

FAMILY TIMES

A Home-school Newsletter for New Testament Christians
Edited by Bev & Dave Hewitt and Karen & Dave Pratte

Subscriptions \$4 per school year* (USA only). Send to:
Family Times, 7846 St. Joe Rd., Ft. Wayne, IN 46835

* Four issues yearly. Subs sent after September receive back issues.

Send e-mail to DEPratte@juno.com



JUNE - AUGUST, 1996

E-MAIL LIST FOR CHRISTIANS WHO HOME SCHOOL

Family Times is indirectly involved in another new project for the benefit of Christians who home school. It is an automatic e-mail list, called HSlist, for those who have a computer with a modem. Anyone on the list can communicate with everyone else on the list simply by sending an e-mail to the list address. The list processor automatically forwards the message to everyone else on the list. We already have over 50 families of Christians on the list. This means that all subscribers have a way of contacting dozens of families of Christians who home school and receiving their replies within just a few hours. This is an amazing advantage for those who want support from other Christians, advice, comfort, or just encouragement.

HSlist is a “closed” list, which means in order to be on the list, people must apply to the owners of the list, Mark Mayberry or David Pratte. HSlist will appeal only to people who are favorably interested in home schooling and who are members of non-institutional churches of Christ. By “favorably interested in home schooling” we mean people who are personally involved in home schooling or who are favorably impressed by the idea of home schooling and want to know more about it. By “non-institutional churches of Christ” we mean faithful local congregations of God’s people which are opposed to instrumental music in worship and opposed to church support of centralized arrangements including sponsoring churches and benevolent institutions such as “orphan homes” (among other things).

Please be aware that all subscribers on the list will have access to the names and addresses of all other subscribers. To the best of our knowledge and ability, we will not, without your permission, submit this information to people who are not on the list.

If, after reading this description, you desire to be on HSlist and you fit the “profile” we have described, then please fill in the brief response form included in your *Family Times* renewal form and mail it back to us. Or you can e-mail us directly as follows: Mark Mayberry 103710.3260@compuserve.com or David Pratte at DEPratte@juno.com.

Note that *Family Times* has a new e-mail address. Please update your records: DEPratte@juno.com

FAMILY TIMES COMPILES CURRICULUM REVIEWS!

Because so many educational materials are available on the market, home schoolers sometimes need guidance in making selections. New Testament Christians, in particular, sometimes find reviews written by denominational people to be unreliable or unhelpful. For this reason, *Family Times* is sponsoring an effort to publish descriptions of major home-school curricula and text books, reviewed from a truly Biblical perspective.

Over the years we have published many reviews in *Family Times*, and we intend to continuing doing so, however we undertake this special effort with the hope that we can eventually edit a book or booklet containing many such reviews. If you are willing to participate by writing a review(s) for us, understanding that this book will most likely be sold with the intent of making a profit, please indicate your willingness on your *Family Times* renewal form. We will contact you with more specific information.

INTERESTING QUOTE

A local radio commercial in our area urged parents to run for their local school board. It said: “Why leave your children’s future in someone else’s hands?” Think about it ...

A REVIEW OF BEKA VIDEO SCHOOL

A Beka School Services Phone: (800)874-3592
Video Home School FAX: (800)874-3593
Pensacola FL 32523-9160

As stated in their brochure, “the Video Home School features the master teachers of Pensacola Christian Academy in a traditional Christian classroom setting for the instruction of your child at home.” Kindergarten through high school courses are available on either a credit or noncredit basis.

This program is based on videos tapes which present the material taught in A Beka Book texts. The tapes come in periodic shipments and must be returned after use. Also included are the student’s textbooks, quiz and test booklets, teacher’s manuals, curriculum guides, quiz and test keys, as well as some supplementary materials. All of these written materials are those which are available through A Beka Books. The “noncredit” program prices are \$690 per grade (includes all subjects) for elementary or \$315 per course for grades 7-12 or \$820 for three to five subjects. The “credit” program is \$740 per course.

The teachers on the videos are, for the most part, excellent. The elementary teachers are nothing short of amazing as they involve the at-home students. Most of the high school teachers (especially history and science) are extremely engaging and interesting. The subject matter is covered thoroughly.

The class schedule in the elementary grades is relatively rigid due to the fact that the subjects follow one another on the video tape. Since the teachers’ instruction builds day by day, skipping ahead is difficult. Beginning with grade 7 the video instruction for each subject is on separate tapes, giving much more flexibility to slow down or to skip ahead in a subject as needed. Of course, the parents can modify the assignments and testing if they are using the noncredit program.

Doctrinal error can be largely avoided by deleting A Beka’s Bible courses. The video teachers and the textbooks (usually history and English) sometimes make references to “faith-only salvation,” Calvinism, premillennialism, and denominational missionaries. These errors are readily identified by older students. Nevertheless, parents should remain vigilant when using A Beka. This teaching is very, very limited in the regular course work, but does occasionally creep in.

The standards and pace of the A Beka program are demanding and challenging. Students can work very independently but a parent should be nearby for further explanations and to gauge the student’s comprehension. Our daughters definitely feel like they are a part of their video classes and speak of their classmates and teachers as though they personally know them. We believe that the video school is an excellent way to home school older students.

— Reviewed by Sherry and Matt Hennecke

WHY ARE WE HOMESCHOOLING? A PROFILE OF THE MAYBERRY FAMILY

by Mark & Sherelyn Mayberry

You might ask, “Why are we homeschooling?” Our son Nathan has done quite well in public school. In fact, he is a straight-A student. We have been generally satisfied with his teachers. However, I have become increasingly uncomfortable in turning my son over to a system dominated by those who believe in secular humanism, situation ethics, values clarification, condom distribution, etc.

I believe the National Education Association (NEA) is a hopelessly corrupt, self-serving organization. Mired hip-deep in liberalism, they oppose everything I support, and support everything I oppose! They are anti-parent, anti-church, anti-God, anti-standards (religious, moral, academic, and otherwise). They are pro-choice, pro-condom, pro-homosexual, ad nauseum. Why should I willingly turn my child over to a system that is dominated by such thinking?

We attended a PTA meeting last year, and all they could talk about was Earth Day! Students are constantly indoctrinated with Al Gore’s “Earth in the Lurch” impending eco-disaster philosophy. Give me a break! Furthermore, posters all over the school building promote student “self-esteem.” Yet, this obviously desirable quality seems divorced from its foundation: i.e., genuine effort and accomplishment. The liberal solution is not to challenge children to excel, but rather to lower the standards so little Johnny won’t feel badly about himself because he can’t read.

The final straw for us occurred last year. Nathan’s 3rd grade teacher was reading a book to the class about a girl named Matilda who loved to read. The child is presented as the fountain of wisdom, while her mom and dad come across as nitwits. Dad is a stupid, mean-spirited, dishonest used-car salesman. Mom is a fat couch potato who cares only about her daily soap operas. Both neglect their daughter. The little girl had to sneak off to the library to find books to read. She plots funny ways of getting even with her

parents. (Nathan, who did not perceive the underlying message of the book, looked forward to their daily reading session. He could not wait to hear how she was going to get even with her dopey parents.) The only responsible and caring adult in the entire story is the girl's school teacher. (Even the principal, another authority figure, is a bumbling misfit). In the end, mom and dad race out of town in a broken down jalopy, forever abandoning the child. However, tragedy is soon replaced by joy, because she is adopted by the loving, compassionate teacher. They both live happily ever after.

I wrote a letter to Nathan's teacher expressing my objections to this story. I said, "Sure, 3rd graders will think the story is funny, but should we hold up parents as objects of scorn and ridicule? Admittedly, some children are cursed with bad parents, just as there are some bad teachers and bad cops. However, in this age of broken homes, we should do everything possible to strengthen the family rather than weaken it." Nathan's teacher responded to my letter by saying that the book was recommended by Publisher's Weekly, School Library Journal, Elem. School Library Collective, etc. (Is the liberal establishment's bias against the family so evident and widespread? I guess so...)

After that experience, we began to seriously consider homeschooling. The more we learned about the movement, the more excited we became. Now, after almost six months of actual homeschooling, we all are thrilled with the decision! It is rewarding in so many ways! Our family has drawn closer together, mentally, spiritually, and emotionally.

By no means am I saying that every Christian should follow this course. Other school systems may be quite satisfactory, even rewarding. However, in our present circumstances, we think this is the best route to follow.

CABLE TV ON-LINE

Cindy Shaver sent us the following information, which she obtained permission for us to reprint. It was taken from an article in the 1996 issue of *Cable in the Classroom*.

Cable in the Classroom, a non-profit service of the cable television industry, seeks to match the resources of cable television with the needs of schools/educators. The organization provides a magazine that outlines and informs educators regarding educational programming provided by the cable television industry. To get a free sample copy of the magazine you simply call 1-800-743-5355.

ON-LINE ROUNDUP

Most Cable in the Classroom programmers now at least offer on-line program descriptions and listings. Many also post lesson plans and support material on-line. Some provide photos, copies of historical documents, and other resources educators can easily and quickly obtain for the price of a on-line-service, subscription or Internet connection.

Students at different schools can also work together, and they can interact with scientists, politicians, and artists to gain first-hand knowledge.

Of course, the electronic landscape changes quickly as new sites come on-line and current members expand their presence. The information in this article comes from an Oct. 95 survey, and was accurate at press time.

A&E

Free support materials and classroom resources are also available at the A&E Web site, scheduled to go on-line this month. The A&E site will eventually offer a message board, live chat rooms, and moderated on-line discussions. <http://www.aetv.com>

BRAVO

Program schedules and descriptions for regular programming and Bravo in the Classroom are available on-line. Free support materials are also offered. <http://www.bravotv.com>

CNN

Program schedules and descriptions, including those for CNN Newsroom/Worldview, are available on CNN on-line sites. Other classroom materials offered on-line include photos, maps, documents, and audio and video clips. <http://www.cnn.com>

C-SPAN

C-SPAN offers program listings with descriptions and copyright information. Free support materials and other classroom resources such as maps, photos, charts, original documents, and audio clips are available. <http://www.c-span.org>

COURT TV

On-line since December 1993, Court TV, offers searchable program schedules and descriptions that include Cable in the Classroom programs. Free lesson plans and support materials for Class Action, Court TV's Cable in the Classroom programming block, are available. <http://www.courttv.com>

DISCOVERY CHANNEL

Searchable program schedules and descriptions include Assignment Discovery programs. In addition, free lesson plans and support materials, audio and visual aides, and documents are available. <http://www.discovery.com/educ>

THE HISTORY CHANNEL

The History Channel's Web site is scheduled to come on-line this month. Searchable program schedule and descriptions available on-line will include History Channel Classroom. Free support materials, other video and audio classroom resources, and a suggestions box will also be offered. <http://historychannel.com>

LIFETIME

Program schedules and descriptions are currently available at Lifetime on-line sites. <http://LifetimeTV.com> (Available 3/96)

PBS

The PBS World Wide Web site offers users program schedules and descriptions in a searchable format. Free lesson plans, support materials, activity sheets, and other classroom aides such as photos, charts, original documents, and video and audio clips, are also posted for educators. Interactive elements include a message board, moderated discussions, and a suggestion box. The PBS Web site also provides links to the Web sites of more than 50 local public television stations. <http://www.pbs.org>

THE LEARNING CHANNEL

Searchable program schedules and descriptions include TLC Elementary School and The Magic Box. Copyright information is also included. Free lesson plans and support materials, audio and visual aids, and documents are offered. <http://discovery.com/edu>

THE WEATHER CHANNEL

The Weather Channel offers complete program schedules and descriptions in a searchable format that includes The Weather Classroom. Lesson plans and support materials are available for free and for purchase. Interactivity is provided through a suggestion box, message, board, and moderated on-line discussions. <http://www.weather.com/weather>

TEEN HELP STATISTICS

Jerry King posted the following interesting statistics to Garyslist. They came from a mail out by the TEEN HELP organization.

HOW TIMES HAVE CHANGED

Public school teachers rate the top disciplinary problems:

1940	1990
Talking out of turn	Drug abuse
Chewing gum	Alcohol abuse
Making noise	Pregnancy
Running in the halls	Suicide
Cutting in line	Rape
Dress-code violations	Robbery
Littering	Assault

IN THE NEXT 24 HOURS...

1,439 teens will attempt suicide; 2,795 teenage girls will become pregnant

1,506 teens will take their FIRST drink of alcohol or use of drugs; 3,561 teens will run away

EDITORIAL NOTES

We owe many thanks to all who have submitted material for this issue. An special thanks goes to Jean McPherson! Nice to hear from you again, Jean. Thanks also to the Mayberrys for the family profile, and especially to Mark for his great work on HSlist.

Thanks also to Matt and Sherry Hennecke for the review of Beka Video School, to Cindy Shaver for the information on cable TV, and to Jeff Hamilton for the review of CLASS. Incidentally, it has been our

understanding that CLASS is a ministry of a denomination called the Church of Christian Liberty. In the past they told us that CLASS funds were not in any way separated from church funds. That may have changed since then, however. Jeff is pursuing this question further. Thanks, Jeff.

Other people are submitting curriculum and other reviews in response to our requests. THANK YOU ALL VERY MUCH. We will publish your material as we have space.

WE URGE ALL OUR READERS TO RENEW. STAY WITH US. THIS IS AN EXCITING TIME FOR CHRISTIANS WHO HOME SCHOOL!