of the stuff I thought would benefit my girls. Father God heard my desperate cry; I listened to Focus on the Family® and heard a hopeful discussion between Dr. James Dobson and a woman (whose name I have long forgotten). It was about teaching late bloomers how to read. I called the 800 number, cried on the phone, and received a reading curriculum for free! I wish I could say that this amazing gift was just what I needed, but it was not. It was a horrible failure, but now I was invested. There had to be something that could help my girls.

My extended family thought I had completely lost my senses and should return the girls to public school before any real damage could happen. A relative insinuated that abuse might even occur. The more they pushed against me, the more determined I became. I would pour my life into my children. They would learn. I would teach them.

*"But they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint." (Isaiah 40:31, ESV)*

In my search for materials and how to use them, I found a cop support group. I spoke to the leader and she guided me in



# My Story:

## A Homeschooling Journey

my journey. At the time, my youngest was angry with the notion of homeschooling; she missed her friends and teacher, and resented me for her new predicament. She used every opportunity to frustrate my efforts and undermine my authority. She was only seven.

One day while trying to talk on the phone with this dear lady, my little heathen began her relentless screaming at me. The woman quietly told me that she would wait while I corrected her. I was stunned. It hadn't occurred to me to correct her behavior. I was simply trying to ignore it in the hope that it would go away, but this quiet comment reminded me that my daughter's behavior was inexcusable. I then began to focus on character traits and began each day with Bible and prayer. Though the behavior training took about two years to adjust, this was the beginning of our steps towards learning together.

In two years my girls, though still academically delayed, were working well with unit studies, and we adjusted curriculum as needed. I found that when I expected more from my girls, they worked harder to reach that expectation. If my goals were low, they did not stretch. The balance was expecting enough without expecting too much.

As a soldier my husband was deployed a lot. The girls and I did everything together. It was during this time that I missed public school the most. I use to grocery shop during the day while they were in school. Now I was the school. I had to discover how to get the groceries without them constantly putting things into the cart that weren't on the list! I don't recall where the idea came from anymore, but one day I decided to divide the list into three parts. They had to read the list and find the item. Then they deposited the item in my cart. The scheme worked perfectly! The girls were happy to help and better yet I was able to stay within my budget. However it did take more time.

I devised a way to make grocery shopping more educational. I added coupons to the girls' list. They had to utilize coupons and comparative shop to discern whether or not the coupon was a true savings. They also had to weigh the produce and speak to the deli lady to order the lunchmeat. This addition took the better part of the morning, but the dividends of that experience was priceless. The girls became versed in comparison shopping, calculating prices, and learned how to speak to adults. I will never forget while overseeing my oldest ordering lunchmeat, a lady turned to me to compliment me on their respectful behavior. It had happened so gradually I had just come to expect them to behave properly. But she was right. My girls had changed from the heathen that I feared into well-behaved young ladies. Don't get me wrong, they were still tricky but the hostility was gone.

*"For I know the plans that I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope."  
(Jeremiah 29:11, NASV)*

In the spring of 2008 my husband retired from the army and moved us back to our home of record – Pennsylvania. One might think that I would be excited to be home with friends and family, but I was not. Pennsylvania is the second most restrictive state in the Union and articles have been written in HSLDA about the hostility of school districts toward homeschoolers. Moreover my older daughters were not the stellar homeschooled children that received high honors academically. Indeed, academically, they were way below grade level; making progress, yes, but in the eyes of a bureaucrat...well, let's just say that I was filled with anxiety.

I dreaded the move. I hated the fact that I knew it was the right thing to do. I prayed for better opportunities in North Carolina. Then in May 2008 we moved. During the next three years I learned to trust God like never before. My extended family was concerned about the socialization of my girls, reminding me of my need for homeschool support. However we could not afford any of the co-ops that I checked into. STARS was the only co-op that we could afford. It had an amazingly low cost per family per year. I did not have to worry about any of the rigorous academics that other co-ops touted, nor did I have to purchase any additional curriculum. I simply had to show up. It was there that we gained acceptance and new friends.

*"For it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure. Do all things without grumbling or disputing; so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world," (Philippians 2:13-15, ESV)*

Today I am the veteran homeschooler. I am familiar with all sorts of curriculum and know enough to offer advice. My older daughters are graduated. The oldest, whom the principal believed would never read, attends Harrisburg Area Community College. My second daughter, who is dyslexic, assists me at home with homeschooling my youngest. She helps teach English. I still hate Pennsylvania homeschool law, but it has taught me how to create wonderful documents. I dare say my documents are exquisite!

Interestingly my homeschool itself hasn't changed much. I am asked the same old questions. The ones I myself asked. When they say, "I could never homeschool. I am not patient enough, smart enough, creative enough, or \_\_\_\_\_," I smile. I try to find out if the statements are an excuse or genuine fear, because I am not patient, smart, creative, or \_\_\_\_\_. It is He who is in me, not me at all. I have learned that I can place my entire trust in Him, because Jesus is faithful.

*Denise Phillips is a veteran military wife, leader of a STARS Home-school Co-op in Harrisburg, and a student of Liberty University studying Christian Counseling. She also volunteers for the Homeschool Foundation. Denise and David have graduated two daughters and still homeschool a nine-year-old daughter from China.*

# Be a Homeschool Tailor

## Embrace the Challenge

Fifteen years into my homeschool journey I am more aware than ever that this educational choice offers the advantage of launching our children into meaningful adult lives. Although many aspects of parenting contribute to this goal, I assert that embracing the challenge of tailoring an educational program that fits each child yields powerful results.

## Avoid One Size Fits All

As homeschoolers we desire that our children enjoy a unique experience, but we often fall into the conformity trap due to our human tendency to look at other families and copy them. Although checking out what others are doing benefits us by alerting us to great ideas, it must never narrow our focus so that we miss out on what our kids need.

Heidi Anderson, a Harrisburg resident who homeschools three children ages 6, 12, and 14, claims, “While it’s helpful to hear how a certain method is working for a friend’s homeschool, I can get caught in the comparison trap, so I try to remember that God has made each homeschool unique. We are all pioneers who follow the path God has marked out for us, asking Him for wisdom.”

## Watch for the Sparkle

Gone are the days of tailors to whom one would go for the manufacture of perfectly designed garments. The curriculum packages available to us today contain rich materials, but sometimes using them without alteration doesn’t satisfy the learning sparkle in our child’s eye. I made that mistake early on with my first child who, when he opened the box of books I purchased for his school year, actually began to cry. I was horrified: “What’s wrong, Luke?” “Mom, look at all the books!” he wailed. “They’ve been picked for me already!” So that year we selected certain titles to be his assigned reading and allowed him to choose the rest by browsing through the local library stacks. For all of his elementary years, he learned history through the lens of war and weapons.



## Trust Your Instincts

We are in charge of how we use the curriculum that we buy. We research. We make wise purchases, but then we test it all in real life and find we must modify what we chose. As I gained confidence, I took a permanent marker to the syllabus that came with each course and, as the school year progressed, liberally crossed-out assignments. This approach may seem counter-intuitive, but it keeps us free to pursue our path.

Kelly Cloak from New Cumberland, who is a homeschooling mom of four, asserts, “You know your kiddos better than any curriculum company. Don’t be afraid to listen to your instincts. Don’t get discouraged because you’re not keeping up or checking all the boxes. Have fun! Sometimes it’s better to head to the creek and play.”

## Limit Hand-Me-Downs

As each new school year begins I find myself craving sameness, but each of my children needs a different program every year. I may envy the institutional schoolteacher who always teaches the same curriculum to the same grade, but that doesn’t match our homeschool world. Not only does each child grow up to attack new subjects, the younger siblings reach the new grade and can’t use the same materials. We keep some resources to hand down, but others must be shelved or sold. It is not fair to coast for those kids coming along after their siblings.

My second daughter despised books about war, battles, and historical fiction, so I assigned her a handful of historical titles and searched for other options. She loves Shakespeare plays, fantasy novels, and difficult classics like *Oliver Twist*. Our youngest daughter loves photography, hands-on projects, and audio books, so her program looks radically different from her sister, who is just fourteen months older.

## Enjoy Discovering Design

Watching for signs of their uniqueness and helping our kids uncover their talents is a joy we experience as homeschoolers.

What a privilege to match up their interests and schoolwork. Our parental eyes can detect early signs of gifting and find ways to develop it through curriculum, hands-on learning, service projects, field trips, and work experience. Evidence of a child’s design is found not only in excellent performance, but also by the amount of time a child chooses to spend at an activity.

## Empower Your Teen

My oldest child (now twenty) is a talented filmmaker with his own business. His interest in cinematography surfaced at age thirteen. He spent hours on his craft. We helped to cultivate it throughout his high school years by arranging for an unpaid internship, designing high school courses in filmmaking, and simply giving him time to pursue his passion.

In their groundbreaking book *Do Hard Things*, authors Alex and Brett Harris describe the importance of discovering life passions: “The teen years are not a vacation from responsibility. They are a training ground of future leaders who dare to be responsible now. At no other time are we better positioned to decide who we will become. Our strength – sharp minds, energetic bodies, and flexible schedules – is our glory. We are not likely to have this same set of strengths ever again. By choosing to use our teen years for strict training, we can choose to set direction, develop character, and build momentum for an amazing future.”

## Keep the Focus on Tailoring

Listen to what others are doing to learn about options, but resist the impulse to make plans that don’t fit your family. Research the variety of curriculum options, make choices, and then fearlessly cut and snip to modify. Give your kids freedom to find resources that grab their attention and offer them ample time to explore what they choose. Expose your students to as much as possible, using field trips, lessons, contests, service projects, internships, small business ventures, church involvement, and sports teams. Free up time in their schedules to focus on an interest. What an immensely satisfying privilege to adapt education to be “just right” for each of your children!

*Laure Covert is a freelance writer who blogs on literacy and inspiration for living: [www.pineneedlesandpapertrails.com](http://www.pineneedlesandpapertrails.com) and <http://bluebird-salwaysfly.wordpress.com>. Laure and her husband Glenn make their home in Harrisburg, PA. This year they are homeschooling just two teen girls, since their oldest has already graduated!*



**We have entered a season of loss.** My husband's stepfather died after having a massive stroke. He was nearly 91 years old and had dementia, so his passing was not unexpected. We traveled to Florida for the funeral, and the day after we returned our son-in-law's younger brother died in an accidental drowning. The grief at his loss is heavy and painful, in part because of the shock of it being so unexpected.

There are times when we have no words to express to the Lord what is on our hearts. Romans 8:26 (ESV) states, "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words." This is where we are at this time. We are saying to the Lord, "We don't know how to pray in this situation. Help us." We know He is faithful and good; His mercies are new every morning.

When the unexpected happens, when we get a diagnosis we didn't want to hear, when we are caring for elderly parents, when we have children who are ill with serious medical conditions, it's so good to know that we can turn to the Lord to help

us. One of the ways He helps us is through our brothers and sisters in Christ. We are seeing the reality of the body of Christ as it reaches out to our in-laws with meals, prayer, financial help for the burial, and the list goes on. Many have experienced their own grief and can therefore share the comfort that comes from knowing the same kind of pain.

II Corinthians 1:3-4 (ESV) says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God."

How wise and good God is to care for us through others who have gone through trouble, and use them to comfort us. How humbling it is to know that He has allowed our pain, in part, so that we too may comfort others.

Before we start each school year, I ask the Lord to prepare us for the year ahead. We don't know what it might be, but the Lord usually has something ahead for us. One year it was the loss of my grandmother. Last year it was the marriage of

our oldest daughter. This year our second daughter is headed to a Bible school in South Carolina. This will be a huge change for our family! We are going to need to rely on the Lord in this too, trusting her to His care. We know we can because He has shown Himself to be faithful.

When my husband and I were in Bible school one of our instructors told us "The Lord always prepares you for what He has prepared for you." That phrase has stayed with me all these years, and I have found it to be true.

As we all begin this new year of home education, I am praying that we will all keep our eyes on Jesus; that we will remember we don't know what tomorrow will bring, but we do know Who holds the future.

*Deanna and Tim Rabe have been home educators for 20 years. They were involved in co-op leadership for many years, served on their county homeschool board, and have been long time CHAP Convention volunteers. A delight to Deanna's heart is in mentoring and encouraging home educating moms. She has six children, three who are homeschool graduates, and three who are still being homeschooled.*

**Geography is a subject that is easy to teach and fun to study.** All you need is a good atlas, some simple outline maps, and whatever curriculum you are already using for history and science. Science? If you're thinking there may be an error here, let me set you straight—yes, science! You see, geography is much more than simply knowing WHERE a place is located on a map or memorizing states and capitals.

Let's take a look at the definition as stated by the National Geographic Society:

**GEOGRAPHY:** *A knowledge of place names, location of cultural and physical features, distribution and patterns of languages, religions, and physical phenomena, such as tectonic activity, land form, climate, bodies of water, soils, flora and fauna. The changes in places and areas through time, including how people have modified the environment. Cartographers' tools, such as maps, instruments, graphs and statistics, are also a part of geography.*

Since the study of geography has so many facets, you can easily integrate it into your current curriculum. When studying plate tectonics, erosion, volcanoes, or weather in science, pull out an outline map and let your student depict the details of what you are learning on it. Weather maps are interesting projects to develop and so are see-through layered maps, made with clear plastic overhead projector sheets. Layer each sheet on top of the next exposing a different theme. It's great fun to make a salt dough map of the area you are studying in history.

Outline maps provide practical hands-on learning experiences for your students. Here are just a few of many ideas to get you started:

- Draw explorers' maps.
- Record biblical events on a map of Israel or the Middle East.
- Depict world empires on maps of Europe, ancient civilizations, etc.

Use maps whenever possible. From making vacation plans to reading the

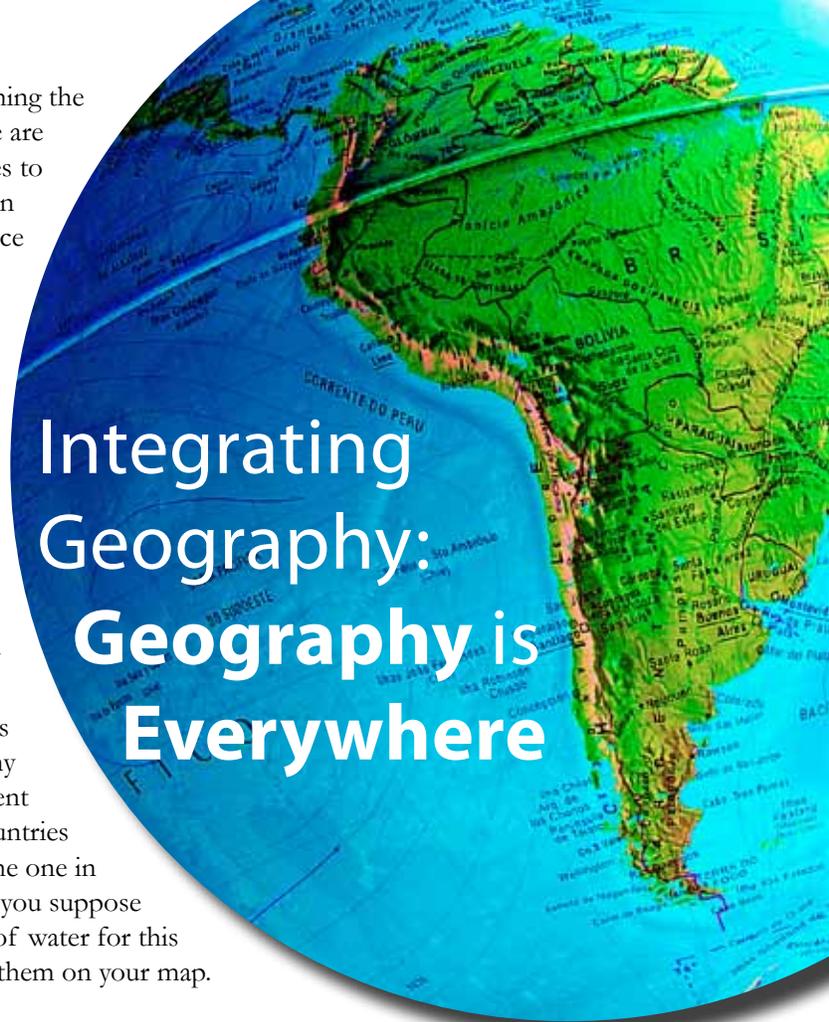
newspaper or watching the evening news, there are always opportunities to look up a place in an atlas. Seeing the place depicted on a map often improves the understanding of the event about which you are learning.

Ask questions of your students to develop their skills of observation and their ability to draw conclusions. Do the physical features of the place play any role in the news event reported? What countries (or states) border the one in question? What do you suppose is the main source of water for this community? Label them on your map.

Here are some important helpful hints to make adding a mapping assignment to your school day beneficial:

- Make sure your atlas is adequate and appropriate for the student's level and the assignment given. Does your student know how to use the atlas? A quick lesson will help alleviate frustration. Often good information on using the atlas is in the front of the atlas itself.
- Use color coding with colored pencils or colored pens to help clarify ages of history, types of mineral deposits, elevations in physical geography, etc.
- Sit with your student the first few times and encourage him with your help and direction.
- Allow plenty of time to get the job done right.
- Show off your student's maps whenever possible and praise him for his efforts.

Using the National Geographic Society definition of geography to enlighten your



## Integrating Geography: Geography is Everywhere

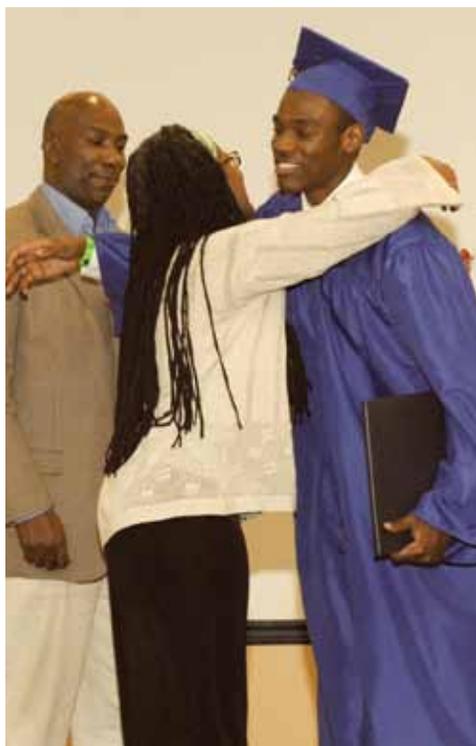
understanding of geography, challenge yourself to find creative “geography moments” throughout the school day. Your students will have an edge in understanding world affairs as they develop a fuller knowledge of geography.

*This article first appeared in the Summer 2013 Arizona Home Education Journal. It is printed with permission of the author.*

*Cindy Wiggers is an author, publisher, and national speaker. She established a family business Geography Matters with her husband in 1989. She has a heart to help parents inspire their children with a love for learning. Her workshop presentations are full of practical ideas from true-life experiences gained from homeschooling her three very different children and her intense desire to see homeschool families succeed beyond their hopes and dreams. Her interests include nutrition and fitness, spending time with her grandchildren, and engaging in adventure with friends. [www.geomatters.com](http://www.geomatters.com)*

# Graduation

# 2015



Friday, May 8<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM at the Farm Show Complex  
Registration deadline is February 15, 2015

Be recognized for your achievements, hard work, and answered prayers! The Christian Homeschool Association of Pennsylvania has once again decided to offer a graduation ceremony and would like to extend an invitation to all 2015 graduates to participate to honor your achievements.

Guests who are not registered to attend the CHAP Convention will be permitted to enter only the area of the Farm Show Complex for the graduation ceremony with no fee for entry. If they would like to enter the convention and vendor hall, they must register for the Convention. Please be aware that a parking fee may be requested from the Farm Show Complex. Parking fees are not in our control.

There will be a registration fee of \$50 for each graduate to take part in the graduation ceremony. The fee covers the rental of cap and gown, keepsake tassel, certificate of participation and folder from CHAP, program costs, and incidentals. We look forward to honoring this year's graduates and their parents publicly for their accomplishments along with giving the honor and glory to the Lord for all He has accomplished through us for educating our children under His authority. May God continue to give each of you (parents and graduates) the patience, diligence, and endurance to the run the race well! See you at the Finish Line!

More information will be available online at [www.chaponline.com](http://www.chaponline.com) under "Graduation"

Deadline for registering to be part of the 2015 CHAP Graduation Ceremony is February 15, 2015





# The Most Important Minute of Your Day

**God gives everyone on the planet (including homeschool parents) 1440 minutes every day, the most important of which is the very first one.** Get it right, and you've set a tone for the day of self-discipline and accomplishment. Get it wrong, and you've begun a pattern of failure and rationalization that continues through your school time and leaves you with regrets at the end of the day. Planning for a successful first minute can have a profound impact on the quality of your homeschool and your usefulness to God.

There are three things you must do in your first minute:

1. Wake Up
2. Get Up
3. Stay Up

## Wake Up

For many years my mornings began by counting the Boeing Aircraft numbers. I started at 7:27, hit the snooze till 7:37, repeating again at 7:47, and 7:57. Then I read a scripture from Proverbs, "As the door turns on its hinges, so does the lazy man on his bed."

I disconnected the snooze and put the clock on the other side of the room.

Now when the clock went off, I had to get up. Since I already determined the night before that "up" is where God wanted me to be at that time, I was now enabling myself to do the right thing. I was programming myself for a successful day.

Your first decision each day is not, "Should I get up now?" Again that was predetermined. The real question is, "Will I obey God right now?"

Remember, "Snoozers are losers." Five extra minutes of sleep between snooze alarms is not going to prevent you from being tired when it's time to start school. Practice "mind over mattress" and start immediately and enthusiastically.

## Get Up

When you wake up, get up! You have to break contact with the bed immediately! The clock on the other side of the room is a good starting place. Another tactic is using a natural alarm clock. Just drink a large glass of water right before you go to bed. Then when you wake up, you *will* get up!

If you still need help, make yourself accountable. Find another homeschool parent who needs to get up on time and

arrange for a 20 second morning wake-up call every school day. There are two times you can get up: When you really *want* to and when you really *have* to. Creating a situation where you really have to get up and answer to someone is a great way to become accountable and to encourage one another to do the right thing.

Whatever you do, don't rationalize planning your school day or having your devotions in bed. The only thing you will meditate on will be the back side of your eyelids.

Don't hesitate, procrastinate, cogitate, or marinate. Just initiate!

## Stay Up

Your bed is like a giant electromagnet, with a force stronger than a garlic milkshake, pulling you back into it. You disable that force by quickly covering it with a bedspread. Until you do, you are vulnerable to falling back in bed.

As believers we also have a powerful weapon in the Word of God. Memorize scriptures related to your morning struggle or print them out and post them by your bed. Here are a few:

*Continued on page 17*



**I was born and raised in a Christian home with parents who took their faith and commitment to family very seriously.** They taught me the practical life skills needed to succeed and passed on their character and spiritual wisdom. I knew that I had no excuse not to pass on these skills to my children, but I wasn't intentionally teaching them to love God and to live a God-honoring life. I was too distracted with the struggles and busyness of everyday life. Being a mom was not fun, it was *hard*.

I was living to get my children through to the next day, just trying to survive. They would need many skills beyond academics to function as independent adults when they left my home and were on their own, but was I preparing them?

Unfortunately in today's society this lack of basic life skills in young adults is all too commonplace. Credit card debt and financial mismanagement is a big issue. Even in some overseas mission houses, the lack of cleanliness, poor eating habits, and basic communication skills are strikingly absent among young adult missionaries. With regard to relationships, the sad statistics determined by The Barna Group in a 2007 study<sup>1</sup> show that the rate of divorce is the same among the general public as it is with Christians. Another horrifying statistic is that one out of every four Christian couples experiences at least one episode of physical abuse within their marriage.<sup>2</sup> I knew I didn't want my children to fall into these statistics!

Deuteronomy 6:5-7 convicted me: "Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up." In speaking to other families, I realized that I was not alone. There was a real need for accountability and consistency in teaching lifelong practical skills to our children. Just think what impact we as Christians could have on society if we actually lived out our faith in our homes in the practical ways in which God intended.

There are many groups and activities that help children to develop. Church, Sunday School, and AWANA teach Bible stories, verse memorization, biblical wisdom, theology, and worship. Homeschool curriculums and co-ops teach academics and the arts to prepare for future employment and give intellectual and creative knowledge. Townships, counties, and other organizations provide sports training and teams for physical development. There are also various clubs like the Girl Scouts that encourage social interaction and community service. But I found nothing that focused on intentionally passing on life skills, relationship wisdom, and character development from a biblical perspective. *These* are ultimately the most important areas of my children's lives.

As parents it is our responsibility to prepare our children to launch from our homes and to bloom where they are planted.

We must take preventive measures to teach our children:

- How to find fulfillment as children of God and not in other people.
- What to look for in a lifelong mate.
- How to have a good relationship and know when to get out of a bad one.
- How to surround themselves with friends who will support and challenge them biblically.
- How to maintain a peaceful and organized home and life.
- How to set priorities.
- How to reach outside of themselves to serve others.

In the past these skills, ideals, and morals were passed down through the generations by children observing their grandparents and parents and helping them to care for their homes and each other. In our fast-paced, technological society, difficult home situations and extended families living far apart prevent this from happening naturally. Busy schedules of both children and parents permit much less time to teach specific practical skills like budgeting, healthy living and food preparation, home maintenance, and much more. It's easier for moms to just do it themselves.

From these convictions and meditations *Bloom Club* was formed. This gathering of women and girls to intentionally teach the skills of Proverbs 31 creates a Christian community that can fill the void created by our modern society. Teaching these skills with other families allows us to share the knowledge that we each have and keeps us accountable to one another. Following a curriculum and meeting regularly encourages us to keep on target and ensures that no important skills are overlooked. Another wonderful benefit is that moms usually learn just as much as the girls. We are teaching *and* learning from each other.\* *Bloom Club* has helped me prioritize what is important and really connect with my girls, plus it has brought back the joy of being a mom.

Our children are surrounded by thoughts and ideas in the world and the media that are not God's best for them. We need to have a real plan to counteract that opposition. *Bloom Club* provides a vital opportunity to form life-long friendships with Christian peers who can support one another in making the right choices in their community and their world. What can be more fun than learning and spending time with your best friends? My greatest desire is for women and girls to be disciplined into confident, strong women of excellence who manage their lives and homes in a God-honoring way. Together we *can* transform the world for the Kingdom.

*Janelle Spedding is the wife of Joe and is enjoying being a mother to three teenagers (one son and two daughters.) She lives in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, where she is working towards her Masters in Theological Studies. Janelle is the founder and leader of Bloom Club, a gathering of women and girls to intentionally teach the skills to become Proverbs 31 women. For more information please visit [www.bloomclub.org](http://www.bloomclub.org) or email [janelle@bloomclub.org](mailto:janelle@bloomclub.org).*

\*Note: These skills are not just for girls; they are equally important for boys. However *Bloom Club* was partially formed out of my conviction to connect with my daughters. We are looking into beginning a boys' club to teach these same skills.

Works Cited:

<sup>1</sup> The Barna Group, Ltd. "New Marriage and Divorce Statistics Released" (2008). Accessed August 10, 2014. <https://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/15-familykids/42-new-marriage-and-divorce-statistics-released>

<sup>2</sup> "The Silent Epidemic," Corie Cutrer. Accessed August 10, 2014. <http://www.todaychristianwoman.com/articles/2004/september/silent-epidemic.html>

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### ***Continued from page 15***

- "A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest; So shall your poverty come like a prowler and your need like an armed man." Proverbs 24:33-34
- "How long will you slumber, O sluggard? When will you rise from your sleep?" Proverbs 6:9
- "Go to the ant, you sluggard! Consider her ways, and be wise." Proverbs 6:6
- "The lazy man will not plow because of winter; he will beg during harvest and have nothing." Proverbs 20:4

The greatest spiritual warfare of your day often takes place during the first minute. You have to be prepared. Let these, and other verses like them, paint a graphic picture in your mind of yourself missing the opportunities God has prepared for you in the day ahead. Picture the accumulated result of a life wasted through laziness which had its start each morning with sleeping past God's appointed time for you to begin serving Him!

Consider the disappointment you will be to God, to yourself, and to your home educated children who depend on you if you fail to seize the moment and act on God's promptings as your first conscious decision each day. Contrast that with the sense of accomplishment that comes with defeating the plans of your spiritual foe and starting your day on a note of victory and achievement before you even reach the shower!

If you believe God has power to raise you from the dead, don't you believe He has power to raise you from the bed?

*Rick Grubbs is a homeschooling father of 12 and host of the radio program "Redeeming the Time." He and his wife Carrie visit Pennsylvania frequently to speak in churches and other events such as homeschool meetings. Their website [www.LifeChangingSeminars.com](http://www.LifeChangingSeminars.com) has a special section written by Carrie for homeschoolers who "never have enough time."*



## Here Come the **Brides...** the **Grooms ...** the **Grand Baby...**

## and the **Retired** **Homeschooling Mom!**

**I sat holding James, our 3 month old grandson, as I watched all of our children take part in our oldest daughter Hannah and son-in-law Nathan's wedding.** Later Hannah's harp teacher, who joyfully provided wonderful music for the occasion and plays at many weddings, reflected, "I think this is the most beautiful wedding I have ever witnessed."

My cup is so full, and I am so blessed. By God's grace our children are following the Lord and to date are marrying godly spouses. In the last two years we have had the joy of adding two wonderful Christian "children" to our quiver and little James.

Who would have imagined that we would be so touched by God's gracious hand when we started our homeschool journey back in 1985? These outcomes were our highest goals.

During these years, we witnessed the legalization of homeschooling throughout the United States. We tackled the challenges of the elementary years and were suddenly faced with the question, "What about high school?" We kept moving on, and by now this road was a commitment for at least the high school years.

"Can homeschool kids get into college?"

was the next inquiry we examined. We thought they could and then tried our version of "home college" by using fully accredited schools and their then lesser known distance learning courses. We combined coursework from both two-year and four-year local schools to save money, and we continued the great conversation that was on going in our home now that we had adult children.

At this point they are marrying and having their own babies, and I have been done with proper homeschooling for over four years now.

When our youngest was four, we were asked to sit on the Christian Homeschool Association of Pennsylvania (CHAP) Board. We weren't all starry eyed about this, nor did we have a great sense of calling to further the homeschooling movement. We were in transition in some phases of our lives and rather selfishly thought it would be a great place to fellowship with other believers on this unique road of homeschooling. If we could do a small task, or mostly "think and talk" about some things to assist this organization, well, we'd join the fun.

Yet I am still involved in this movement – locally, on a state level, and on the national level – and early on moved beyond thinking and talking. Now I do have a

stronger sense of call to this journey of homeschooling. "Why?" you might ask. I believe Christian homeschooling works best when it is Christ-centered, parent directed, privately funded, home-based discipleship. As I look back, homeschooling is one visible means to carry out the command to teach our children about the Lord. Scripture is absolutely clear that this is the parents' job. In Deuteronomy 6:7 Moses gave the command directly to the people that all homeschoolers look to. He wrote, "You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates." I believe the reason traditional homeschooling is so successful is because it mirrors God's command, not because it is homeschooling per se.

There is no looking to the government to have a role. There is some evidence that the church has a responsibility to help nurture the fold, but the job of instructing children about God's laws is squarely on the shoulders of the parents when they are on the scene. I suppose we can say Scripture says nothing about the three Rs, nor physics, and the like. However it does make it pretty clear that to teach

children God's law is a job that is to be done throughout the day, and in order to learn it well, one would have had to learn the biblical languages. They might have had to be taught what a cubit was to understand the measurements of the temple. Basic math and even geometry might have been in their daily discussions.

Now that my children are out of the nest, the more I am able to direct folks to some of these concepts related to a Christian home education. In today's world the lines between traditional homeschooling and other forms of education that have elements of it are blurring. Just as the prayer in public school was eliminated, and eventually everything about biblical faith, I have concern that the reverse might happen here. All other modes of education will invade the more Christ-centered, parent-directed, privately funded model and blur the lines. Will the end result be the same? Statistical evidence is showing us that students in public school at home situations perform at a lower standard than a traditional homeschooler. (See the results of statistics in the state of Idaho: [www.virtualcharter-schoolmyths.com](http://www.virtualcharter-schoolmyths.com))

Obviously the grace of God is greater than any model, and some students do very well in settings other than that of traditional homeschooling, and in some instances the converse is true. However our end goal as Christian parents is to have our children know Christ, live for Him all their days, and share the good news of Jesus with their children and communities. This is a Scriptural command, and when the curriculum outlaws the Gospel, which is the case of public school at home, we have a lot of questions to consider. *The Trojan Horse* DVD helps explore these many concerns. (Available from [www.CHAPonline.com](http://www.CHAPonline.com) under "Store.")

State organizations such as CHAP exist all over the United States, Canada, and Mexico. These organizations are seeking to promote Christ-centered, parent-directed, privately funded, home-based discipleship. There are competitive

homeschooling conferences that are for personal profit, or for sending the funds out of the states, but they do not support homeschooling in the state once the conference is over. The National Alliance of Christian Home Education Leadership is an international organization (rooted here in the States, but to date includes Canada and Mexico), and it has 32 affiliated state organizations like CHAP. (Learn more here: [americanhomeeducation.org](http://americanhomeeducation.org). Like their Facebook page and serve this homeschooling community in a great way.)

So why all this discussion about these groups? It would be wise to support Alliance homeschooling conferences. Some non-Alliance conferences may support the CHAP definition of homeschooling yet do nothing for the state organizations that serve folks all year long. When we have conversations with others we can inform them of the Alliance and the AHEAD Conventions as organizations that work for homeschoolers all year long.

There is plenty to do for we retired homeschooling moms as this movement launches into the future. We can help preserve it and join the ranks of those carving out a place for homeschooling as described here. CHAP has need of volunteers all year long. Contact us and let us know what skills and talents you would be willing to share.

We grandparents can guide our children as they explore educational options and help them keep abreast of the history we have witnessed. The threats to educational freedom are still lurking in the wings.

We can also serve our children by assisting them in teaching their children. Each Wednesday I spend a couple hours with my grandbaby James and Stephanie my daughter-in-law. I think Stephanie does this for my benefit more than hers as she knows I am thrilled with this little guy. I sometimes do chores so she can attend to James, but on occasion her arms need a break and she does the chores and I tend to James! When he was just a month old I read him the book of James. I often read Scripture to him as I rock him. We read

books, though he is only four months old. He loves them.

Most of you are still actively homeschooling, but you too might have a role with CHAP. Remember our youngest was four when we started on the Board. Most of the CHAP Board families – then and now – have young children.

Lastly do you know some retired homeschooling moms and dads? Please "think and talk" to them about this movement. Invite them to help in your local co-ops or on the wider stage of CHAP and other forums that help spread the news about traditional homeschooling.

During the first few centuries of the early church, no one questioned the deity of Jesus. Then in the early 300s a man named Arius began teaching that Jesus was our Savior, but not God. Arius said that Jesus was a very special being created to bring salvation, but a creature nonetheless. At the Council of Nicaea the church rejected this teaching and upheld the truth that was established in the early days of the church: Jesus was and is fully God and fully man. Other questions came and other councils refined and restated the truth of Scripture. In like manner as the homeschooling movement has grown and changed, Christian home educators have attempted to define what the pioneers followed without question: Christ-centered, parent-directed, privately funded, home-based discipleship. The winds of change are sweeping the movement, attempting to settle the dust wherever it can. Retired homeschool moms and dads, we can help spread this news. We still do have a rich calling, one that points our children and grandchildren solidly to Jesus.

*Mary Ann Eagleson and her husband Bruce have homeschooled their four children since 1981. Though all are graduated now, they did some variation of college at home with all of them and continue to disciple each one. They serve on the Christian Homeschool Association of Pennsylvania (CHAP) and Alliance of Christian Home Education Leadership (The Alliance) boards.*

# 2015 Contests

Contest deadlines are March 15, 2015

## Science Fair



### Enter this year's CHAP Science Fair

taking place May 8–9, 2015, during the CHAP Convention at the PA Farm Show Complex. Details are still being finalized for this year's fair but we do know you must register for the CHAP Convention in order to be part of the Science Fair. You'll need to bring your Science Fair entry to the CHAP Convention for display and judging and then pick up the project at the conclusion Saturday May 9. An entry fee applies. Visit [www.chaponline.com](http://www.chaponline.com) for more details and to enter online.

## Essay Contest



**This year's essay contest** will be based on the Convention theme verse: Jeremiah 29:11 "'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'"

Each participant should write on what this verse means and how it applies to the student. The essay should be no more than 1,000 words in length (typewritten and double-spaced). The essay contest will be divided into two age groups: 10-14 and 15-18. Prizes will be awarded for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place in each age group. Winners will be announced during a brief ceremony at the CHAP Convention on May 9, 2015. Visit [www.chaponline.com](http://www.chaponline.com) after December 1, 2014, for more details and to enter online. Entries must be submitted online by March 15, 2015.

# Art Contest



## The annual Christian Homeschool Association of Pennsylvania (CHAP) Art Contest

is open to all traditionally homeschooled students ages 10 through 18. You must register for the CHAP Convention in order to participate in the art contest. The contest will be divided into two categories: photography and artwork (artwork using pencil, pen, pastels, or paint) and then broken down into two age groups (10-14 and 15-18). Prizes will be awarded for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place in each age group. Entry fee applies. Winners will be announced during a brief ceremony at the CHAP Convention on May 9, 2015. Visit [www.chaponline.com](http://www.chaponline.com) after December 1, 2014, for more details and to enter online. Photos of the entries must be submitted online by March 15, 2015. You must register for the CHAP Convention in order to participate in the art contest and the entries must be brought to the Convention for display and final judging and picked up at the Convention at the conclusion Saturday May 9th.

# Scholarship



## Once again the Christian Homeschool Association of Pennsylvania (CHAP) is offering two scholarships

to traditionally homeschooled students. Students should have already graduated or will be graduating in the Spring of 2015. The scholarships are for Pennsylvania resident students who are planning to continue their education. Prizes will be awarded for 1<sup>st</sup> place (\$1,000) and 2<sup>nd</sup> place (\$500). All components of the scholarship applications must be printed and mailed to CHAP by March 15, 2015.

Winners will be announced during a brief ceremony at the CHAP Convention on May 9, 2015. Visit [www.chaponline.com](http://www.chaponline.com) after December 1, 2014, for more details and to download an application. Completed applications will be accepted from January 1, 2015 to March 15, 2015.



# You Don't Need Big Brother

**Growing up, my younger siblings and I had pigs named Popeye, Olive Oyl, and Brutus, all named after characters from a popular cartoon show.** I watched it a lot, unaware of its atrocious grammar because English was not my primary language. The animation was clear however, and I can still imagine Popeye the Sailor Man how his blood pressure would rise up when he realized imminent danger was about to befall his beloved Olive Oyl. Popeye would claim, "That's all I can stands! I can't stands no more!" He would then pull out his secret power source in a can and dump all that spinach down his throat. Soon his biceps would start bulging, and we all knew what would happen to poor antagonist Bluto (a.k.a. Brutus) next.

What ignites your internal furnace? I have it. You have it. It may not be how we often picture God, but He has it too. It is evident in His passion and intensity over things that are important to Him: His beloved children, issues that matter for eternity, and His kingdom. This passion takes each of us to a different frame of mind because it consumes us.

Take Moses for example. The Bible says, "One day after Moses had grown up, he went out to where his own people were and watched them at their hard labor. He saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his own people." (Exodus 2:11) The same thought kicks in as with Popeye: "That's all I can stands! I can't stands no more!" and he did what he thought he should do.

My family recently watched *The Ten Commandments* (1956) which took a couple

of days to finish. It's a lengthy film, so it surprised me when my children asked to watch *The Prince of Egypt* (1998) next. I don't know about you, but as a home-schooling parent, both versions sorely disappoint me. I understand the inevitability of filmmakers applying some artistic liberties for marketing considerations, but did you notice that neither gave due recognition to the impact of Moses' parents in his early life, particularly his nurse-mother's influence? She taught him who he truly was and who he must serve.

Reading through the Hall of Faith listed in the book of Hebrews, chapter 11, we read: "By faith Moses' parents hid him for three months after he was born, because they saw he was no ordinary child, and they were not afraid of the king's edict." (verse 23) "By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter." (verse 24)

The first verse speaks of Amram and Jochabed's sizeable faith, enough to risk their whole family's safety to hide a child condemned to die along with every other male baby his age. When Moses was placed back in their hands I can't imagine how excited they were for the opportunity to shape his heart and mind. The second verse focuses on Moses' own faith which gave him the tenacious spirit that I'm sure both hurt and tried his adoptive mom.

Sadly both movie versions show Moses almost accidentally discovering his ethnic background, as if he didn't know his Hebrew God until he was a grown man. It seems like the movie makers either wanted to intentionally ignore the how, why, and by whom he developed such passion and conviction which eventually led to his heroic leadership, or they downplayed it.

Isn't this stereotypical of our society's view that mothers don't matter? It seems clear to me that Moses became an activist at 40 years old because his mother in-

structed him in the ways of the LORD from a very early age. (Acts 7:23) In our current time there is no hiding the fact that domestic and world entities only give lip service to the intrinsic value of the family unit and have no confidence that parents can successfully educate and guide their children's future. However the bigger conflict in my opinion seems to be that while with one hand we resist the powers that challenge our parental authority, with another hand we reach out to grab any benefits available that keep us from freely exer-

must not desire stolen money by taking advantage of government services and goods, or it is as if we helped steal it in the first place!

This school year acknowledge God's sufficiency in your parenting; agree to keep the vision of lesser governmental regulation and intrusion a priority. Allow your holy discontent to fuel you, not frustrate you! Align your heart perfectly with God's heart, share the angst others are experiencing, and afford them the same independence as much as it depends on

you and give you the wisdom, insight, and ability you need to both disciple your children in the faith and educate them for the future.

We will continue to work hard to change the excessive homeschool regulation that we are unjustly subjected to obey. We just "can't stand no more" of the criticisms, demands, and intimidation from the school district. Even those of us who are spared such close scrutiny from friendlier school districts long for the day when the school will stay out of our domain and not require so much access to our private records.

*Corie Moore and her husband Mark became active in politics when their oldest daughter started a local club for HSLDA's Generation Joshua in 2005. Corie blogs updates at [www.CHAPLegislativeAction.blogspot.com](http://www.CHAPLegislativeAction.blogspot.com) Corie and Mark also serve together on the CHAP Advisory Board.*

Article photo: Eron Balogh

## "Parents are the key factor in a child's education."

cising the very rights we want as parents. Then our level of entitlement mitigates our faith in God's loving provision. We like the free curriculum, the IEP's, the computer that comes with cyber-schooling, or the music and sports' programs. Not only in material ways but positionally, we want the benefit of an admirable status as well when we desire to either over pacify or impress the school district by the volume and quality of what we submit. I may be stepping on some toes but know that the truth has struck me more times than I care to admit.

I cannot claim to fully know the heart of God but can imagine Him grieved by the prevailing secularization of His children. All of these governmental requirements take precious time away from teaching our children about what really matters and discipling them in the faith! He understands that we're weary of the oppressive taxation that robs our families of the resources we need. But then to desire or expect benefits in return from those same powers, ties us up to products that deliver trouble instead of blessings. We need to remember that we are all being robbed financially, so we

you. Affirm the natural abilities God gives every parent, not some appointed government bureaucrat who was appointed by another appointed government bureaucrat from the Department of Education.

I confess that I often feel like I'm failing in my tasks. Passing House Bill 1013 is an exciting but attention consuming project. My children's needs became the distraction instead of the main focus. Feeling as if I'm beckoned from a hundred different directions - some by those with very loud voices - it's easy to get absorbed and neglect my own children beyond their physical nurture. Writing this article has convicted and reminded me first of my priority before my Lord. Moses became an effective servant of God and a powerful leader of nations because of his early training under his mom.

Parents are the key factor in a child's education. You are capable of researching and setting your own standards. You have that fundamental right. Ignite that passion to motivate you! The marvelous Creator of the universe is able to guide

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# Plans to Give You Hope and a Future

Jeremiah 29:11

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Join us for an exciting time of listening, learning, shopping and fellowshiping with  
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