

FAMILY TIMES

A Home-school Newsletter for New Testament Christians
Edited by Bev & Dave Hewitt and Karen & Dave Pratte
7846 St. Joe Rd., Ft. Wayne, IN 46835

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Send e-mail to familytimes@gospelway.com
Web site: www.gospelway.com/familytimes/

June-August, 2001

UPCOMING CHANGES IN FAMILY TIMES

by the editors

As we come to the end of another school year, the editors would like to take a little space to discuss future plans for *Family Times*.

Changes in our families

The editors' families (Hewitts and Prattes) began home schooling back in 1983 (or was it 1984 ... or maybe 1982?). In those days, the only other people we knew who home schooled were George Washington's parents and Abraham Lincoln's parents. ☺

Times have changed, not only for home schooling, but for the Hewitt and Pratte families. All three of the Pratte children are grown, all have graduated from home school, in fact all have their college degrees (this year Susan received her AA from Florida College and Tim received his Master's degree in accounting from the Univ. of Illinois). Two of the Pratte children are married and one has a child (yes, we're grandparents!). This year Emily Hewitt graduated from high school, which means all the Hewitt children have graduated from home school. The three oldest Hewitt children have also graduated from Florida College, and one is married.

This inevitably changes our relationship to home schooling. In brief, the editors are now all "retired" home-school teachers. This does not mean we no longer intend to encourage and promote home schooling (old habits are hard to break!). But it does mean we are no longer personally involved "hands-on." We simply are not going to know, from personal experience, what materials are available and what current problems home schoolers may be facing.

The proverbial "bottom line" is that we hope to continue keeping up with *Family Times*, but we will need help. For one thing, we simply cannot review current home-school curricula and materials, for the simple reason that we don't know what's available any more. We cannot discuss the latest trends and techniques, because we have no experience with them. For another thing, we need time to go visit our grandkids! We are now completing our 14th year of editing and printing the newsletter, and "burn out" does become a factor.

So we have some changes in mind and more may follow soon.

Wayne Walker a regular contributor

First, we have asked Wayne Walker to become a regular contributor to *Family Times*. Wayne is a friend of Prattes and Hewitts from way back, having married Karen Hensley, who grew up in Ft. Wayne. The Walkers have been home schooling their boys for some time, and have been actively involved in editing a newsletters for Christians who home school in the Dayton, Ohio, area. They are planning to move from Dayton soon, and afterwards Wayne will become a regular contributor to *Family Times*.

We are looking forward to working with Wayne, and we anticipate an increasing involvement on his part in the newsletter soon. Please see his article in this issue.

Need for volunteers

We also need continued and increasing contributions to the newsletter from our readers. We appreciate so much those of you who have contributed articles over the years. We intended from the beginning for the newsletter to be a forum for our subscribers to share their knowledge and experiences. Our goal has always been for each issue to consist primarily of subscriber contributions, rather than material that we have written. We appreciate so much the contributions we receive.

In fact, the newsletter would simply not be possible without your contributions. So we continue to urge our readers to continue writing and submitting material. In general we always need:

- * People to write and submit family profiles
- * People to write and submit reviews of home-school curricula and materials
- * People to write and submit descriptions of teaching methods, techniques, and suggestions, etc.

At this time, however, we have special needs in two areas. We would dearly love to have some of you volunteer to help in these ways:

(1) **We need regular contributors** – people who will commit themselves to regularly submit articles (short or long) on topics of your choosing. This would not necessarily have to be every issue, four times a year, but maybe two or three times a year. If we could just have several families that we could rely on to send material, this would significantly ease our work load.

(2) We would dearly love to find someone who personally owns an office copier (or has one available to them – **not** a church-owned copier!) and who would **volunteer to copy, address, and mail the regular mail copies of *Family Times* each issue**. We could submit the “master copies” to you, you could print them on the copier, address and stuff the envelopes, and mail them. This would involve typically fewer than 50 subscribers to mail to for each issue. Of course, *Family Times* would reimburse your costs (but don’t expect to get rich!). It would help if the volunteer had e-mail and can receive e-mail attachments. If anyone could volunteer to do this for us each issue, this would be a major help.

At the end of this issue is a form for you to fill out, if you are willing to volunteer to help in any way.

Discontinuation of State Contacts and Hospitality List

We have made an editorial decision to discontinue our involvement in the State Contact and Hospitality lists. This does not mean the lists will necessarily end. It just means we are not willing to maintain the lists any more. If someone else will volunteer to keep the lists (one or both) and make this information available, they are welcome to continue the lists.

We began the lists at a time when contact between Christians who home school was difficult. New home schoolers needed ways to contact other home-schooling Christians to learn about state laws and to receive encouragement and discuss concerns about home schooling.

Much of this need is now being met in other ways. HSLDA now has information available about all state laws on their web site. The Homeschoolers List is an email list for faithful Christians who home school, so contact and information is easily and quickly available there (see our web site for more information). And the members of that list are even planning annual camping meetings to visit together.

We have asked for your input and, while the responses were favorable, there were only two of them. We do not doubt that some people receive value from the lists, but we simply do not see enough of a need to continue to do the work considering our own work load. So if someone will volunteer to maintain one or both of those lists and make them available, we will be glad to help you get started.

Time to renew

Finally, it is time for many of you to renew your subscriptions to *Family Times*. All subscriptions run by school year. Since we are now reaching the end of a school year, many subscriptions now come due.

If you subscribe by regular mail, your address label will indicate if you need to renew (if the numbers at the top show “01” but not any higher number, such as “02” or “03,” etc., then you need to renew). If you subscribe by email, we will send you an email reminding you that it is time to renew.

When you do renew, please fill in the form at the end of this issue to help us know what you are willing to do to help us with the work.

Our thanks to contributors for this issue.

We especially thank Janet Metzger and Wayne Walker for their regular contributions. We thank Rhonda Bosworth for both of her reviews, Teresa Harris for her family profile, and Jeff Smelser for information about his Greek course. Thanks again to all our contributors.

DAYCARE BOMBSHELL HITS THE “VILLAGE”

by Phyllis Schlafly

The advocates of “it take a village to raise a child” are having a rough month. They are scurrying around trying to come up with arguments to refute the new study showing that children who spend most of their time in daycare are three times as likely to exhibit behavior problems in kindergarten as those who are cared for primarily by their mothers.

Children who spend more than 30 hours a week in daycare were found to be more demanding, more noncompliant, and more aggressive. They scored higher on things like gets in lots of fights, cruelty, bullying, meanness, talking too much, and making demands that must be met immediately.

The study found a direct correlation between time spent in daycare and a child’s aggression, defiance and disobedience. The findings held true regardless of the type or quality of daycare, the sex of the child, the family’s socioeconomic status, or the quality of the mother care.

Why is anybody surprised that social science research is confirming reality? True science always verifies reality; it’s only junk science that manufactures illusions based on ideologies.

The new study followed more than 1,100 children in ten cities in every kind of daycare setting, from care with relatives and nannies to preschool and large daycare centers. The study was financed by the National Institute on Child Health and Human Development, a branch of the National Institutes of Health that produced a daycare-friendly report in 1996.

The “village” advocates are swarming all over the media with their feeble rebuttals. They argue, without evidence, that better quality daycare might produce different results, that the real problem is that employed parents are tired and stressed, and that the study hasn’t undergone rigorous peer review.

Of course, there are other variables, including viewing television, the divorce of parents, and the amount of father care. But this new study is the most comprehensive to date and its findings are by significant margins.

The new study corroborates the 1986 findings of one of its principal investigators, Dr. Jay Belsky, who shocked the child development world with an article entitled “Infant Day Care: A Cause for Concern?” Belsky reported on the evidence then piling up that infants who spent long hours in daycare were at risk of behavioral problems later.

At that time, the daycare industry and the “village” advocates in the child development field were preparing to launch a national advertising campaign for federally funded, federally regulated daycare as a new middle-class entitlement. They felt threatened by this article by Belsky, then just a young associate professor at Pennsylvania State University.

So, the daycare industry lowered the professional boom on the upstart professor who dared to challenge the then prevailing feminist notion that commercial daycare was what infants really needed so that their mothers could be fulfilling themselves in the labor force. The word went out: don’t buy Belsky’s textbook, shun him at professional meetings, label him a misogynist.

The reason the daycare issue arouses such bitter antagonism is not only that it challenges the liberals who want to expand government social services by having the “village” take over raising children. The daycare issue also strikes at the heart of feminist ideology that it is oppression of women for society to expect mothers to care for their own children.

Feminist ideology teaches that equality for women depends on the government relieving women of the burden of child care so they can be advancing in the labor force. Any evidence that shows commercial daycare inferior to mother care, therefore, must be destroyed and the messengers vilified.

Remarkably, Belsky didn’t kowtow to the Politically Correct gestapo as so many academics have done. He is now a professor at the University of London and this time he was joined in his research by some of the country’s most respected child development experts.

In 1988, the daycare industry, with lobbying help and media access from the Children’s Defense Fund, went ahead with its lavish national advertising campaign, proclaiming the lack of sufficient daycare a national “crisis,” and offering the ABC Child Care Bill sponsored by Senator Chris Dodd (D-CT) as the solution. Their three-year congressional and media battle failed; the American people are not willing to provide tax-paid baby-sitters for other people’s children.

Hillary Clinton made another attempt to peddle the notion of a daycare “crisis” as her “frontier issue” in 1997. She hosted an exclusive shindig at the White House featuring all the usual suspects of those

who want the “village” to raise children, such as her friend Marian Wright Edelman of the Children’s Defense Fund, but the American people turned a deaf ear to her cries of “crisis.”

The conservative solution to child care needs has always been tax credits, i.e., let the parents spend their own money for the child care of their choice, and don’t force mothers taking care of their own children to subsidize babysitters for employed moms. Fortunately, we’ve made some progress in legislating child credits into the income tax code.

Phyllis Schlafly column 5-02-01
Eagle Forum www.eagleforum.org

BARRON’S MATH WIZARDRY FOR KIDS

Written by Margaret Kenda and Phyllis S. Williams

Reviewed by Rhonda Bosworth

Does your child enjoy nature? Exploring patterns and shapes? Art? Music? Poetry? Codes and Puzzles? Games? What about history? If the answers to these questions are, “Yes,” your child may enjoy *Math Wizardry*, even if he or she does not care for math. *Math Wizardry for Kids* is the second in a series of “Wizardry” books published by Barron’s. As with the other “Wizardry” books, no wizardry or magic is involved in the multitude activities.

This book is written directly to learners ages 8-88, and, for the most part, no adult supervision is needed. (In a couple of cases, as in making tessellations with gelatin, an adult might want to be on hand, depending upon the age and capabilities of the child.)

This book has over 300 pages of activities that will engage and challenge your child. Our world is filled with “math,” and the goal of this book is to help the child discover the importance of understanding math and have fun while doing it. While this book never mentions the name of God, and doesn’t directly teach about Him, you can see His handiwork clearly while participating in these activities.

Here is a sampling of some of the activities you will find:

Explore shapes and patterns in nature.

Learn the history of traditions and numbers.

Learn how to design shadows.

Learn about fractals and golden numbers.

Explore proportions.

Play tangram games, star games, and Mancala.

Make your own puzzles.

Make 3-D mobiles.

Learn ancient language “codes.”

Count to 10 in four languages.

Learn puzzlers by using numbers to amaze others.

Learn how to develop helpful shortcuts in math.

Learn to think like a computer.

Build an Abacus.

Learn to use math for sports stats.

Make magic squares.

The book even gives you ideas for having a Math Party, complete with a treasure hunt!

Admittedly a great many of these ideas and activities can be found in other sources; however, this is the only book I have ever found to have so many and such diverse items in a single source. And, because of its “ageless” appeal in many cases, this is likely a book you will want to hang on to.

Math Wizardry is organized well so it can be readily used as a reference book as well as an idea book. Whenever a problem is presented in the book, an answer for that problem is provided at the back of the section where the problem was presented. However, this book does not contain math lessons based upon a regular course of math principles. This book does include all of the “fun” math that traditional textbooks tend to leave out!

Whether or not you are good at math, this is a fun book to have on hand. For those who would not call math their “strong point,” this book helps to explore the world of math as well as make you more comfortable with it. For those who have a firm grasp on math, this book provides all the fun and creativity that you may have never realized was inherent in math. It comes as a spiral bound paperback, 7.5” x 9.5”, 325 pages. Single color illustrations abound; the format and font used are reader friendly.

THE HARRIS FAMILY PROFILE

by Teresa Harris

We are the Harris family from Galena, Indiana. There is my husband, Simon, myself, Jordan, 11, Kelsey, 7, Simon David, 4, and Faith, 3 months. Simon preaches for the congregation in Galena, which is in Southern Indiana, 20 minutes from Louisville, Kentucky.

We have been home schooling for four years. Kelsey is in the third grade and Simon David is in preschool. We have used several curricula. Currently we are using Sonlight with Kelsey, as well as Math U See and Easy Grammar. With Simon David, we use Peak with Books, Look What I Can Do, and Alpha Phonics.

We chose to home school mainly because we felt it was the best for our family. I taught in the public school system for six years and I love teaching. When it came time for Kelsey to start school, it seemed the most logical course for her to stay home to learn. Simon's office is at home, so we are all together throughout the day. We love the closeness this brings to our family.

We have a finished room in the basement with all the school stuff and toys. We also have a playpen for Faith set up. We spend a good deal of the day in that room during the week. I start Kelsey with her school, then while she is working, Simon David and I spend about an hour doing activities.

We are blessed to be a part of a home-school group in our area, that is made up of Christians in the Louisville and Southern Indiana area. We meet once a month for activities such as History Fair or Science Enrichment, and we also have field trips once a month. We have preschoolers all the way up to high schoolers. We feel this group is such a wonderful support and encouragement to our family.

We are also blessed to be a part of a congregation where there are four home-schooling families. In the congregation there are a large number of children, yet there is no tension or competition between home schoolers and those who school outside the home. We are all supportive of one another's decisions.

We face all the typical home-schooling challenges that most families face, but truly we do feel that home schooling is a plus for our family. We plan to continue home schooling for as long as this continues to be true for our family.

A PENNY SAVED AND A STITCH IN TIME

by Janet Metzger

*****Limit phone conversations

If you have an answering machine, let it screen your calls for you on a particularly busy day. If talking on the phone slows you down, try finishing some of your tasks before picking up the receiver.

*****Use less

You will have to experiment with this. Depending on the softness of your water you may be able to cut your dishwasher detergent and washing machine detergent in half and still get the same results. I cut my dryer sheets in half and they last twice as long. I also cut my facial cleaning sheets in half.

*****"Good for you" Popsicles

Our local Wal-Mart and Dollar General sells reusable Popsicle molds for \$1 that makes 4-6 Popsicles. I use the grape juice or orange juice that we already have, and they make a great treat on a hot day for kids and grownups.

*****Greeting cards

Some towns have special card shops that sell all of their cards 2/\$1. The Dollar General in our town does. That's a much better price than \$2-\$3 or more per card. It is usually the hand-written note inside that is more meaningful than the card. It can also be a great project for children to decorate homemade cards for different occasions.

*****Quick and Easy Beef Noodle Soup

This recipe has only 5 ingredients and is very quick to prepare, especially if your ground beef is cooked ahead of time. It is from the March/April issue of *Quick Cooking Magazine* from the makers of *Taste of Home Magazine*. The website is www.reimanpub.com if anyone is interested in checking out their magazine.

1 lb. cooked ground beef

1 can (46 ounces) V8 juice

1 envelope onion soup mix

1 package (3 ounces) beef ramen noodles

1 package (16 ounces) frozen mixed veggies

Combine beef, juice, soup mix, veggies and contents of the noodle seasoning packet. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, for 6 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Add broken -up noodles and cook for 3 minutes more or until noodles are tender. Stir occasionally to separate noodles. Yield: 8 servings. This freezes very well in individual portions.

Good luck this summer in being good stewards of your time and money!

SPENCERIAN PENMANSHIP

Reviewed by Wayne S. Walker

Platt Rogers Spencer grew up near Lake Erie loving graceful lines and beautiful writing. As a young child, he often drew such letters on birch bark and on the sandy lake shores. He admired the elegant signature of John Hancock on the Declaration of Independence and thus seemed destined for the distinguished career in penmanship with which he is identified, developing and teaching a system of handwriting which dominated in schools for almost a century. In 1864 he produced five copybooks as a complete course in elementary school handwriting, copyrighted by Ivason, Phinney, Blakeman & Co., in New York City, NY.

Book 1 introduces all the short lower case letters and the four strokes or principles that are needed to produce these letters. Book 2 adds two tall lower case letters, t and d, and the figures 1-9. Book 3 completes the lower case letters and introduces most of the capitals. Book 4 completes the capital alphabet and provides practice on all the letters as they appear in words. Book 5 presents sentences and sayings for writing practice. This form of penmanship became a standard in the late 1800's when an elegant handwriting was much prized and was known, not only for its beauty, but also its speed and ease.

After Spencer's death, his five sons and another disciple carried on his work of teaching and of preparing publications. They became known as "the Spencerian authors" and compiled an instruction book from the work of Spencer, known as "Theory of the Spencerian System of Practical Penmanship in Nine Easy Lessons," which was copyrighted in 1874 by Ivison, Blakeman, Taylor, and Co. It is arranged in a question and answer format to teach the theory of forming all letters from seven basic strokes.

The Spencerian Penmanship copybooks and theory book have been reprinted by Mott Media, Inc., and are part of their "Classic Curriculum." In the curriculum for grades three and four, Mott Media's Writing Series workbooks (four per year for grades one through four) are keyed to the Spencerian books, although the latter can be used independently. The theory book is covered over those two years, with copybooks 1 and 2 intended for grade three and copybooks 3 and 4 intended for grade four. While there are no more workbooks after grade four, the Spencerian copybook 5 alone is used for grade five, and grades six through eight are supposed to go back and review using all five copybooks.

Since the Walker family's home school uses the Mott Media "Classic Curriculum," which, in addition to the Spencerian Penmanship, is based on the McGuffey's Readers, Ray's Arithmetics, and Harvey's Grammars, we do have some experience with the Spencerian Penmanship. It is the only aspect of the "Classic Curriculum" that I do not care for and that we do not use. The biggest problem that I see is that many of the letters are formed in a completely different way from the normal method that we usually teach for forming cursive letters.

My opinion is that for a child who loves and enjoys writing, learning Spencerian penmanship would be a welcome addition to his or her writing skills. However, for a child who has difficulty with writing (as our older son Mark does), Spencerian penmanship can be somewhat confusing, because he has to make his letters one way at some times and another way at other times. Therefore, while continuing with the other classic texts by Mott Media, we simply jettisoned the Spencerian Penmanship and went back to good, old standard cursive practice books for our handwriting.

FORMER HOME SCHOOL CRITIC NOW ADVOCATES MOVEMENT

By Fred Jackson

(AgapePress) - One of America's best known talk show hosts has apologized to home schoolers.

For years, Dr. Laura Schlessinger has been one of the leading public voices for conservatism in America. She has not been afraid to tackle tough issues such as denouncing homosexuality. But as *The Washington Times* notes, in recent years Dr. Laura has been openly critical of what she described as the narrow focus of home schooling, offering concerns that home educators were not teaching major science and math to children, and were keeping young people from being properly socialized.

Now, Dr. Laura says she has had a change of heart. She says whether through becoming more enlightened herself, or because the movement has grown, or both, she finds herself recommending it constantly. In an interview with *The Times*, Dr. Laura describes herself as an enemy of the public school system because of the liberal forces that have taken it over and are determined to do social engineering there, foisting upon people notions of behavior and philosophy... sexual behavior, that have nothing to do with reading, writing, and arithmetic.

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NEW TESTAMENT GREEK ONLINE COURSE

by Jeff Smelser
www.ntgreek.net

NTGreek.net is for serious students who want to learn to read the Greek New Testament. The first level course corresponds to approximately 1/3 of a good first year Greek course.

The online course is designed to be used in conjunction with *New Testament Greek, A Beginning and Intermediate Grammar*, by James Allen Hewett, Hendrickson Publishers, 1986. There is also a Greek font that must be installed so that the user can see Greek characters.

There are two ways to use NTGreek.net:

1. Un-Registered users are welcome. Anyone is free to browse the site, do the exercises, etc. If a person is sufficiently self-motivated and self-disciplined, he can learn to read the Greek NT this way, although few will manage to do so.
2. Registered students will pay a fee and in return will receive a structured course with feedback, assistance, and evaluations. Homework for each lesson will be submitted by e-mail and will be returned to the student with comments. Additional help will be available by e-mail correspondence. Each lesson will also have a final quiz that will be graded.

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Renewal Form and Survey for Home-Schoolers

***Family Times*, 7846 St. Joe Road, Ft. Wayne, IN 46835**

To renew, please cut off, copy, or print out the following form (front and back), indicate which of the options below you choose, complete both sides of this form, and send it with your check to the above address.

3 years by e-mail (send \$6); 3 years by regular mail (send \$12);
 one year regular mail (\$5)

Your family name: _____

Parents' first names: _____

Phone (_____) _____

Mailing address (including street address, city, state, ZIP):

E-mail address: _____

(Please see reverse side.)

SCIENCE WIZARDRY FOR KIDS

Reviewed by Rhonda Bosworth

Science Wizardry for Kids is the first of a series of "Wizardry" books published by Barron's. (Math Wizardry and Geography Wizardry are the other titles). While "Wizardry" is in the name, no wizardry or magic is involved in the multitude of experiments.

This book is written directly to the 8-12 year old learner, and adult supervision is only necessary in some of the projects. (Adult supervision is indicated liberally; responsible older children can safely do some projects where such supervision is indicated without an adult being present, but the book does instruct the child to get the assistance of an adult.)

The over 200 experiments suggested cover all aspects of science, and are good starting points to explore different aspects of our world. Some of the experiments will undoubtedly encourage additional exploration, depending upon the particular interests of the learner. Most of the experiments are actually broken into smaller steps, or mini-experiments, and therefore a natural progression of knowledge and skills occurs as the learner works on a certain series of experiments in the book, building on what was done in the prior experiment. However, the learner still has freedom to pick and choose the experiments based upon interest, without doing any prior experiments, in most cases.

Unlike the "Backyard Scientist", all of the projects are in a single book and arranged so that all like projects are placed together, and, because an index is included, this book can be used as a reference book. Very rarely are "special" items required, which means that the learner can actually do some things on his own as he becomes interested. If the item mentioned isn't found "on hand", it can usually be purchased at a market or drugstore and can be used for other things.

If you have a background in science, this may not be the book for you. However, if you want to expose your children to some fun, hands-on activities that will stir-up their interest in our physical world, this will likely be a book you will be pleased with. It comes as a spiral bound paperback, 7.5" x 9.5", 316 pages. Single color illustrations abound, and the format and font used in the book is reader friendly.

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Please indicate each of the following which applies to you:

- Please send us information about Homeschoolers List, the e-mail list for Christians interested in home schooling. Our e-mail address is listed above.
- Please send us information about discounts for membership in the Home School Legal Defense Association.
- We would like to have our names added to your e-mail mailing list to be informed about reviews of home-schooling materials or about home-schooling materials produced by faithful Christians. (You will also receive free Bible teaching articles. Please include your email address on the other side.)
- We are willing to consider submitting brief reviews of textbooks, curricula, or other materials we have used, with the understanding that these reviews may eventually be published for the benefit of other Christians. (Please include below a list of materials you may be willing to review.)

-
- We are willing to write an article(s) for *Family Times* on the following suggested topic.
-
- We are willing to write a family profile and submit it to *Family Times*.
 - We are willing to serve as regular contributors to *Family Times*. We understand this involves writing 2-4 articles per year, short or long, on topics of our choice. (If you have a theme or column title you would like to write under, please indicate: _____.)
 - We have a plain paper copier available to us and would be willing to discuss with the editors about volunteering to print, address, and mail up to 50 printed copies of *Family Times* each issue.
 - We are willing to submit names of other Christians we know who home school so they can be invited to participate in the above projects. (Please send us the names and addresses, or you are free to copy this form and distribute it directly to other home schoolers in the church.)