

Fall 2012

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# CHAMP



CHRISTIAN HOMESCHOOL ASSOCIATION OF PENNSYLVANIA

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# Persecution? God Guarantees It

by Bruce Eagleson

**Remember** the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you." John 15:20

Jesus promised us persecution. We will have enemies who will seek to work us woe. This seems like a strange promise, but it has a profound effect on who we are and how we see ourselves.

Delving deeper into Jesus' teaching is even more revealing. In the sermon on the mount we are told: "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake." Matthew 5:10-11 The key fact here is that we are blessed if we are persecuted for righteousness' sake. If we suffer because we are serving ourselves we cannot expect the blessing. It is only when we suffer for the cause of Christ that we can expect blessing in the suffering.

Thus, we are guaranteed persecution, but the blessing is conditional. We are only blessed if we are suffering for the cause of Christ.

In the early days of homeschooling all homeschoolers enjoyed some measure of persecution. Some of the persecution was just from the skepticism of friends and family, some from the government. There were more severe examples. With surprising frequency, headlines about homeschooling parents going to jail appeared.

What has caused the remission of the persecution? Many things were involved. One source of relief was the tireless work by the state organizations (such as the Christian Homeschool Association of Pennsylvania [CHAP]) and the Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA). Another source of relief was the godly attitude of the families under attack. The academic success of the early homeschoolers was another source of defense. Dr. Brian Ray and the National Home Education Research Institute (NHERI) deserve our thanks for documenting our great success.

Will the persecution return? Yes. It already has. It is more subtle now. Homeschoolers who began homeschooling to raise Godly children are now sending their children to public cyber schools without seeing government schools at home as a problem. Experience, in the Western states where the public cyber schools first appeared, has shown that most of these children will end up attending a public school.

The state organizations that worked so diligently to win our freedoms are falling on hard times. They are experiencing financial problems. They are also having trouble recruiting new workers to replace the first and second generation. Is this just the normal trials of running non-profit organization or is it preparation for a new wave of persecution?

Furthermore, there are signs of persecution coming from the academic communities who are publishing articles without substantial research, claiming that Christian homeschooling is a concern because the parents teach that there is only one true path to God.

What should you do? First pray, then link and like on FB, and donate to NHERI, HSLDA, and CHAP. Volunteer to work for CHAP at the convention or during the year by taking on one or more of the ministry opportunities that awaits support by someone. Tell your friends and family about the virtues of homeschooling.

Resources: CHAP-CHAPonline.com, NHERI-NHERI.org, HSLDA-HSLDA.org

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### Homeschooling information, contact:

CHAP 231 N. Chestnut St., Palmyra, PA 17078  
Tel.: 717-838-0980 Monday-Thursday

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# Side by Side in Pennsylvania



## Parents

Gary & Leigh Genasevich

## Children

Jarod, Wade, and Nolan

## Hometown

Sugarloaf

**Activities** Church and sports! We're each involved with ministries at our church including praise band, small groups, and young adult and youth groups. The boys all either play or have played school and/or rec. league baseball, basketball, and soccer. Golf is quickly becoming a new favorite.

**How long have you been homeschooling and what was one of the main reasons that you chose to homeschool?** This will be our 14th year homeschooling. We began homeschooling out of circumstance, not conviction. We had some previous exposure to homeschool families and admired the relationships they had with their children. Under the circumstances, we decided that no one knew our children, or how to raise them, better than we did, so we would give homeschooling a try.

**What have been your most helpful resources?** The Bible, the great moms and dads in our homeschool support group over the years, the CHAP convention and HSLDA.

**What type of educational philosophy/curriculum do you follow?** We are very eclectic. I like to know what's "out there" so we often try a little of this and a little of that.

**What has been one of your highlights in homeschooling?** All growing to know the Lord through homeschooling! My husband and I grew

up in church, but never had a personal relationship with Jesus. When we started homeschooling, I joined the local support group and met a bunch of women who were very different than any Christians I knew. They had something I wanted, but I wasn't sure what it was at first. Then we bought a Bible curriculum, because after all, we grew up in church! I quickly discovered that the curriculum taught things we were not hearing in church. I began reading the Bible and searching for answers. My search led us to a Bible church, where we all came to know the Lord and have grown closer to Him each day together in our homeschool studies.

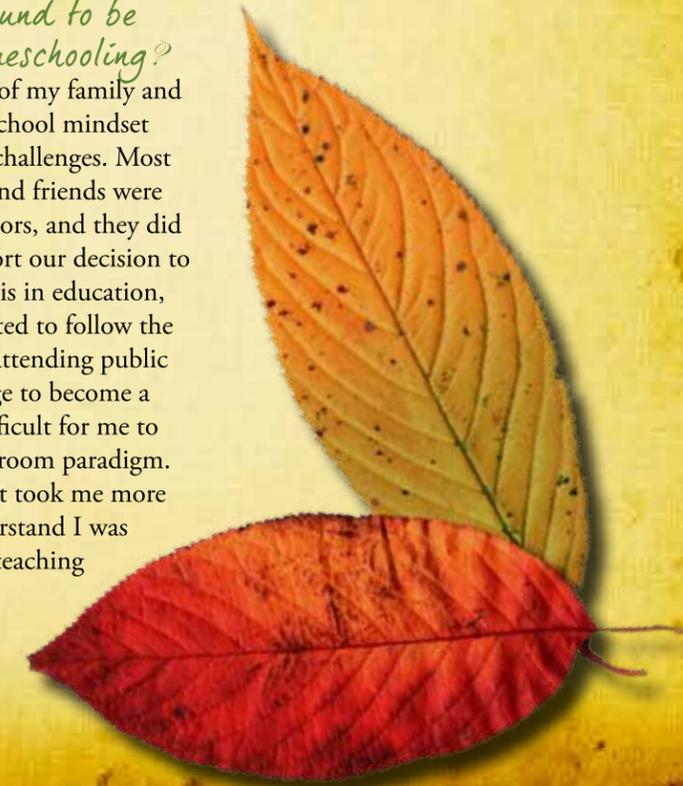
**What was your favorite field trip?** We've been very fortunate to be able to travel with my husband on business trips and turn them into field trips or family vacations. The Grand Canyon was a favorite! Right here in PA, we've enjoyed going to Gettysburg a few times and especially loved touring the battlefields on horseback.

**What was one of the funniest things that happened during a homeschool day?** When the boys were younger, we liked to dress up, act out, and make food from the time period we

were studying. One year we were doing colonial history, and while the boys were writing letters with quill pens, I was hot gluing cotton onto some sort of shower-type caps already on their heads for wigs. It didn't occur to me that the heat from the glue would still go through the shower cap. No one was injured, but they had hot heads for a while, literally and figuratively!

**What have you found to be challenging in homeschooling?** Not having the support of my family and getting over the public school mindset were two of my biggest challenges. Most of my extended family and friends were teachers and administrators, and they did not understand or support our decision to homeschool. My degree is in education, so naturally, I was expected to follow the same path. I was raised attending public school and secular college to become a teacher. This made it difficult for me to break free from the classroom paradigm. I'm embarrassed to say, it took me more than a few years to understand I was "teaching a child," not "teaching a curriculum."

**What advice would you give to someone who has just begun homeschooling?** In a word, relax. You will never teach your child all there is to know. God will lead you to teach them what He needs them to learn for His glory. Cherish every moment, because even though the days may seem to drag, the years fly.





## One Good Eye

By Becky Whitaker

**When** Reuben donned his winter coat, gloves, and galoshes to leave the house each day for work, his eyes were open, but he could not see. The collapsible white cane was his warning to others that he was coming. Once past the icy front steps, it was just a block or so to East State Street where he crossed to wait for the bus. “Hello Reuben!” “Hello yourself, you are looking good today!” quipped Reuben to the driver. Twenty minutes later he departed at the grand downtown Faust Hotel.

Customers in need of massage therapy would find him shuffling among the porcelain tables, sauna cabinets, menthol lotions and towels in his own special room. Lello was a regular. “Got some steam for me today, Reuben?” Puffing from his extra weight, Lello needed weekly relief. Reuben carefully worked the painful muscles in every direction bringing sighs from his client. Though a short man, one could see from years of physical exertion that Reuben’s biceps were firm for his age and his hands were muscular. After the rub-down, Lello sat wrapped in a towel inside the steam cubicle with only his head visible. It was a strange contraption lined with rows of light bulbs that eventually

made him sweat. “You’re done!” said Reuben handing out more towels.

As Lello, or any other customer for that matter, handed the cash over to Reuben, it was curious that no one ever took advantage. Sometimes, Reuben would even open his wallet and ask if he had a ‘ten’ there behind the ‘five’ dollar bill or was it a ‘one.’ He could trust the folks to tell him. Then after a ten-hour-day, six days a week, Reuben made the trip home, same bus, same driver. He was exhausted, but thankful for his work. While his skilled hands provided relief to those weighed down with arthritis or worldly concerns, they also provided support for his family of five... well, six including Great Grandma.

Teckla stayed home to care for the children and her elderly Swedish mother, Mrs. Emma Borg, who spoke no English. Every day was the same, except for Sunday. Reuben and his family never missed Sunday church services. Each Swedish greeter knew Reuben well and marveled at his positive outlook on a difficult life. “Did you hear about the blind man who picked up his hammer and saw?” Reuben was known to say. Laughter echoed through the large, green-tiled church foyer. Joking aside, Reuben was intent on being faithful to his God.

As a child, I often watched his fingers moving slowly over the mammoth black Braille Bible as he swayed in the brown rocker. How does he do that? I wondered. How does he know what it says? Meanwhile, Grandma Teckla would announce that pancakes and lingonberries were ready for lunch. She cut up his pancakes with instructions that the lingonberries were at three o’clock on the plate. Every meal was like that – cut up the meat and tell Reuben the potatoes were at nine o’clock or the veggies at six. But first, they prayed. For folks who had few possessions, they were always thankful.

Later in my life, I learned that Grandma Teckla struggled with a defect in her left eye for years. That meant between her and Grandpa there was only one good eye, though I’m certain Grandma was humbly grateful for the one. She was secure in her faith, but surely there were moments of despair; like the time the sewing machine needle went through her thumb, or the day the bicycle wheel spike bore into her daughter’s heel. God was present in those instances as well. The sewing needle was removed without too much damage and her little girl recovered with no paralysis. Although life for these humble people seemed to overflow with challenges, their faith in God remains as an example to me.

Every time I am tempted to worry, fuss, or become anxious, I remember the faith of my dear grandparents, Reuben and Teckla, who must be standing now, possessing pristine vision, in the front row of the heavenly choir – that uniquely appointed row reserved for the thankful ones who acknowledged God, did not complain, and remained faithful even if with only one good eye and a pair of hands to serve Him.

**“Then we your people, the sheep of your pasture, will thank you forever and ever, praising your greatness from generation to generation.” Psalm 79:13 (NLT)**

*Becky Whitaker was a homeschooling mom for many years and she enjoys encouraging others to do the same. She currently serves as CHAP’s Administrative Assistant.*

# Holiday SANITY

By Kathy Kuhl

How do you approach the holidays? Like a weary marathoner learning that she’s got a second 26.2 miles to run? Is your do list going to do you in? This holiday season, I have a radical suggestion. Do less.

“But I can’t!” you sigh. “The kids/grandparents/Martha Stewart... will be so disappointed!”

But wouldn’t your family rather have a more relaxed, cheerful you, than any number of decorations, activities, or even—if they are wise—gifts?

Take a moment to list what you *need* to do for the holidays. Then below that, list what you want to do. Keep your lists handy for a day or two, and add to them as you remember more jobs. Think hard what goes on which list.

Of course, your other duties (mother, homeschooler, chauffeur, medic, counselor, volunteer...) aren’t going to evaporate. So look at your home and homeschool, and jot down a third list. What can you *really* expect to accomplish before Thanksgiving? Christmas? What must be done? Pray for wisdom and think it over.

Do these lists make you sad? Cheer up! The first step to conquering a problem is to see it.

Then, talk to your spouse. (If you’re a single parent, consult with a wise friend.) I’m not saying you have to show your list; that may be too much information. But ask, “What’s important to you about holidays?” Listen. If your husband says you were doing too much last Christmas, pay attention. Husbands, if your wife wants you to stop putting 100,000 lights on the house and

read to the kids more, she may be onto something. If that friend or spouse doesn’t understand your problem, maybe it is time to share your list.

Your children can help you prioritize, too. Ask what’s important to them. Years ago, when the kids and I were making our usual four kinds of Christmas cookies, I found out they don’t like snickerdoodles or snowball cookies nearly as much as some other kinds. My mom had always made them, so I did. But what my kids like best are butter cookies that they help decorate and gingerbread. So now, that’s all we bake.

Once you have your lists, shorten them and prioritize. Ask yourself, what can I skip?

Women are like jugglers, multitasking homeschooling, homemaking, and holiday preparations. Sometimes you have to decide which balls you will drop. Different folks will drop different things.

Other tasks can be postponed to other parts of the year: I buy Christmas cards and wrapping paper after Christmas. A friend sends cards at Easter, not Christmas.

My mother-in-law taught me to look for gifts while traveling. Thanks to her, I can justify shopping on vacation, spread the expense over the year, and feel virtuous that I’ve got a head start on the holidays.

As you look at your lists, ask yourself, “Who am I doing this for?” Is my pride involved in getting some tasks done? Am I doing so much at church because I feel I must keep up an appearance of spirituality? Don’t play “keep up with the Joneses” in your church activities. Spirituality is not primarily about church activities, but

growing in grace.

What does God intend you to do? Maybe you are coping with a deployment or a layoff. Perhaps you are exhausted caring for sick relatives, or facing a chronic illness yourself. Be realistic.

One December, I had bronchitis. I had caught a cold in November, but I didn’t slow down until I realized I didn’t have even enough breath to get through one line of a hymn. The doctor said I had to rest. So I baked no cookies. I sent no cards. As I stretched out on the sofa, my husband and son decorated the tree. My daughter came home and cooked the feast. We had a good Christmas.

Remember, “The heart is deceitful above all things.” Watch yourself when you want to say: “Yes, I can bake cookies for that.” “Oh, I can make three angel costumes by Friday.” Is that what you should be doing? Does it mean you’ll stay up late sewing costumes so that the laundry won’t get done, the bills won’t get paid, and you’ll be grouchy the next day?

Set realistic, limited goals. Consider your priorities. Slow down so you can enjoy your family and children—and the holidays.

Happy Christmas!

*Veteran homeschooler, author and speaker Kathy Kuhl lives in Herndon, Virginia. To stay sane, she enjoys walks with her husband, reading, and exercising with friends. Visit [LearnDifferently.com](http://LearnDifferently.com) or email [Kathy@LearnDifferently.com](mailto:Kathy@LearnDifferently.com)*

# Homeschool



By Vicki Bentley

*“There are many kinds of success in life worth having. It is exceedingly interesting and attractive to be a successful business man, or railroad man, or farmer, or a President, or a ranchman, or the colonel of a fighting regiment, or to kill grizzly bears and lions. But for unflinching interest and enjoyment, a household of children, if things go reasonably well, certainly makes all other forms of success and achievement lose their importance by comparison.”*

—Theodore Roosevelt, *Autobiography*, 1913

As the days get chillier, your children may spend more time indoors. You can make the most of all this togetherness with some fun and games designed to build family relationships while reinforcing skills. Games promote family bonding while building math, language, and thinking skills. Game play reinforces both character *and* curriculum by encouraging children to take turns, follow directions, think strategically, and recall information learned or skills developed.

## Play a variety of games

Encourage children to play a variety of types of games, both cooperative and competitive. Cooperative games give the students a common goal, while competitive games are opportunities to learn good sportsmanship. While skills-based games stretch a child academically or logically, chance-based games level the playing field when children of varying ages or ability levels are playing together. Some traditional children’s games are geared to the younger set or may be adapted for play by older siblings with their preschool or primary siblings. While online or computer games can spark interest or review concepts, this article focuses on concrete, “in-house” games.

## Make games part of the lesson plan

Even the most reluctant or distracted learner can usually be motivated by games. Carol Barnier, in *The Big WHAT NOW Book of Learning Styles*, shares this insight: “Time Spent Doing Math: Typical Child—20 minutes; My Child Usually—3 hours; My Child with a Game—30 minutes.” Her book is chock-full of creative, game-style ideas that are helpful for *all* types of children, but especially the non-traditional learner.

File folder games and other educational games can be integrated into the learning day; if you use workboxes, these activities can go straight into their boxes. Or you can block out time for games in their lesson plan books. You could have a math games day one day a week, or incorporate some vocabulary-based games for language arts. Your kids may have so much fun learning, you’ll make games part of their everyday routine!

## Don’t limit yourself to only “educational” games

Board games such as Yahtzee, True Math, Set, 24, and Number Jumbler are some obvious math choices, but Balderdash,

Scattergories, and Password—reinforce vocabulary as well as thinking skills.

Brainteaser games such as Set and Mindtrap encourage logic and strategy. Puzzle books, hidden pictures, and I Spy encourage critical thinking and observation.

Jigsaw puzzles aid in visual discrimination for beginning readers; for example, a child who can discern the slight variances in puzzle shapes will be more likely to recognize the differences between a *b* and a *d* or a *p* and a *q*. Puzzles can also encourage patience, cooperation, problem solving, and art appreciation. My girls spent hours together constructing a 3D puzzle of the U.S. capitol building.

Trivia games can be useful for reviewing facts such as dates, titles, biographical info, Bible information, and more. When choosing trivia games, be sure to consider the ages and abilities of the players. If they are likely to become a bit too competitive or unevenly matched, team play can be an option.

Scavenger hunts or treasure hunts are fun for the older children to design for their younger siblings. Clues can be riddles to solve or codes to decipher, or simply directions to follow.

Guess Who?, Battleship, Clue, and Risk encourage critical thinking and strategy, while more active games like Twister, Pictionary, Cranium, Charades, and Guesstures can get the muscles and imaginations going (as well as the laughter!).

Pencil-and-paper games such as hangman, word searches, crossword puzzles, complete-the-square, tic-tac-toe, Guggenheim, and Mad Libs can occupy hands and minds on errand days and holiday trips. Cards for Uno, Old Maid, Go Fish, and War also travel well.

## Family fun night

There are games designed specifically for family interaction: *Imaginiff* and the *Ungame* encourage sharing of opinions, thoughts, and laughter. Jeff Myers developed *The Story Game*

from a card deck he wrote for his own family gatherings. Several years ago, Todd Wilson of FamilyManWeb.com created *To Bethlehem* for his own family, to allow him to interact with his kids, laugh and act goofy, and help them focus on the real meaning of Christmas.

So plan to bake a homemade pizza or other family favorite, maybe pop some popcorn, and gather around the table for a game night that the whole family will anticipate all week.

*Vicki Bentley is the mother of eight daughters, foster mom of over fifty, and grandma to fifteen wonderful grandbabies (and another on the way!). Vicki has homeschooled 17 children since 1988, alongside her husband Jim, and led a local support group of over 250 families for 14 years. She is the author of My Homeschool Planner, Everyday Cooking, The Everyday Family Chore System, Home Education 101: A Mentoring Program for New Homeschoolers, High School 101: Blueprint for Success, and other homeschool and homemaking helps, and coordinates HSLDA’s Early Years and Group Services programs. Vicki has a heart for parents, with strong practical wisdom and encouraging words.*

This article is adapted from the October 2009 Early Years newsletter at [www.hslida.org/earlyyears](http://www.hslida.org/earlyyears).

## More ideas, if you are “game”

- Have a family game night in place of your regular monthly homeschool meeting. [http://cardboardgames.suite101.com/article.cfm/how\\_to\\_organise\\_a\\_fun\\_games\\_night](http://cardboardgames.suite101.com/article.cfm/how_to_organise_a_fun_games_night)
- Start a weekly or monthly game club in your area, using chess or other board games.
- Design your own board games or card packs [www.ehow.com/how\\_2046016\\_make-board-game.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_2046016_make-board-game.html)



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# WHOSE YARSTICK ARE YOU USING?

By Todd Wilson



**CHRISTIANS**, especially homeschoolers, like to measure things, specifically things like our spirituality, our homeschools, our children, our husbands, our marriages, our cooking ability, our clothes, our successes, and our failures.

We step back from the proverbial measuring post to see how we measure up, and if things look good, then we bask in the warm glow of success; but on the other hand, if we see our marks lacking, we slink into a hole of despair, convinced that we're failing miserably.

The problem with all our measuring is that we often use the wrong measuring stick... external standards. We look at picture-perfect homeschooling families and see that the children comb their hair a certain way, dress a certain way, listen to a certain style of music, play certain types of musical instruments, and own their own home—debt free—and that becomes our ruler.

We see the mark on the post and then work like a dog trying to reach that mark. We try to get our children to look a certain way, act a certain way, and be responsible... and grown up. Then we back them up to the post and assess the damage.

We see that our kids' hair is too sloppy; they wear jeans instead of dresses, burp at the table, fight with their brothers and sisters, and spend their money on trading cards instead of saving for a house.

We make the mark on the post only to see how we have failed, and then we toss in the towel or, worse yet, drive our family even harder until they hate us and everything we're trying to achieve.

But there's another side to the post. Sometimes, through sheer determination or by accident, we get our children all cleaned up, dressed up, and schooled up, and they score high on the post. People point at our children and say, "Wow. Your children are wonderful." Inside, we're tempted to feel prideful and judgmental of others who haven't reached the mark, but in reality we know that somehow, although the marks look good... things don't feel so good.

The problem with both scenarios is that we homeschoolers have been duped into using the wrong standard... an external standard.

Now, I don't want to be too hard on us because we're prone to using the wrong



standard. I know some pretty good guys in the Bible who did so too.

Remember Jesse, David's dad? He had a bunch of strapping boys. One day, Samuel the prophet showed up and invited them to offer sacrifices with him (1 Samuel 16). Apparently, Jesse thought Samuel was scoping out his boys for something "BIG." So, one by one, Jesse paraded seven of his big boys in, and one by one Samuel said, "Is that all you got?"

Eventually, overlooked and under-appreciated David was called in from the fields and as he stepped in the doorway, God said to Samuel, "He's the ONE!!!"

Now, I'm sure both Jesse and Samuel were shocked. After all, the first of Jesse's sons... looked good, and David... well, didn't look so good. Both Samuel and Jesse had fallen prey to wrong standards... external standards.

Remember what God said, "Man looks on the outward appearance, but I look on the heart."

A thousand years later Jesus arrived on the scene. People were disappointed by His 'normal' appearance. He didn't have a degree, fancy robes, a lot of money, or come from the right side of the tracks. And if that wasn't bad enough, He also associated with a pretty rough crowd... prostitutes, tax collectors, and other 'sinners.'

They measured Him by the wrong standard... an external standard, and most of the people of His time (including some of his own family) missed the promised Messiah.

The problem with their standard was that it was an 'outward appearance' standard... one that can be easily measured.

- Tall and handsome - good.
- Proper etiquette - good.
- Talented - good.
- Dressed nicely - good.

Another problem with the outward appearance standard is that it is not God's standard. God's standard is an "inside thing," and "inside things" are not always so easy to measure. Sure we can measure conduct against the Biblical Standard, and we should, but sometimes the true inner motives are hard to measure. What may look like pride and aloofness to us may in reality be a God-designed personality characteristic.

Homeschoolers love to measure by outward appearances. We pride ourselves in what we eat, how we dress, what we drive, where we live, our children's achievements and extra-curricular activities, and even how many children we have. At times we feel good by having scored high on the measuring stick... but we've used the wrong standard.

And the truth behind the wrong standard is that it really doesn't satisfy. We may look good to everyone else, but sometimes that only reinforces the feeling of despair that we feel inside. The sad thing about using the wrong standard is that you lose both ways.

Imagine the freedom we would experience if we would read-just the standard and view our children, marriages, homeschools, and families as God sees them. We would no longer have to carry the weight of trying to keep up the appearances, of trying to have the right clothes, kids, marriages, and homeschools.

So what if we don't have a marriage that looks like the one portrayed in some sappy homeschool book or magazine. We're not measured or measuring by outward appearances anyway.

With confidence we could proclaim, "You know my marriage is struggling, but I'm still committed to my spouse. I'll keep working at it and praying for it, and I know God isn't done with us yet."

Instead of forcing our children to wear certain clothes to appear properly attired so that it will reflect good on us, we would take a look at the standard and say, "It's modest, it's not offensive... it may be a little unhomeschoolerish, BUT it doesn't displease God, so I shouldn't care what others think and I'm not going to make a big deal about it. Go ahead honey, you can wear that.

And by the way you look beautiful."

Is that a frightening way to live? YES!!! Is that the way God designed us to live? YES!!!! So let me encourage you Mom and Dad to remember that God doesn't judge our successes and failures by outward appearances, and neither should you. Look at the heart of your spouse, children, family, and homeschool, and then readjust.

Maybe you need to spend less time trying to get your children and spouse to "look" a certain way and more time just loving your children and spouse the way they are. It might feel a little uncomfortable at first, but the true measuring post, although it sometimes points out areas of weakness, brings freedom and joy.

That's one standard we can live with.

*Todd Wilson, author of Lies Homeschooling Moms Believe, Help! I'm Married to a Homeschooling Mom and The Official Book of Homeschooling Cartoons, is a dad, writer, conference speaker, and former pastor. As founder of Familyman Ministries, his passion and mission are to remind dads and moms of what's most important through The Familyman Weekly (a weekly e-mail sent to thousands of dads), seminars, and books that encourage parents. www.familymanweb.com*



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parking at Trader Moe's. 3 shekels (optional)

Game pieces must walk. Subtract 1 from your next roll.

Traveling to Jacob's Well.

collector. Pay 2 shekels.



## Changes for CHAP & YOU!

If you are a current member of CHAP, you will continue to enjoy the benefits until your membership runs out. As of October 16, 2012, CHAP has discontinued accepting new or renewed membership, and is moving toward extending current membership benefits to all who are on our database over the next year and beyond. Which services will stay and which will be changed is yet to be determined.

About 5 years ago we went to a membership so CHAP, as a 501c4 nonprofit, could recommend political candidates just to our members (not our full database as the law stipulates). We have found there are other ways to do this as an organization grows, and we are considering these for the future. We hope and pray that the direction we are taking will provide more benefits to all homeschoolers in the state of Pennsylvania and the surrounding states.

CHAP's structure has changed considerably. We now have some new families on the CHAP Board and we also have a newly formed Advisory Board. We continue to have a convention coordinator and convention committee who are responsible for the CHAP Convention. The new voices in all these areas have given us much helpful feedback and wonderful new ideas.

We welcome your comments and consider them helpful as we journey forward together. Please send us any feedback you may have OR If you'd like to join our volunteer team serving the homeschoolers of Pennsylvania, please contact us.

As we look to Him for direction,  
*The CHAP Board and  
The CHAP Advisory Board*

### *Dear Friend of CHAP,*

CHAP needs CHAMPIONS. That is, we are in need of some volunteers...champions that will take on some of the many causes and/or jobs that we have before us. If you or anyone you know has the heart, ability and time to do any of these tasks, the CHAP board would be interested in chatting with you about this, and will be eternally grateful! Some of these jobs are huge and others are small but necessary.

When we say a champion, we mean that the person would either do the work, or some of the work, and oversee it by developing a team (a committee and then other volunteers) consisting of as many individuals as needed. Supervision of that team would be the champion's job as well.

This is a chance to help Christian homeschooling in our state and beyond. You will help build a stronger state organization as we face the challenges ahead and have the opportunity to serve the Lord and others on the journey. There is some concern that our freedoms in this realm could be threatened in the coming months and years, thus the need to strengthen and grow state organizations like CHAP. If many people carry a smaller load, there can be joy in the journey for all of us.

Thanks for considering this opportunity to serve. Below are a few volunteer positions we need and we'll be mentioning more in the future.

#### *The CHAP Board \ The CHAP Advisory board*

If you are interested, please contact the CHAP office by email at [admin1@chaponline.com](mailto:admin1@chaponline.com) and state "volunteer opportunity" in the subject line.

### *We need the following volunteers:*

1. Editor for the CHAP magazine (four issues per year)
2. Editor for the enews (one a month)
3. Graphic Design person to lay out the CHAP Magazine and the enews in Constant Contact and other publications (can be multiple persons taking on each of these jobs)
4. Advertising Coordinator

# *Resolving Conflict* *with Your Leadership Team*

*By Doug Bartsch*

Unresolved conflicts derail many marriages, families and leadership teams. As a child I fell down in an asparagus patch. One of the shoots cut my hand. Although the cut bled profusely, we cleaned it up, bandaged it and left on vacation. While on vacation, the wound began to fester and fill with pus. It became even more painful and infected. By the time we returned from vacation, I had to go to the doctor to have it examined. The result? The wound had to be cut out and closed up with six stitches. The cause? A small piece of asparagus had remained lodged in the wound in spite of our best efforts to clean it out. Unresolved conflict has the same effect on relationships.

Notice that we are talking about unresolved conflict. Healthy conflict is vital to a team's success when it results in better ideas and comes from open, honest dialogue. Unresolved conflict arises for a number of reasons including valuing personal agendas more than the best solution, taking respectful dialogue that is different than your view as a personal attack, harboring resentment from past conversations, emotional immaturity, etc. So, how do we resolve conflict? I believe there are three steps that can begin the process.

First, forgive others for past conflicts. Regardless of the cause, harboring unforgiveness will imprison you. God designed forgiveness to set us free. We cannot change the other person but we get to choose if we will be bound in the prison of unforgiveness. Set yourself free by a decision to forgive. Forgiveness cannot be based on feelings or "keeping score." It

is simply a decision in faith to forgive. After all, when we realize the price Jesus paid to forgive our sins, how can we hold on to the sins of others? (See Matthew 18)

Second, seek to understand. Too often, conflict arises because we don't really listen to the heart behind the words. The other person begins to speak, we make a quick judgment and begin to formulate our response (which of course diminishes our ability to truly listen). Let the other person finish speaking, ask clarifying questions, truly seek to understand. Discussing from common understanding is vital. Often you will find there are many areas of agreement. Identify those areas and begin your conversation from there. Even if you do not agree with someone, the effort you made to genuinely understand can minimize much of the negative emotion tied to conflict.

Finally, change your perspective. My mentor, Dr. Dean Radtke ([www.ministryinstitute.org](http://www.ministryinstitute.org)), taught me a life-changing concept: view conflict resolution as coaching, teaching, training and mentoring. Conflict resolution by its very definition stirs up negative emotions. The very thought of those conversations often resulted in a knot in my stomach. But when I began to see those conversations as an opportunity to grow myself and to coach and develop someone else, the negative emotion went away. I actually began looking forward to helping the team members grow. The result? When my attitude changed, how I approached the conversation changed. Instead of bringing negative emotions to the conversations, I brought peace, joy and good anticipation of what God would do as we worked through the conflicts.

Unresolved conflict does not have to destroy your team. However, it requires each of us to start by forgiving the past, seeking to understand the perspective of others and changing our own perspective. If we will take the initiative to lead ourselves, we will find most of the conflict can be turned into healthy dialogue that moves our team and our ministry forward for God!

*Doug Bartsch is the guest speaker for the 2012 Renew Conference. Over the past ten years, Doug and his wife Kim have been homeschooling their children, Spencer and Bailey. Doug's hunger to develop as a leader has been enhanced by life experiences and great mentors, and he shares practical insights that can transform the life and ministry of other leaders.*

So you can't carry a tune in a bucket? Don't tune out just yet! Have you ever thought of using songs in your prayer time? Many hymns were actually written as prayers. Often, when we cannot find words to express our thoughts and feelings, words that others have written in song can aid us in expressing ourselves to God. The words to many great songs of the faith can also assist us to pray in a fresh way, breaking out of our common method of praying.

One song that many Christians know is the "Doxology." We commonly sing it to the tune "Old Hundredth." But did you know that those words of praise are actually the final verse of two devotional prayers written by Thomas Ken? Read the words to these two hymns he wrote and see if you could pray them from your heart:

### Morning Hymn

Awake, my soul, and with the sun  
Thy daily stage of duty run;  
Shake off dull sloth, and joyful rise,  
To pay thy morning sacrifice.

Thy precious time misspent, redeem,  
Each present day thy last esteem,  
Improve thy talent with due care;  
For the great day thyself prepare.

By influence of the Light divine  
Let thy own light to others shine.  
Reflect all Heaven's propitious ways  
In ardent love, and cheerful praise.

In conversation be sincere;  
Keep conscience as the noontide clear;  
Think how all seeing God thy ways  
And all thy secret thoughts surveys.  
Wake, and lift up thyself, my heart,  
And with the angels bear thy part,  
Who all night long unwearied sing  
High praise to the eternal King.

All praise to Thee, who safe has kept  
And hast refreshed me while I slept  
Grant, Lord, when I from death shall wake  
I may of endless light partake.

Heav'n is, dear Lord, wher'e'er Thou art,  
O never then from me depart;  
For to my soul 'tis hell to be  
But for one moment void of Thee.

Lord, I my vows to Thee renew;  
Disperse my sins as morning dew.  
Guard my first springs of thought and will,  
And with Thyself my spirit fill.

Direct, control, suggest, this day,  
All I design, or do, or say,  
That all my powers, with all their might,  
In Thy sole glory may unite.

I would not wake nor rise again  
And Heaven itself I would disdain,  
Wert Thou not there to be enjoyed,  
And I in hymns to be employed.

Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Him, all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

### Evening Hymn

All praise to Thee, my God, this night,  
For all the blessings of the light!  
Keep me, O keep me, King of kings,  
Beneath Thine own almighty wings.

Forgive me, Lord, for Thy dear Son,  
The ill that I this day have done,  
That with the world, myself, and Thee,  
I, ere I sleep, at peace may be.

Teach me to live, that I may dread  
The grave as little as my bed.  
Teach me to die, that so I may  
Rise glorious at the judgment day.

O may my soul on Thee repose,  
And with sweet sleep mine eyelids close,  
Sleep that may me more vigorous make  
To serve my God when I awake.

When in the night I sleepless lie,  
My soul with heavenly thoughts supply;

Let no ill dreams disturb my rest,  
No powers of darkness me molest.

O when shall I, in endless day,  
For ever chase dark sleep away,  
And hymns divine with angels sing,  
All praise to thee, eternal King?

Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Him, all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Have you ever considered praying the words to "America the Beautiful" as a sincere prayer for our nation? Or reflecting back the words of "O Worship the King" to God as personal praise? Many hymns were written out of significant events in the lives of the writers, many during times of great difficulty. Yet these men and women did not lose their strong faith in the sovereignty and love of God. We can pray the words to their songs in the midst of our troubles and find our faith strengthened. Take, for example, the words to this hymn.

### Whate'er My God Ordains Is Right

Whate'er my God ordains is right,  
Holy His will abideth.  
I will be still whate'er He does,  
And follow where He guideth.  
He is my God,

Though dark my road,  
He holds me that I shall not fall  
Wherefore to Him I leave it all

Whate'er my God ordains is right,  
He never will deceive me  
He leads me by the proper path,  
I know He will not leave me  
I take, content,  
What He hath sent  
His hand can turn my griefs away  
And patiently I wait His day

Whate'er my God ordains is right,  
Though now this cup in drinking  
May bitter seem to my faint heart,  
I take it all unshrinking  
My God is true,  
Each morn anew  
Sweet comfort yet shall fill my heart  
And pain and sorrow shall depart

Whate'er my God ordains is right,  
Here shall my stand be taken  
Though sorrow, need, or death be mine,  
Yet I am not forsaken

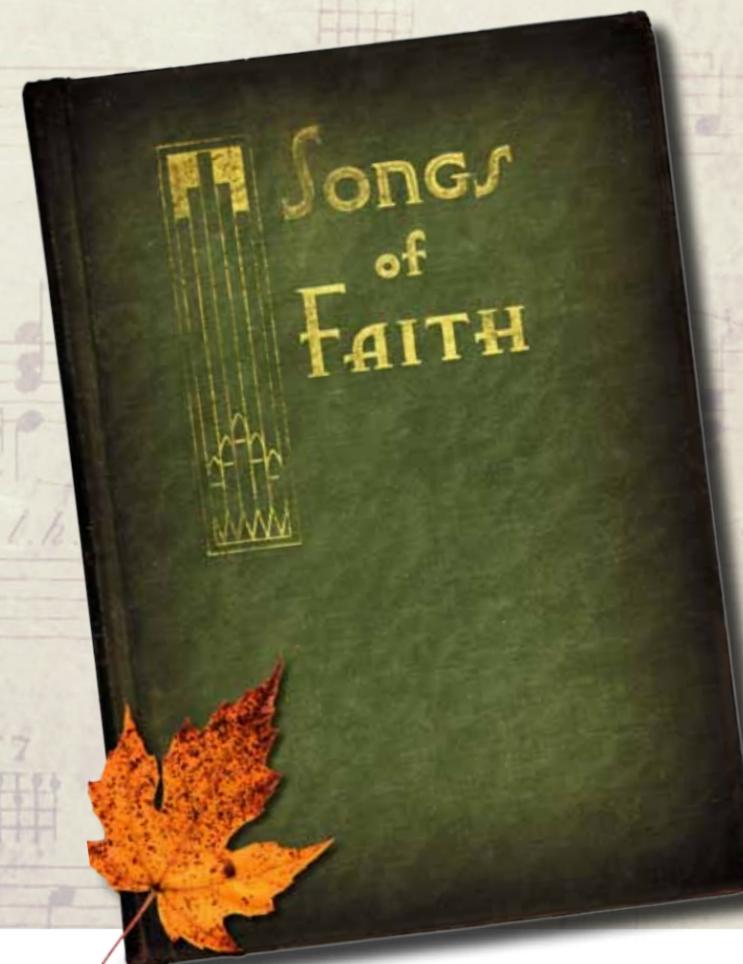
My Father's care  
Is round me there  
He holds me that I shall not fall  
And so to Him I leave it all

This is just a sampling of hymns that make great prayers. Consider getting a hymnal, or using the internet, to help you deepen your prayer life.

On a personal note, if you are interested in learning more about the history of some great hymns, both familiar and possibly new, consider reading the series of Mr. Pipes books written by Douglas Bond.

May God bless each of you as you seek to deepen your walk with Him. Watch and pray as the Day approaches!

Valerie Moore lives in south-central PA with her husband Tim and their children, and has, by the daily grace of God, homeschooled their children since 1997. They served on the CHAP Board from 2005 through 2012.



# Practicing Homeschool Sanity



by Melissa Morgner

I get excited reading about the various methods of teaching my children at home. I can spend hours researching the many tools and resources to make our days come alive in our learning endeavors. I love planning our week and get giddy with the many tangents we could take to bring the topic to life. Don't I sound like the perfect homeschooler? I'm not. None of this is actually homeschooling.

It took me a few years into our homeschool journey to realize that **planning my homeschooling** is really a different beast than the homeschooling itself. In all honesty, I thrive in the former and struggle with the latter. Planning is my specialty; implementation is a challenge times six at my house.

Homeschooling is the nitty-gritty work with my kids. It's sitting down together to explain a math concept they just can't seem to wrap their brain around. It's consistently reading EACH and EVERY day with my 1st grader who isn't yet a fluent reader. It's following up

with my middle schooler to ensure that he actually did the work and understood it. It's starting each day in a timely way and getting through the work at hand. It's implementing all those clever ideas. Or pitching them when they don't work. It's finding what works for each child. Homeschooling is hard work. The glamour of the plan is discarded for the grit of the job of teaching.

In my almost 9 years of doing this job, here's what I have learned (often the hard way).

## 1. Create a flexible weekly plan

I spend some time over the weekend laying out my plan for the next week. Or better yet, choose a curriculum that does some of this for you. Tweak it as necessary. Make copies of worksheets, gather materials for any projects and check out library books you'll need. My plans have to be basic and flexible. If my plans get too detailed, they'll be impossible to implement. If I don't plan at all, I'll flutter this way and that and forget some

important things. I must create a plan that includes some margin. You know, that space around the edges. Time and space for life. Time and space for slow downs. Time and space for learning glitches.

## 2. Have a daily routine

Don't be a slave to a time-slotted schedule. Whether we start at 9:00 or at 10:30, our beginning looks the same. Not only does this add structure to our time, but it gives the kids a sense of the flow of things. Some children panic when they don't know what to expect. They think Mom will keep them slave to homeschool all day long. But when they know the order of our day, they see the light at the end of the tunnel. I write my routine at the bottom of my schedule for the week, or honestly, I'd forget things.

## 3. Don't compare

This is toxic! Don't compare your homeschool with others. Don't compare your children with others. Don't compare yourself to others. Don't homeschool from a panic point of view. When you've heard another mom share how her children spend an hour a day on math, and you

realize your little students race through one worksheet in 15 minutes a day, you can be prone to panic and want to pile on the work. Don't do it! Seek the Lord for wisdom for your family. If you feel convicted because you don't ever teach geography, then ask the Lord how He would have you fit this in. He is so faithful to direct us, often against our own vision and ideals, for the best for each child in our family.

## 4. Mesh your ideal with reality

Ever since I began homeschooling, I've always had a toddler in tow. I've usually had a preschooler around to keep busy. And it seems like I'm always teaching someone to read. So as much as I love the idea of curling up on the couch with my children for hours of read alouds, it's really all we can do to spend 30-45 minutes reading a book. And that's with lots of interruptions. Make sense of the season you're in. It won't last forever, even though it feels this way. I have lots of things I wish we could squeeze in, but I can't beat myself up over it. I also have learned that it's not wise to try to do it all. Someone, maybe

everyone, will suffer. Do what works best for the WHOLE family for the season of life you're in. Save your best-laid plans for another year.

*Melissa Morgner is a happy wife and mother to six loud, but lovable children ranging in age from 15 down to four. Her busy household puts her gifts of juggling and winging it to the test each day. She steals moments here and there to write on her blog, Half Dozen Mama (<http://Half-DozenMama.com>), about the lessons she's learning from the Lord in the routine but privileged tasks of mothering.*



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# It's All in the *Tone*

By Tricia Hodges

We're at the neighborhood pool on a Saturday. Littlest guy, who is not scared of the water at all, jumped and dog paddled all morning. I look over as he swims to his daddy, face down in the water. Suddenly, he comes up coughing and sputtering. Calmly, Daddy says, "You're ok. Cough it out now. Good job on the swimming!" Littlest guy smiles at his daddy.

How would our three-year-old have acted had we all jumped at him, scooped him up and frantically asked if he was okay? He likely would have been scared.

A few nights later, I awake to booming, rattling thunder, bright flashes of lightning and weather alert alarms going off. We, as parents, can set the tone, model the reaction.

*God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.* 2 Timothy 1:7

If we, as parents, have these truths from the Bible tucked in our hearts, they will naturally set the tone in our homes.

We can talk about The One in control when four out of our five are gathered around on our bedroom floor at 3:23 a.m. It can be a learning opportunity. We wonder about the one child still resting peacefully. How can she sleep? This verse comes to mind:

*I'll put you in the cleft of the rock and cover you with my hand.* Exodus 33:21

"God is taking care of us," I tell littlest one as I pull him close. He then asks, "Where is God?" Daddy answers, "Why, He's on His throne in heaven as He always is. He's King of the universe. And He's taking care of us."

## *Singing Breaks the Tension*

Singing also breaks the tension of a frightening moment, no matter what your child's age.

*His eye is on the sparrow and I know He's watching me.  
All day long, I've been with Jesus, it has been a glorious day. I've just moved up one step higher and I'm walking on the King's highway.  
Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world.*

# *Tone*

## *Laugh at the Situation*

That's right! In an extra tense moment, burst out in laughter. Or share a funny story from your childhood. "So, when I'm lying in my bed and the furniture starts creeping. I'll just laugh and say, 'Hey! Cut that out!' and get back to my sleeping."

## *Trust at All Times*

Setting the tone in our homes applies not only when the spiders or scary bugs show up, but also when financially challenging times come; after your child is hurt by a friend; whatever challenge or storm looms then booms on every side.

## *Set the Tone in Your Home*

Parents set the tone in the home. Isn't it best for our children to learn the way to react from us? at home? You see, often it's not the words we say but the tone of voice that conveys our love and care. Daily, daily, daily we are the example of how to live in this world. Ouch! That means admitting to our children when we are wrong.

## *Model Forgiveness*

Asking, "Will you please forgive me for..." models forgiveness so our children will know just how to ask for forgiveness, too. But also so the children will know from the day-to-day goings on in our homes the freedoms that exist with a life in Christ—of power and love and discipline, and forgiveness, and loving care.

## *Teach Them*

So, teach them as you lie down and as you walk on the road. Yes, through His strength we can be purposeful in our parenting. Even when a child comes up for air and is sputtering. Even in the middle of the night, in the thick of the storm.

## *What is the tone in your home?*

Tricia Hodges has homeschooled for over a decade now, facing a daily dose of chaos with five children. She shares a mixture of free art lessons, recipes and the practical at [www.HodgePodge.me](http://www.HodgePodge.me). She and her husband, Steve, are also authors and owners at <http://TheCurriculumChoice.com> and [www.HabitsForaHappyHome.com](http://www.HabitsForaHappyHome.com).

*Originally published September 13, 2011, at Passionate Purposeful Parenting.*

By Kara Rozendaal

Old School: A penny saved is a penny earned.

Homeschool: A penny saved is a necessity!

The checkbook often tells the story of sacrifices made by homeschoolers. There are practical ways to simply trim expenses to alleviate budget woes and offset the sacrifices made.

## **Save on Eyeglasses**

Eyeglasses are an unavoidable expense for many. Happily for consumers, high prices can be avoided by ordering glasses online at stores such as EyeBuyDirect.com. Glasses that would typically cost \$100 at a local store are surprisingly \$20 online. Simply enter the data from the prescription received from the eye exam. Shoppers can "try on" glasses by uploading their picture and virtually placing various frames on the image. The process is quick, easy, and cheap!

## **Save on Groceries**

It may sometimes feel like coupons are intended to trick shoppers. To minimize being tricked and maximize savings, look closely at the wording on the coupon. Many coupons will have a photo of a product, hoping to tempt shoppers to purchase the higher quality or new line of their product, when the coupon is actually for *any* of their products. On many coupons, under the product photo, appears a valuable money saving phrase "Off Any."

This marketing technique is common

# Saving Money the Practical Way

on toothpaste, makeup, and medicine. Manufacturers have a photo of the newest whitening line or new improved color, while the discount is allowed to be redeemed off any item in the product line. Don't be tricked—look past the picture.

Setting price limits on grocery products helps keep budgets in check as well as alert shoppers when stocking up is a good idea. For example, name brand, high-quality bread is always \$1 at Dollar Tree. Setting a limit to spend only \$1 on bread and stocking up when it is priced less than \$1 is a great shopping strategy.

Freezing bread is easy – no tricks or training required – just place the bread in the freezer. Many suggest standing the loaf of bread on end during the defrosting stage to help the slices retain their freshness. It is an easy benchmark to remember: stock up on bread when the price is below \$1 per loaf.

## **Free Children Devotionals**

Daily devotionals have benefits that last way beyond the end of the story. The joy of reading with children – as well as learning valuable life lessons – is an investment of time that pays immense dividends.

Keys for Kids, a well-loved children's devotional, is available for free online. Keys for Kids also offers a free magazine that you can receive by mail at your home. Get free devotionals at [www.cbhministries.org](http://www.cbhministries.org).

## **Save on Electricity**

Electricity bills can be a

substantial household expense. One way to minimize the bill is by line-drying clothes. Each time a load of clothes is dried in an electric dryer, it costs roughly \$.50 per load. Some neighborhoods have restrictions on the use of outside clothes lines. An alternative is to think inside.

There are numerous drying racks that can be built and attached to a wall. One design uses dowel rods suspended on a rectangular frame of 1" x 4" wood, and utilizes a piano hinge to attach the rack to a wall. It is estimated that consumers wash 8-10 loads of laundry a week. If 80% of the loads were dried on a line, the savings would surpass \$200 per year.

## **Abundant Rewards**

It is encouraging how quickly small amounts of savings add up over time. Being intentional in saving money produces abundant rewards.

Sign up for a free weekly email full of money saving tips at [PracticalSaver.com](http://PracticalSaver.com).

Kara Rozendaal is a homeschool mom with a passion to help other families succeed financially. Kara is a financial planner with a degree in Finance from ASU. She is the author of several books, appears regularly on Channel 3's *Your Life A to Z*, and publishes a weekly newsletter that is filled with ways to take the stress out of stretching your budget. Kara lives on a ranch in Prescott Valley, AZ, loves homeschooling her three children (ages 12, 14, and 16), and has been married to her husband Ross for 18 years.

*"We have made a deep commitment to managing money and enjoying life. With the money we save, we spend as much time as we can camping, riding our horses, and taking family vacations. This time we spend is the ultimate reward for the practical way of life we have chosen."*

— Kara Rozendaal

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# Homeschool Logs SIMPLIFIED

by Darlene Catlett

## WHAT is a log?

Ask five homeschoolers this question and I guarantee you'll get five different answers! Some evaluators and school districts are looking for a teacher's plan book, but Act 169 says only that it is one part of the portfolio, that it is to be "made contemporaneously with the instruction" and that it "designates by title the reading materials used."

## WHAT is included in a log?

HSLDA recommends that we make note of the titles each day of instruction rather than creating one list of reading materials that were used during the school year. One option is to use a calendar; each day of instruction would have an entry showing the reading materials used that day, with a simple code for each book (e.g., *Romans, Reformers, Revolutionaries* = 1 or RRR, *Principles of Geometry* = 2 or POG, etc.). Another option is to simply number from 1 to 180 and check off each day as instruction occurs. Use a simple code beside each numbered day to indicate the reading materials used that day. Sample calendars and logs can be found on the CHAP website.

Your evaluator and the superintendent of your school district can use either type of log to verify that you have completed the required 180 days. Instead of counting days, homeschoolers in Pennsylvania also have the option of counting hours (900 hours in the elementary grades or 990 hours in grades 7 through 12). You'll want to consider which way works best for you.

It's important to note that a log is not a teacher's plan book, nor does it need to show in detail exactly what work your child has done each day. For some subjects, such as physical education, we may not use a book at all. If you have a school day when you don't use any books (for example you went to a museum or a hike or field trip), just circle the date – there are no books to write down. If it makes you feel better, or helps you remember in case your evaluator asks you, write "hike" or "museum" or just "field trip."

You may decide to work from some type of detailed plan book, complete with page numbers, scores, etc., in order to make plans and communicate with your children, *but this is beyond the requirements of Act 169*. The first goal for your log is to meet the requirements of the law (sad that this is our first priority). The second goal is to make the log as un-invasive as possible and to make it work for you and your family.

Sometimes school districts and evaluators ask for more than is required by Act 169. If this happens to you, respectfully point out what the law says about logs and ask them to show you where Act 169 requires more of you. If you are a member of HSLDA, ask

the school district to put their requests in writing, and send a copy to HSLDA. If you're not a member, CHAP recommends that you consider joining HSLDA. [www.hsllda.org](http://www.hsllda.org)

## Regarding logs, Act 169 says:

*section 3(e)(1): ... The portfolio shall consist of a log, made contemporaneously with the instruction, which designates by title the reading materials used...*

Seriously... that's all that is said about logs in Act 169!

## READ THE LAW

Our children are all grown, but when we were homeschooling, I made it a point to read Act 169 at least once every year, and I encourage you to do this, too. I usually read it when I was preparing our affidavit and portfolios in the late spring. You can get a copy of the law, as well as *CHAP's Homeschooling Briefs*, from CHAP's website.

Years ago, I copied the text of Act 169 and pasted it into a Word document. Then, without changing any of the words, I put it into an outline form so that I could understand it better. You can find a copy of this outline form of Act 169 on CHAP's website, too.

CHAP's *Keys to Homeschooling in the Keystone State* is another helpful resource, which you can download for \$6 from the CHAP website, or order a spiral-bound hard-copy for yourself, your support group or your public library by mailing a check for \$15 to the CHAP office.

*Darlene Catlett and her husband Don began homeschooling their four children in 1988. They enjoy sharing a vision for homeschooling free of all unnecessary paperwork and requirements, but until that day comes, Darlene works with other homeschool families as they make their way through various challenges such as filing paperwork and choosing curriculum.*

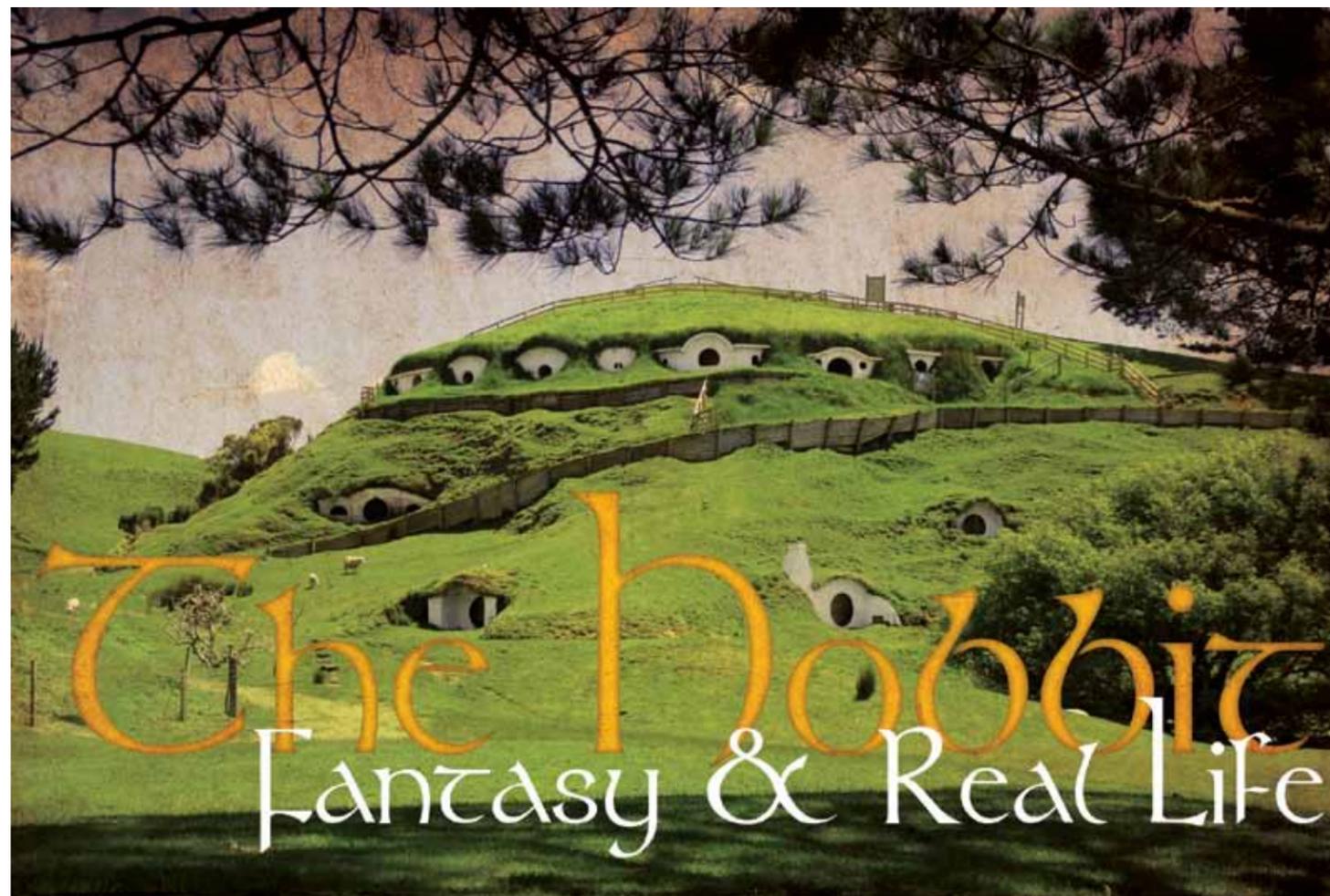
## Online Resources:

*CHAP's Homeschooling Briefs*  
[http://files.chaponline.com/CHAP\\_HS\\_Briefs\\_11\\_07.pdf](http://files.chaponline.com/CHAP_HS_Briefs_11_07.pdf)

Act 169  
[www.chaponline.com/getting-started/know-the-law/act-169](http://www.chaponline.com/getting-started/know-the-law/act-169)

Act 169 in outline form  
[www.chaponline.com/getting-started/know-the-law/act-169-in-outline-form](http://www.chaponline.com/getting-started/know-the-law/act-169-in-outline-form)

*CHAP's Keys to Homeschooling in the Keystone State*  
[www.chaponline.com/keys](http://www.chaponline.com/keys)



By Laure Covert

*"A good book has a profound kind of morality – not a cheap sentimental sort that thrives on shallow plots and superficial heroes, but the sort of force that inspires the reader's inner life and draws out what is noble."*  
—Honey for a Child's Heart by Gladys Hunt

*The Hobbit* began as a bedtime story for J.R.R. Tolkien's children. It has a milder story arc than the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy and, therefore, is a great read-aloud for families whose younger children can absorb the peril of giant spiders, a wily and powerful dragon, and battles scenes. Older teens and adults will receive enjoyment and insight from the book as well. (My husband listened to it on audio this past summer).

I found that reading *The Hobbit* aloud to my teen daughters last year offered not only the solidarity of sharing a great story, but also a new understanding of how our inner gifts and life purpose can be drawn out by others. Gandalf does this for Bilbo Baggins, who sees himself as a simple hobbit in the Shire, living a safe and complacent life. We all need to have others who will see our unique purposes and help us walk them out. Beware, as Tolkien shows us: the road to fulfilling our destiny is fraught with difficulty.

The first of a two-part film adaptation of the book, *The Hobbit: An*

*Unexpected Journey*, will be released on December 14, 2012, by New Line Cinema, Warner Bros and MGM. I urge you to read the book first, so that you receive the story as the author intended it to unfold – unabridged – the plot intact with all the detailed descriptions and the dialogue that define the characters. Also, give yourself the fun experience of having certain scenes and themes of the book jump off the pages right at you. The movie, (which I expect will be excellent) by contrast, will be the product of director Peter Jackson's vision and how the story impacted him.

**Fun Fact:** There are editions of his work that J.R.R. Tolkien illustrated himself. Also, Harper Collins will release *The Art of the Hobbit* on September 18, 2012 which has compiled illustrations for the story by the author.

Also recommended: *Tolkien's Ordinary Virtues: Exploring the Spiritual Themes of The Lord of the Rings*, by Mark Eddy Smith.

*Laure Covert, a resident of Harrisburg, is a proud member of CHAP and has homeschooled her three children for the past 12 years. Her favorite things are birds and books. Laure's vision is to see people of all ages become life-long readers. Check out her blog [www.pineneedlesandpapertrails.com](http://www.pineneedlesandpapertrails.com)*

# 2013

## May 10 at 7:00 PM 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual graduation

The Christian Homeschool Association of Pennsylvania is pleased to announce that it will be providing our Third Annual Graduation Ceremony during the 2013 CHAP Convention. Sign up begins October 15th and ends February 1, 2013. Cost is \$50.00 per graduate which includes the use of cap and gown, and other incidentals. E-mail chapgrad@comcast.net for further information.

An invitation is extended to all 2013 Pennsylvania Homeschool Graduates who will complete the Pennsylvania educational requirements during the 2013 school year. Please be aware that the ceremony is provided to honor the students for their achievements, but CHAP does not take the responsibility of verifying that the requirements for the state law have been met. This is the sole responsibility of the parent(s).

Caps and gowns will be worn, and parents will present certificates of participation during the ceremony. So spread the word and keep your eyes open for updates in the CHAP Magazine, the CHAP eNews, or on the CHAP website! Remember the deadline for registering to participate in the graduation will be set for February 1, 2013.



## You are cordially invited to experience the best in Christian Homeschooling at the **27th Annual CHAP Homeschool Convention**

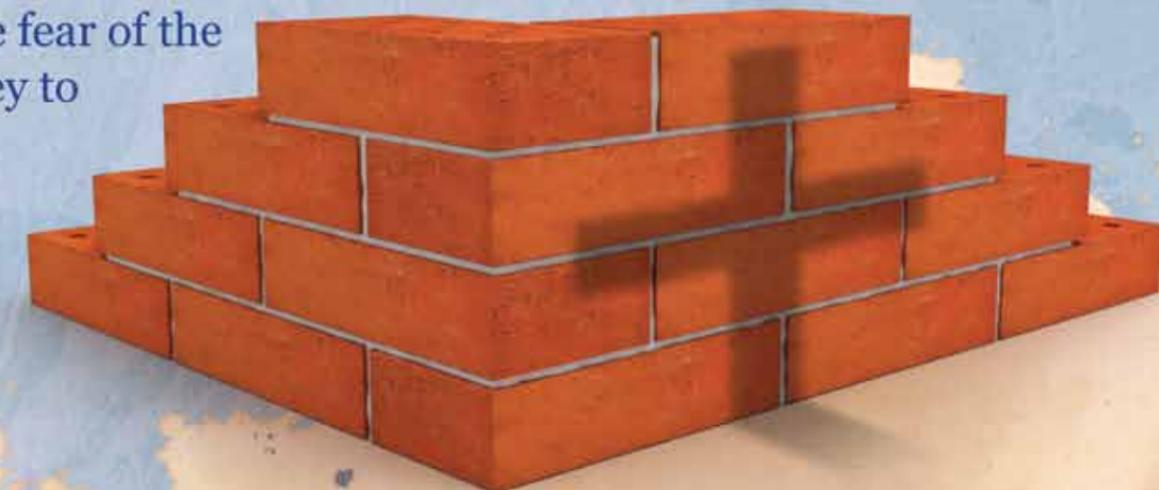
Friday and Saturday, May 10 -11, 2013

[www.CHAPconvention.com](http://www.CHAPconvention.com)

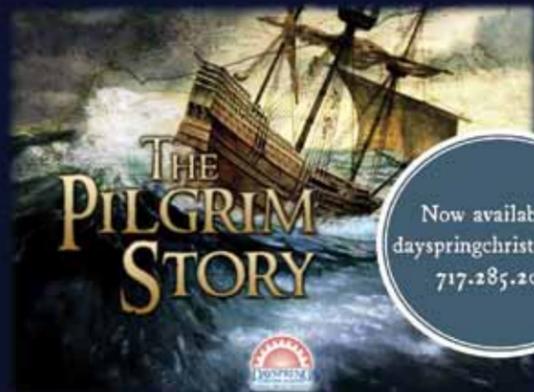
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He will be the sure foundation for your times, a rich store of salvation and wisdom and knowledge; the fear of the LORD is the key to this treasure.

Isaiah 33:6 (NIV)



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