

The *Inform*er

Winter 2017

a publication of the Indiana Association of Home Educators



Teaching Our Children
to Want & Like Good
Books...page 8

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Can Your Children
Explain Why You
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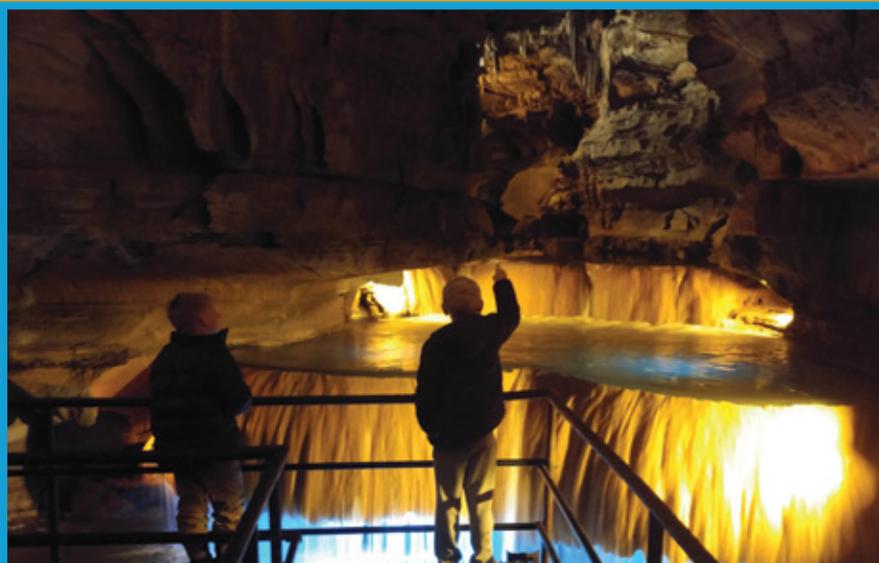
Explore Above & Below Any Season

in Historic Corydon & Harrison County

Above ground check out the Harrison County Discovery Center, play a round of mini-golf at Golf Shores Fun Center or discover the first state capitol. Below ground, take a tour of Indiana Caverns on an underground river or explore the new passageway at Squire Boone Caverns.

For a sample itinerary, contact Stacy at 888-738-2137 or stacyp@thisisindiana.org.

thisisindiana.org



The Informer Core Values

- To be Christ-focused
- To be Indiana-focused
- To be encouraging
- To be a resource

IAHE

The IAHE is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1983 for the purpose of serving the Lord Jesus Christ by supporting and encouraging families interested in home education. We define home education as parent-directed, home-based, privately-funded education.

Our primary functions are maintaining visibility as home educators with civil government leaders, influencing the legislative process, sponsoring seminars for parent education, and publishing.

The IAHE is governed by a volunteer board of directors. Sixteen regional representative couples are in direct contact with local support groups across the state.

Our major source of income is our annual convention. With the growth of the home education movement, both our needs and responsibilities continue to grow, and we welcome your tax deductible contributions.



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Welcome

a note from the editor

As the temperatures cool and the leaves begin to fall, our homes are filled with plans for the holiday season. Between the busyness of Thanksgiving and Christmas, it can be easy to forget to give thanks for all that we've been given.

Here in Indiana, we are blessed with the freedom to educate our children at home. We are also blessed to have an incredible volunteer team that dedicates countless hours to serving homeschool families. From time spent counseling and encouraging parents, providing resources, and working to maintain our freedoms, the IAHE team is blessed with incredible people with a heart and a passion for you and your family.

We are especially grateful during this holiday season for each individual that has served our community.

"Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. Remember that the Lord will give you an inheritance as your reward, and that the Master you are serving is Christ."

—Colossians 3:23-24

"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. As it is written: 'They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor; their righteousness endures forever.'"

—2 Corinthians 9:7-9

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depositphotos.com: #21204667

The Informer Magazine

The Informer is published quarterly by the Indiana Association of Home Educators (IAHE) to provide information, inspiration, and support to homeschool families. Circulation is 8,000 and subscriptions are FREE upon request. The mailing list for The Informer is never sold or rented.

The articles in this magazine reflect the freedom of home educators in Indiana to choose from a wide variety of homeschool philosophies and teaching methods. Opinions and attitudes expressed in articles do not necessarily reflect the beliefs of the Indiana Association of Home Educators. IAHE does not endorse or advocate any one method or philosophy. The Board encourages each home educator to seek God's will in determining what is best for him, his school, and his students.

Advertising

Advertising is available on a first-come, first-served, space-available basis. For ad information and rates, please download our Advertiser's Packet on our website or contact advertising@iahe.net. We appreciate the advertisers who help us to bring this publication to you. Please let them

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Article Submissions

Please see The Informer's Writer's Guidelines at www.iahe.net or contact writing@iahe.net.

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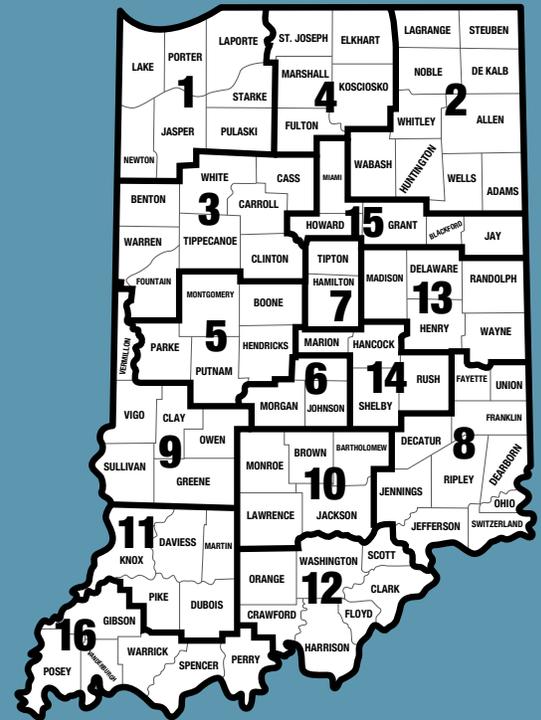
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IAHE Regional Representative Map



To reach your Regional Representative please call **317-467-6244** and dial your Regional Representative's extension.

If you do not receive a response in a timely manner, please contact the IAHE office.

Regional Representatives

serve the homeschooling community throughout Indiana. Each representative is a veteran homeschooler who can help answer the questions of a family just starting out. They also communicate with local support groups in their region and keep them up to date on changes in the law and activities throughout the state.

You can contact your regional representative for information about spelling bees, sport clubs, book fairs, curriculum advice, workshops, standardized testing and convention information. They can also help you find a support group in your area, or if none is available, they'll help you start one.

Region 1

Frank & Jessica Dunlap
Ext: #201
r1@iahe.net

Region 2

Kris & Stephanie Reckers
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Region 3

Phillip & Rebekah Ash
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Region 4

Pat & Kathy Balke
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Region 5

Dwayne & Melissa Sawyer
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Region 6

Chris & Betty Broshears
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Region 7

Shawn & Amy Canaday
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Region 8

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Region 9

Please contact the IAHE Office
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Region 11

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Ext: #214
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Region 15

Jeff & Tammy Hierholzer
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Region 16

Shawn & Theresa Slinkard
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New Reps for Region 10

Chad & Lori Behrman

CHAD & LORI BEHRMAN have been homeschooling for over 13 years! Their son is a freshman at Liberty University and their daughter is a junior in high school. They love hockey, drag racing, and serving in their church. Residing in Bartholomew County, they have been involved in leadership for many years. ■



New Board Members!

Tim & Becky Zook

TIM & BECKY ZOOK have been homeschooling since 2011. They have two boys ages 13 and 10. Prior to joining the board, they served as IAHE Regional Reps. Becky also serves the struggling learner homeschool community, a ministry that she is still very passionate about. They are also very active in their local church and 4-H organization.

They consider homeschooling to be one of the best choices that they have made for their family and love helping others get started on the journey. ■



Thanksgiving and Prayer

"We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you..."
- Colossians 1:3 (NIV)

The IAHE Board of Directors would like to thank **Phil & Debi Ketron** for their years of service to the homeschool community. They served as IAHE Region 8 Representatives from 2006 to 2011 and joined the IAHE Board of Directors in 2011. Phil has served as Vice President and Debi has served as Director of Government Affairs. They are also founding Board members of IAHE Action, IAHE's sister organization.

The Ketrons have been instrumental in the growth of our organization during their time on the Board. Debi's dedication to protecting homeschool freedom in our state is unparalleled. Their passionate dedication to the vision of the IAHE serves as inspiration to our team going forward.

"God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them."
- Hebrews 6:10 (NIV)



Are homeschool rights
important to you?

Make sure your legislators know!

Make plans now to attend the IAHE's

HOME SCHOOL DAY AT THE STATE CAPITOL

Monday, January 22, 2018



It's our desire that EVERY legislator meets with a homeschool family that day. It sends a powerful message to them to know that homeschool rights are important enough to take time out of your very busy schedule to come to the Statehouse.

We have events from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm to help your family learn more about our state government. *Registration/Check-in begins at 9am.*

Activities Available Throughout the Day: Scavenger Hunt • Prayer Walk • Letterboxing*

SCHEDULE

- 9:00 am • State Library Tour (Pre-registration required)
- 10:00 am • IAHE Action How a Bill Becomes a Law (IN Government Center Auditorium)
- Statehouse Tour (Pre-registration required)
- Live Statue Hunt
- 11:00 am • IAHE Action Bills of Concern (IN Government Center Auditorium)
- Statehouse Tour (Pre-registration required)
- Live Statue Hunt
- 12:00 pm • Rally (North Atrium)
- 1:00 pm • Statehouse Tour (Pre-registration required)
- 1:15 pm • State Library Tour (Pre-registration required)

**To participate in the letter-boxing event, you will need to bring a rubber stamp, ink pad, pen, and log book.*

Page for A Day Program

Families with a student ages 13 and older are eligible to serve as a Page for the Day. The Page for the Day program is an excellent way for your student to gain a first-hand glimpse of how the legislative process works at the Indiana Statehouse. During IAHE's Home School Day, the rest of the family will have other events in which to participate while your child serves. This program fills up quickly, so check the IN.gov website for details and deadlines.

MORE DETAILS?

iahe.net/2018-homeschool-day-state-capitol



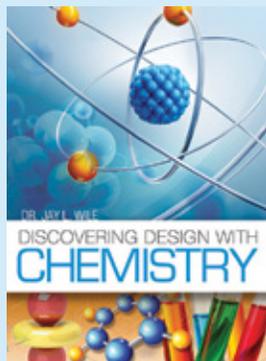
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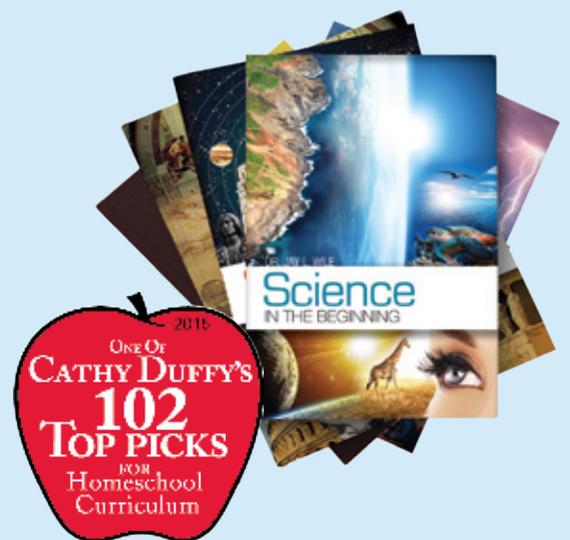
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TEACHING OUR CHILDREN TO

Like and Want GOOD BOOKS

— Colene Lewis



Enjoying good literature is one of the chief goods of life.

Teaching our children to enjoy literature is akin to teaching our children to eat. As parents, we feed our babies nutritious food. As they grow we monitor our children's eating and teach them principles of nutrition. Gradually we let them make their own choices while still providing healthy (free) food at home. Finally, our adult children leave the nest, trained to eat well, and to recognize the good, the bad, and the ugly. Of course, in the short term they might dip too much into the bad (out of moderation) - sugary, refined, low nutritional-value food. Even if they stray, because they have been trained they will probably come back to nutritious eating in their late 20's. And they know to avoid the really bad – the poisonous substances.

Parents are not only feeding bodies, we also feed minds and souls. In the same way that we exert total control over their consumption of food as babies and toddlers, and slowly help them develop discernment and good habits, we should also control and train their consumption of books and movies, and slowly help them develop discernment and good habits in this arena as well.

So how do we find the healthy, and yummy, food for their soul?

Don't give them junk food early. As close to NO screen time as you can manage for the first three years of their lives. If you give a toddler soda pop they will love it, but if they never know what it is... No more than one hour of screen time each day for kids ages 3-7. No more than two hours each day for kids ages 8-12.

Provide a few open-ended toys: Toys that do not play by themselves (where the child just sits and watches) and toys that can be used in many ways such as blocks, plain Duplos/Legos, balls, crayons, paint, and paper.

Provide good books. This means books that are well written, well-illustrated, and teach what is right.

Let's unpack what makes a book good.

It is well written. This includes good grammar, interesting rich words, vivid word images, read-aloud sentence rhythm, and engaging stories. The book should appeal to imaginations, open minds to new ideas, explain history or science in such a way that understanding and desire for more grows. If the parent cannot

stand to read the book out loud to the child, it may not be well written. There are many picture books, even baby books, that are delightful. While we might eventually tire of it, we can and have read *Barnyard Dance*, *Good Night Moon*, and *Good Night Gorilla* multiple dozens of times. Well written chapter books such as *Winnie the Pooh*, *The Hobbit*, and *A Wrinkle in Time* delighted me when I read them (multiple times) as a child/teen, again with my own children, and now with my grandchildren!

It is well illustrated. Illustrations should fit with the story and move the story along. Illustrations can evoke a sense of place and time. Illustrations with the text can evoke strong emotion – excitement, joy, apprehension, fear, triumph! Here are just a few of my favorite illustrators: Trina Schart Hyman, David McCauley, Nancy Burkert, Elsa Beskow, Tomie dePaola, Gennady Spirin, and Jan Brett. I have even searched Amazon for favorite illustrators; many times, though not always, I will love all the books they illustrate.

It is moral. I am not talking about moralistic. Children will balk if they sense that every book is trying to get them to “be good.” Do the characters inspire the child to be better and more than they are? The characters can be flawed, since all of us are! But do they show growth towards the good? Or do flawed characters pay a penalty for their sin? If there is no penalty, does the book inspire and encourage immoral behavior? Does it portray stealing or murder or other vices as a moral good?

It is age appropriate. This is different than being moral. There will be a time when our children will need to struggle with moral dilemmas and philosophical questions. But if you have an advanced reader, you need to make sure they are emotionally and spiritually mature enough for the content. For instance, *Lord of the Flies* and *1984* should be reserved for teens regardless of how well your child reads.

It is true. Does this book have true or untrue things to say about God? Does this book have true or untrue things to say about the nature of man? This can be subtle and parents need to preview the books the children read. Sometimes the book should still be read – but there should be a discussion before, during, after, or all three.

A recent example presented itself as I was reading a library book that described Marco Polo’s trips, including his stop in Jerusalem. The book correctly mentioned that this is a holy city for Jews, Christians, and Muslims. But listen to the details the author included: “Jesus lived and died in Jerusalem. King Solomon built the first Jewish temple there. And the Islamic prophet Muhammad rose to heaven in Jerusalem.” This book is like rat poison – even though it is mostly okay, it has this bit of poison in it. “Muhammad rose to heaven; Jesus lived and died.” I am not suggesting this book for the curriculum I am writing, but I did read this passage out to the big grand boys, ages 9-12. I asked them to tell me what the author was saying about the three leaders of these religions. Their eyes got big, their minds informed, and discernment grew as they realized, and rejected, what this author was stating.

Parents, let us encourage one another to provide wholesome choices for our children to consume so that they grow up healthy and whole. We must teach our children to think like Christians. This discernment is developed by providing good material, minimizing the mediocre, and teaching discernment of the bad. This takes work on our end, but it is worth it. ■



Colene Lewis homeschooled her daughters through high school in a home where learning was a joy and a way of life. Each girl excelled at college and is now raising and homeschooling her own children. With her daughter Heather Haupt, Colene has developed an easy-to-implement geography curriculum based on living books and cross-cultural exploration. For more encouragement, visit them at HeatherHaupt.com.

New to Homeschooling?

Join us Thursday, March 22
for a **FREE** informational workshop!

Are you or someone you know considering the possibility of homeschooling?

This informative afternoon is geared to help parents get answers to the many questions they have. Veteran homeschooling parents will be on hand to give an overview of home education in Indiana followed by a Q&A session.

Thursday, March 22, 2018

6:30pm to 9:00pm

Elements Financial Blue Ribbon Pavilion
Indiana State Fairgrounds



Parents.

Gatekeepers of Time

— Heather Haupt

“Where did he run off to now?” I wondered. Having told this son of mine that we would finish that spelling lesson after our quiet afternoon reading time, I was somehow surprised when he was nowhere to be found. I was feeling just a bit annoyed as I sought him out that day and the feelings only intensified when I found a pile of cardboard scraps on the ground with open scissors nearby. I glared at the mess, as I rehearsed my “clean-up speech” in my head. Soon enough, I found the culprit on both fronts wielding a new cardboard sword at some imaginary foe in our backyard.

I have a soft spot for boy battles and the site of this new one was enough to help me calm down before walking outside. As I approached him, he turned to me with a grin. “Mom, I am Esteban from *The King’s Fifth*.” Inspired by his reading, he had grabbed cardboard to fashion a Spanish rapier for himself replete with an intricate cardboard and duct-tape hilt. As he stopped his duel, bits and pieces of the story gushed out. This son, who is not all that talkative, couldn’t stop relaying the battles as well as the angst of journeying with this boy, Esteban, who had opposed greed, succumbed to it, and then came out from that dark period in his life.

The urgency of the spelling lesson faded into the background as we talked about exploration, the lust of money, and choosing the right path. Once he ran out of words and I finished admiring his intricate sword creation, we did make our way inside to finish the other “school” and clean up that mess. Along the way, I found myself thankful for the flexibility we had to pursue this bunny trail.

We live in hurried times where a busy schedule is worn like a badge of honor. But in our busyness, we miss the processing and the

inculcating of the lessons we are learning. We miss out on those lessons our children discover on their own. There is beauty in slowing down. In a world screaming to have your children running from activity to activity, parents have the power to say no. You have the opportunity to intentionally determine your own family’s schedule. Sometimes this means saying no to good things so you can pursue what is better. Sometimes this means saying no to DOING, so your children have time to simply BE.

You are the gatekeeper of time, the protector of childhood, the encourager of deep thinking.

You accomplish this by creating time for the following three pursuits:

Time to Read

As guardians of our children’s time, we need to carve out time to read. Reading is a slow activity and in this fast-paced world where we are in constant search of stimulation, reading can oftentimes find itself on the backburner. We need to model this slowing down by reading ourselves and establish a home culture where reading is

prioritized. It is when our kids marinate in the rich stories from the past that they formulate the ideas and principles necessary to guide them in the future. This means that we want to not only create time to read, but look to find great books for our children to feast on. For instance, instead of handing our sons the potty-humor infused books marketed to boys today, we find grand tales of adventure that inspire their moral imagination and help them become the brave men or tomorrow. Enjoying the slow art of reading, means they have time to really embrace and process what they are reading. Books like *St. George and the Dragon* not only tell an exciting story, but they also communicate that our children can defeat the dragons that they will meet in their lifetime whether those dragons come in the form of general life struggles or standing against injustice and protecting the weak.

Time to Play

Protecting childhood means providing time and the encouragement to play. It is in play that the lessons learned through reading or conversations with the people around them are solidified. Learning and play to hand-in-hand. Sometimes we might participate or initiate this play as part of more formal education such as when we have them dramatize the revolving of the earth around the sun, or act out a scene from Macbeth. Other times, it is accomplished simply by saying no to electronics and letting them use their imaginations to make up their own worlds. If your kids are anything like mine, they will probably take what they are learning into their play. I have the fondest memories of the hours and hours my sisters and I spent together with our paper dolls working out relational skills, developing empathy, and keeping each other accountable for historical accuracy with whatever era we were imitating. I'll never forget the days my boys spent playing with

ice cubes and their sea animals as they replicated life in the Antarctic ocean regions while I cooked dinner.

Time to Ponder

One of the great gifts we give our children is time to process and time to ponder. Young children ponder most frequently through play. As children get older, it can take the form of daydreaming. When we create time in their lives to simply BE, they have opportunity to ponder great mysteries and work creatively towards solutions to problems they encounter. We give them time to ponder, when we slow down our lives to walk beside them and talk about the issues they are facing and hear about the things they are learning about. These are moments that we cannot manufacture on our own, but ones that crop up in the daily living out of our lives together. This gift of unhurried conversation allows them to really wrestle with ideas and process what they are learning.

As the guardians of your family's time, you get to decide what this looks like for your own family in each season you walk through. In our home, we have adopted a knight-training mindset that recognizes that our children are in training now for the adventure of life and that it is our job to not only train them, but allow them time to grow and develop - time to read great books, play hard, and to think deeply. In doing so, we give our children a great gift that will go with them for the rest of their lives. ■



Heather Haupt is the homeschool mother of 3 knights-in-training and a spunky little princess and the author of *Knights-in-Training: 10 Principles for Raising Honorable, Courageous, and Compassionate Boys*. She is excited to come speak at the IAHE Convention in March. She writes at HeatherHaupt.com



LOOKING FOR A UNIQUE AND FUN PLACE TO HOST YOUR NEXT HOME SCHOOL EVENT OR BIRTHDAY PARTY?

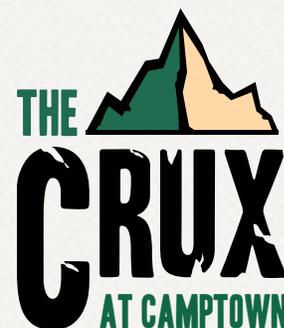
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Abundant Mercy



*The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning...
– Lamentations 3:22-23a (ESV)*

33rd Annual IAHE Home Educators' Convention

Two jam-packed days
of encouragement
and refreshment!

March 23 & 24, 2018
Indiana State Fairgrounds
Elements Financial Blue Ribbon Pavilion
& Champions Pavilion

Bring the whole family!

The IAHE Home Educators' Convention is a time for encouragement, ideas, advice, workshops and curriculum shopping. The keynote speakers provide encouragement and inspiration. You have your choice of a multitude of workshops ranging from preschool to high school and everything in between. Want to know how to teach math? Have a special learner? Check the workshop schedule. Speaking with veteran homeschoolers and shopping at the many different exhibitors can build confidence in your decisions.

iahe.net



Mike Smith
HSLDA

Mike Smith and his wife Elizabeth, along with Michael Farris and his wife Vickie, incorporated Home School Legal Defense Association in 1983 and were the original board members. Mike grew up in Arkansas and graduated from the University of Arkansas. Upon graduation, he entered the U.S. Navy and served for three years before attending law school at the University of San Diego.

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REGISTRATION

Save Money When You Register

Early Bird NOW – December
\$45 Individual / \$65 Family

Pre-Reg January 1 – March
\$50 Individual / \$75 Family

At-the-Door March 23 &
Convention Registration (*ONE DAY*): \$40 Individual / \$65 Family
Convention Registration: \$55 Individual / \$85 Family
Exhibit Hall Only Pass: \$35 Individual / \$55 Family



Debra Bell
DebraBell.com

Debra Bell, PhD, is the best-selling author of the award-winning Ultimate Guide to Homeschooling, and many other products from Apologia Press. Currently, she is completing the series in Residence and Readers in Residence—a multi-volume language program for grades 4th and up.



Rick Green
Patriot Academy

Rick Green is one of the most dynamic and inspirational speakers in America today. Through his informative and moving historical presentations, that often include his children, he equips, empowers, and challenges people to live out their freedom by teaching the bedrock principles that led to America's place as the most successful nation in the history of the world.



Frederic Gray
FredericGray.com

Frederic Gray is enthusiastic about helping and empowering families. As the founder of the Fathers of Faith & Daughters of Excellence Retreat, he has spoken for homeschooling groups, state and local conventions, family camps and retreats across the country. As a marriage coach, Frederic provides teaching and support to couples through his Magnetic Marriage seminars hosted by churches and private groups across the country.

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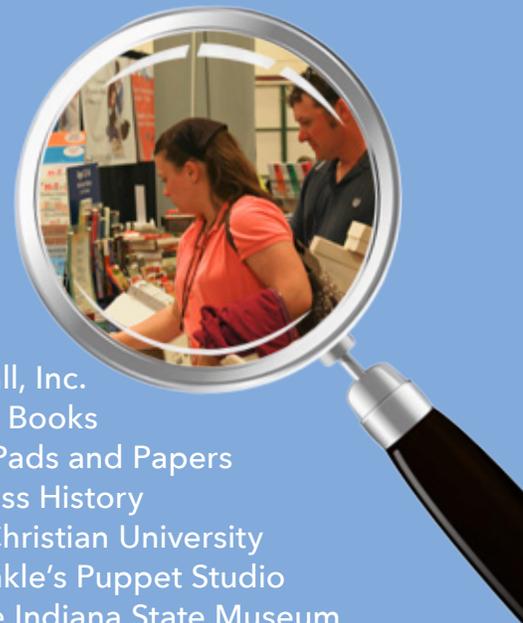
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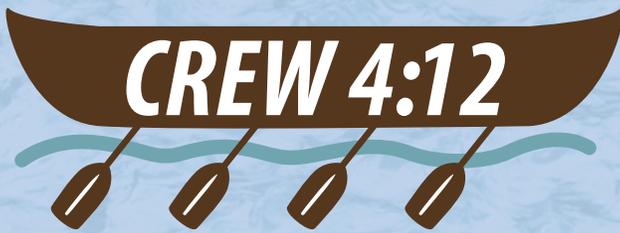
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dual / \$65 Family
/ \$85 Family
\$55 Family

Get an Early Peek at Some of Our Exhibitors!



- A Helping Hand
- A Beka Book
- ACE
- BJU Press
- Cedarville University
- Compass-finances
- God's way
- Demme Learning
- Harrison County CVB
- Indianapolis Children's
Choir
- Institute for Excellence
in Writing (IEW)
- Jim Hodges Audio Books
- Larry Winkleman
- Microscope Service
- Lions Home School

- Football, Inc.
- Master Books
- Miller Pads and Papers
- Notgrass History
- Ohio Christian University
- Peewinkle's Puppet Studio
at the Indiana State Museum
- Piano Solutions
- Quiet Witness, The
- Rainbow Resources
- Resounding Voice
- Right Start Math
- Sonlight



Crew 4:12 Teen Service Program

Ages 13 to 18

Come and meet other homeschooled teens from all over the state! Be prepared for a high-energy, fun, and challenging convention that meets you where you are.

Workshops • Activities • Service Jobs

CREW 4:12 participants will engage in a three-pronged convention track that is specifically tailored to their age group, interests, and needs. Teens will be challenged to think deeply, serve others, and make new friends through workshops, service, and team-building activities. CREW 4:12 is a full two-day program that includes a component of serving in the convention hall. As such, students will be given a convention shirt to wear on both days and will serve as ambassadors as they represent the IAHE to convention guests & exhibitors. Cost is \$30, and covers t-shirt and lunch.



Places to Rest, Relax & Recharge!

These are the hotels with IAHE room blocks available at a reduced price until the deadlines listed. Rates quoted do not include tax. **NOTE:** Be sure to mention "IAHE" when you book your rooms to ensure our special convention rates

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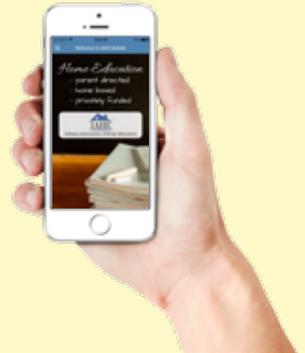
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CAN YOUR CHILDREN EXPLAIN WHY YOU HOMESCHOOL THEM?

— ZAN TYLER

From their early years, my children grew up with television cameras in the living room and our “school” room. We began homeschooling in 1984, and it was a controversial decision to say the least. As we marched through the process as a family of lobbying for homeschooling legislation, my children were asked a thousand questions: What about socialization? Do you like homeschooling? Do you have any friends? Do you feel like you are missing anything? Why does your family homeschool? Can you play sports? Will you ever be able to go to a prom? Where do you want to go to college? Do you think you will be able to get in? Are you learning anything?

I will never forget the first time the camera crew came to our home. The boys were seven and five. They were well-prepared to meet the crew socially. They interacted well and were not intimidated, even at such a young age. And then the official interview began. I had not prepped them for it, because I wanted their answers to be sincere, spontaneous, and genuine. The reporter asked my totally endearing five-year-old, “So, tell me, son, why do you like homeschooling?” He looked the reporter straight in the eye and said, “Because I can get a snack and go to the bathroom anytime I want to.”

I cringed. From my son’s perspective his answer was absolutely true and important to him. He had been in preschool before we started homeschooling where he couldn’t do those things whenever he wanted to. But that’s not what I wanted being discussed on the nightly news.

It was my fault. I failed to realize that lawyers prepare their witnesses to be interrogated. It doesn’t mean their answers aren’t sincere and

genuine, but they are thought-through as opposed to spontaneous. Sometimes spontaneity isn’t all it’s cracked up to be!

Adults prepare for job interviews, so they are able to put their best foot forward for the potential employer. If adults need to prepare for interviews and interrogations in the real world, how much more does a child need to prepare and rehearse? I set to work, and from that point on my children gave well-thought-out answers to the litany of questions I thought they would encounter as homeschooled kids. Remember, no age is too young for preparation!

All Of Life Is An Interview

Every child is asked a myriad of questions in his growing-up years. If that child happens to be homeschooled the tally rises to a million fairly quickly! You know how it is. You can’t go through the checkout line in the grocery store without you and your children being riddled with questions. Homeschooled children are questioned by friends, by relatives, by people at church, by strangers, and occasionally by a TV reporter or a legislator. And sometimes well-meaning friends and relatives can’t wait to get your children alone so they can find out what they really think and feel.

I was really shocked when, one day, my teen-age sons started sharing with me just how many times our friends and family members had interrogated them about homeschooling when Joe and I weren’t there. The questions ranged from “Do you really like homeschooling?” to “Do you feel gyped by not being in real school?” to “What have you learned this week?”

You will be doing your children and yourself a great service if you teach them how to handle questions in a graceful, confident, and knowledgeable way. And remember, many—if not most—of the questions they will be asked will occur when you aren’t with them.

Later as I taught classes on public speaking and developing a biblical worldview in our local co-op, I always included one session on the apologetics of homeschooling. I would use this time to help prepare elementary-aged kids through teenagers to respond to questions about homeschooling in a formal interview situation, as well as in informal conversations.

The Process Of Preparing Children For Questions/Interviews

Brainstorming. I began each discussion (whether at home or in a co-op) by drawing a line down the middle of a large white board. The left side of the board, I labeled “Private Reasons”: the right side, “Public Reasons.” Then I asked questions like the ones at the beginning of the article. As students responded to the various questions, I would write the answer down on the right side of the board if they were suitable for public discussions. But if a child answered she liked homeschooling because she could stay in her pajamas all day, I would write the answer on the left side under “Private Reasons.” I took the time to explain that while certain answers—like wearing pajamas all day—may be true and meaningful to them, these are not the answers we want to discuss in public.

At the end of the brainstorming discussion, I wanted to make sure every child could tell me five reasons why their parents homeschool them and/or five reasons why they enjoy being homeschooled.

Tweaking and polishing. At the end of that brainstorming exercise, we looked at the answers on the right side of the board and began to tweak and polish them a bit.

Role playing. Then we role played. I would be the reporter,

and I would ask the kids questions. Then we would switch roles and they would ask the questions and I would answer. It gave them a chance to hear my responses. We would continue until they were too tired to be productive, or we had an answer relatively down pat.

Practicing. Once we had gone through the role playing, we would practice—sometimes formally, sometimes informally. With my own children, if we were in the car, I would throw out one question and have them answer it. Sometimes we would go back to the white board and have a more formal training session. If a new question arose, we would go through the process of brainstorming, tweaking and polishing, and role playing again.

The point is this: begin the discussion. Prepare your children well to answer the questions that will arise almost daily in their lives concerning homeschooling. As your children get older, help them understand why people ask them so many questions about homeschooling and why their answers matter. They are truly some of the greatest ambassadors homeschooling has.

You Can Transfer This Process To Other Areas

Your children will be questioned about their Christianity as they grow up seeking the Lord. Use this same process to teach them how to answer questions about their faith. As they prepare for job and/or college interviews, they will benefit greatly from these same interview skills you have instilled in them as children. And through this process of questioning and answering you are helping them develop powerful critical thinking skills. ■



Zan Tyler and her husband Joe homeschooled for 21 years, teaching all of their children from kindergarten through high school. Zan is the author of *Seven Tools for Cultivating Your Child's Potential*. ZANTYLER.COM

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ISSUES UPDATE

— DEBI KETRON, GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS DIRECTOR

As I was trying to decide which topic to tackle for this issue of the Informer, I thought it might be best to update our readers on a number of issues that affect Indiana homeschoolers.

School to Prison Pipeline

As you may remember, beginning in October 2015, the Indiana Advisory Committee to the US Commission on Civil Rights began discussions about the School to Prison Pipeline (SPP). The American Civil Liberties Union defines the SPP as “a disturbing national trend wherein children are funneled out of public schools and into the juvenile and criminal justice systems. Many of these children have learning disabilities or histories of poverty, abuse, or neglect, and would benefit from additional educational and counseling services. Instead, they are isolated, punished, and pushed out.” We learned after the initial meeting that there was a claim that homeschoolers



were part of this issue. IAHE and IAHE Action spent all of 2016 and 2017 defending Indiana homeschoolers.

Last March, the State invited me to have a seat on a state task force that discusses this issue and seeks to correct problems that lead to incarceration of youths. IAHE is grateful for this opportunity to hear of concerns first-hand instead of vague rumors through the grapevine.

It has been troubling to learn there are “homeschoolers” involved with the Indiana Department of Corrections. As a veteran homeschool parent of 21 years, it is difficult to imagine how this could happen when a homeschool parent is heavily involved in a child’s life. Who are these youths?

WE'VE SEEN WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO LIBERTY OVER THE PAST 50 YEARS. "LIBERTY, ONCE LOST, IS LOST FOREVER." ~ JOHN ADAMS

Within the past few years, IAHE's Regional Representatives fielded a noticeably, large number of phone calls from families who shared that their public school had reported their student's enrollment as a homeschooler on the Indiana Department of Education's website, and the parent was given IAHE's information to help get them started homeschooling. Our Reps quickly realized that these families had no understanding of homeschooling, what was involved, or the commitment level required, when the public school reported their child's enrollment as a homeschooler to the Indiana Department of Education. With additional information provided by IAHE, the parent decided he or she needed a different educational option. Were these students ever removed from the list of Indiana homeschoolers who reported enrollment with the Indiana Department of Education? We doubt it.

A number of years ago, the state decided to increase the compulsory school age to 18 and to revoke the driver's license of a student who chooses to dropout. The State said they did not know where these students were going when they exited the school, either dropping out or claiming to homeschool in order to keep his license. As an accountability measure, a form was developed in 2013 for the parent to sign that stated the requirements for home education. The understanding was that if the parent signed it, but did not provide educational equivalency, he or she would be prosecuted. We suspect these may be the ones who are ending up in the court system and not legitimate homeschoolers.

Another topic mentioned in the SPP testimony was that schools encouraged problem students to exit the school to pad their school's graduation rate and to improve their A-F grade. Some of these students were credit deficient and had little hope of graduating in a timely manner.

There are some who use the School to Prison Pipeline issue to call for greater regulation for all homeschoolers. IAHE calls on the state to vigorously prosecute any who claim to homeschool but do not abide by our laws that pertain to home education. If the State refuses to prosecute, then lower the compulsory school age to 16, allow dropouts to keep their license and get a job. Homeschoolers, who have proven themselves to be some of the most responsible parents in the state, should not be penalized because of the actions of those who are not homeschooling their children.

Discrimination

A homeschool grad contacted IAHE because a police department where he was hoping to get a job did not honor his homeschool diploma and required him to get a GED. According to the hiring manager, this veteran with military policy experience and a bachelor's degree from an Indiana state university did not meet the minimum requirement of having an accredited diploma or a GED. We have since learned of other similar instances.



DEBI KETRON and her husband graduated four children from their home school. They were involved in homeschool leadership in Dearborn County, IN for many years. She was a former IAHE Region 8 Representative with her husband Phil, and currently serves as the IAHE Director of Government Affairs and on the Board of Directors for Indiana Association of Home Educators (IAHE) and IAHE Action.

A 1990's graduate from a small Christian school had a similar situation. After over 20 years in the workforce, a state agency has required this individual to get a GED in order to be hired.

We take these issues of discrimination very seriously and are working to effect change.



Lowering Compulsory School Age/ Mandatory Kindergarten

Dr. Jennifer McCormick, Superintendent of Public Instruction, called on the General Assembly to lower the compulsory school age from age 7 to age 6 and make kindergarten mandatory. According to an article in the Tribune Star, Indiana "has 7,000 children who don't take advantage of kindergarten, and of those, 5,000 are considered at-risk, she said."

She is concerned that the parents of "at-risk" children in preschool will not follow through and enroll their student in kindergarten. A number of state legislators have bemoaned the fact that there is a "gap" between preschool and age 7 when compulsory school age begins. IAHE believes a parent should have the liberty to decide when their child is ready to begin formal education.



Education Savings Accounts

The Indiana Superintendent of Public Instruction has called for increased accountability measures for schools that accept taxpayer funding. She wants them to have the same "academic and financial scrutiny as traditional public schools." We are flagging this out to homeschoolers since we have voiced this concern since the State first began discussing Education Savings Accounts for homeschoolers. IAHE continues to view government funding with suspicion as a carrot that will lead to increased regulation.

As IAHE Action noted on their blog, "In a similar vein, Heartland Institute's Teresa Mull shared the money quote in her article, "Ending Government Schools Does Not Mean Ending Public Education." "Delivering families access to alternative forms of education—whether it be in the form of online classes, learning therapies, homeschool textbooks, tutoring, or private schools—is the purpose of tax-credit scholarships, education savings accounts, and vouchers, all of which are forms of "public education," since public tax dollars fund the programs."

A new public school system is being built. As we've shared with homeschoolers in recent years, we first noticed it as we read quotes from early education reformers from the 1990's. The question for homeschoolers who worked so hard to have the liberty to teach their children as they see fit, is do you want to be sucked back into the public school system? ■

Friends in the Fight

— Julie Young



Although their parents were friends for years before they got to know one another, when Kalei Mendiola and Nicole Kerkes of San Diego met, they discovered that they had a lot in common as well. They both have a strong connection to their faith. They both have large families. They have both homeschooled their children at various grade levels and they are both fighting back against Parkinson's disease (PD) at Rock Steady Boxing (RSB).

Mendiola was diagnosed first. "I was symptomatic since I was 33 but I was not diagnosed until I was closer to 41," she says. "It started out as a tremor in my left arm and then slowly progressed. I wasn't sure if I had a thyroid issue, if it was anxiety or something more serious."

When she was pregnant with the youngest of her seven children, the symptoms worsened and she knew something serious was happening inside of her. Eight months after

delivering, she consulted a neurologist about her condition. She was given a diagnosis...but little else.

"There were medications I could take obviously, but they only provided a minor sense of relief. I got the impression that there just wasn't any hope," she says.

After learning that exercise could help slow her symptoms, Mendiola began working out, lost weight and even took part in a free Lee Silverman Voice Treatments (LSVT) program at St. Augustine University's satellite campus in San Marcos but a few years later, she lost the swing in her arm. She returned to her doctor and asked if there was anything else she could try

and was dismayed with the response she received.

“They were always saying, ‘we don’t know if exercise really helps.’ They never wrote me a referral for physical therapy and even when I switched neurologists, I was told, ‘if you get worse, you may have to use a walker.’ It was so frustrating,” she says.

In 2015, a friend of Mendiola’s sent her an article about the RSB program and a link to the CBS Sunday Morning Special with Leslie Stahl that aired on November 8, 2015. Mendiola became very excited about the program, but was dismayed to learn that classes in the San Diego area were too far away and did not correspond with her homeschooling schedule. A year later, she found out that a new RSB affiliate was opening a block from her home. Her husband, Paul, said he would rearrange his work schedule to be home with the kids so that she could step into the ring.

“I was out of excuses,” she laughed.

The experience was life-changing and she was quick to tell her friends about the difference RSB made in her life. She was particularly concerned about Kerkes, an old friend who had moved back to the San Diego area after living in New Mexico for a period of time. Prior to joining RSB, Mendiola noticed that Kerkes had some of the same symptoms she experienced and she wondered if she might have PD as well.

Kerkes says she had symptoms for eight years prior to her diagnosis in 2012, but when Mendiola joined RSB, she did not follow suit.

“I was doing CrossFit and wasn’t interested in making a big change. However, as things became more difficult for me, I gave it a try. RSB has helped me a lot with my movement and I can’t say enough about the support I have received from the other boxers such as Kalei. She’s been quite a mentor to me. There is such a positive environment at our gym.”

Kerkes admits that as young mothers who have been diagnosed with PD, it puts her and Mendiola in a unique category – one that their other friends at RSB and elsewhere do not always relate to or



Kalei Mendiola (L) & Nicole Kerkes (R).



The Mendiola family



The Kerkes family



Nicole & Kalei with their fellow boxers at Rocky Steady Boxing San Diego.

understand. They still have to drive the kids around, attend activities and keep up with things around their homes.

While the ability to multitask may come easily to some women, it can be particularly challenging when you are also managing Parkinson’s disease. Kerkes says it’s nice to have a friend to turn to when the going gets tough.

“Having a friend going through the same things that I am dealing with is a huge blessing,” she said. “It’s nice to have someone in the same boat who I can vent to and who I can trade information with. We text each other in the middle of the night, share articles about PD research and fight next to one another at RSB.”

It also helps their husbands who can support each other and find some camaraderie with other RSB spouses.

“Luckily, my husband works from home so he can help change diapers when my hands aren’t working right,” she laughs. “I don’t think I could do it without him.”

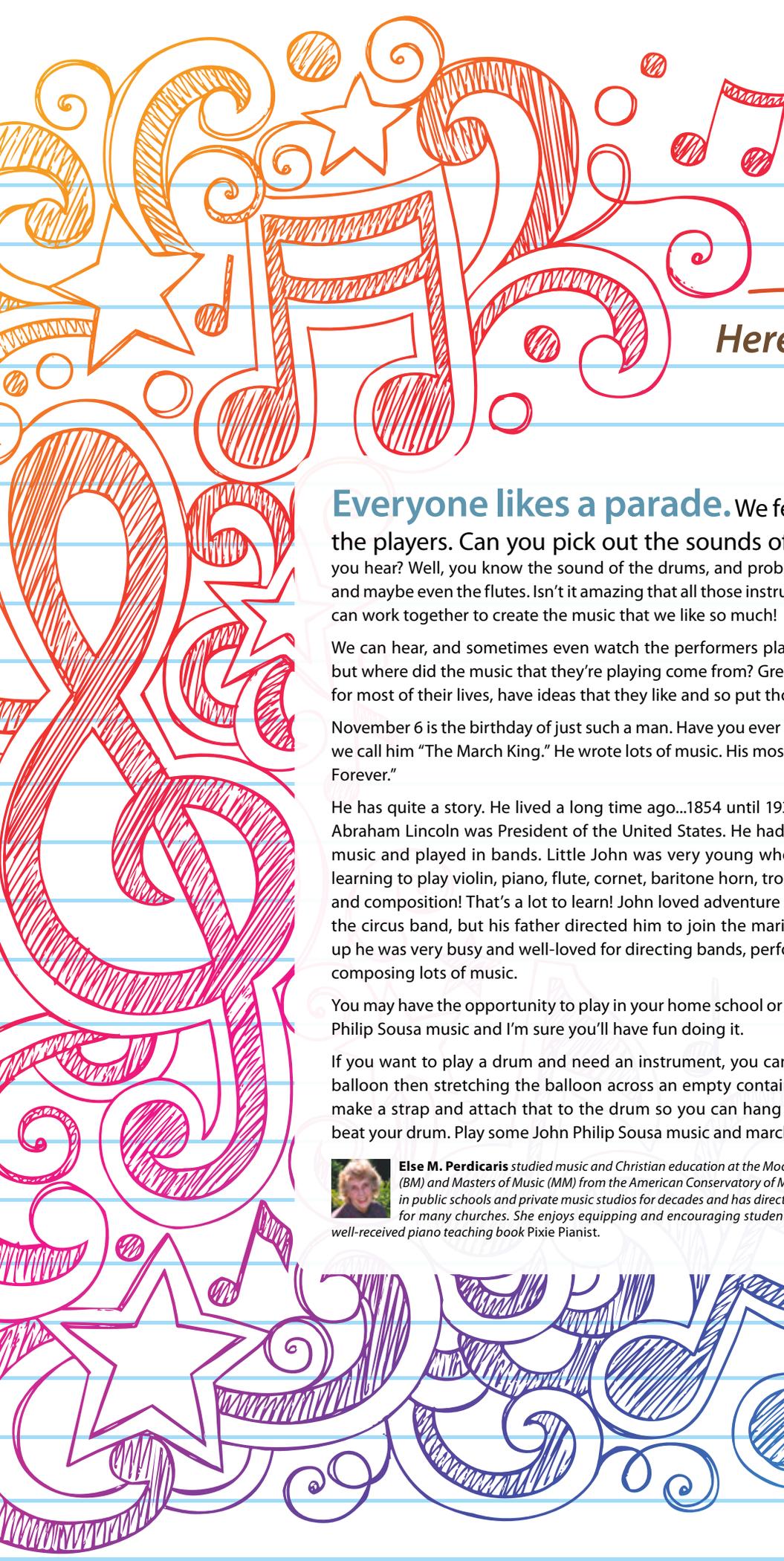
They also get a little help from an anonymous donor who has paid their RSB tuition enabling them to box for free.

“I am so thankful for the support, I don’t even have the words to express it,” Mendiola says. “It makes a huge difference.”

“We don’t know who that person is or why they have decided to do it. We have our theories, but we’ve never approached the individual just in case we are wrong,” Kerkes says. “Maybe they chose to do it because we are young mothers who still have a lot of kids at home, maybe not. We don’t know, but for whatever reason, they wanted to help us out and we are grateful to them. It certainly makes things a little easier.” ■

Julie Young is an award-winning freelance writer and author in the Indianapolis area who has written seven books, including *RSB’s I Am Rock Steady*. She lives in Indianapolis with her family and, in her spare time, coaches tennis for the National Junior Tennis League.

Reprinted with permission from *Rock Steady Boxing’s In Your Corner* Winter 2017 magazine, Volume 1, Issue 4.



Music

Minute for Kids

Here Comes the Band!

Everyone likes a parade. We feel like marching along with the players. Can you pick out the sounds of any particular instruments you hear? Well, you know the sound of the drums, and probably the trumpets and the trombones, and maybe even the flutes. Isn't it amazing that all those instruments with all of their different sounds can work together to create the music that we like so much!

We can hear, and sometimes even watch the performers play and the conductors direct the band, but where did the music that they're playing come from? Great composers, who have studied music for most of their lives, have ideas that they like and so put those ideas together to write the music.

November 6 is the birthday of just such a man. Have you ever heard of John Philip Sousa? Sometimes we call him "The March King." He wrote lots of music. His most famous piece is "The Stars and Stripes Forever."

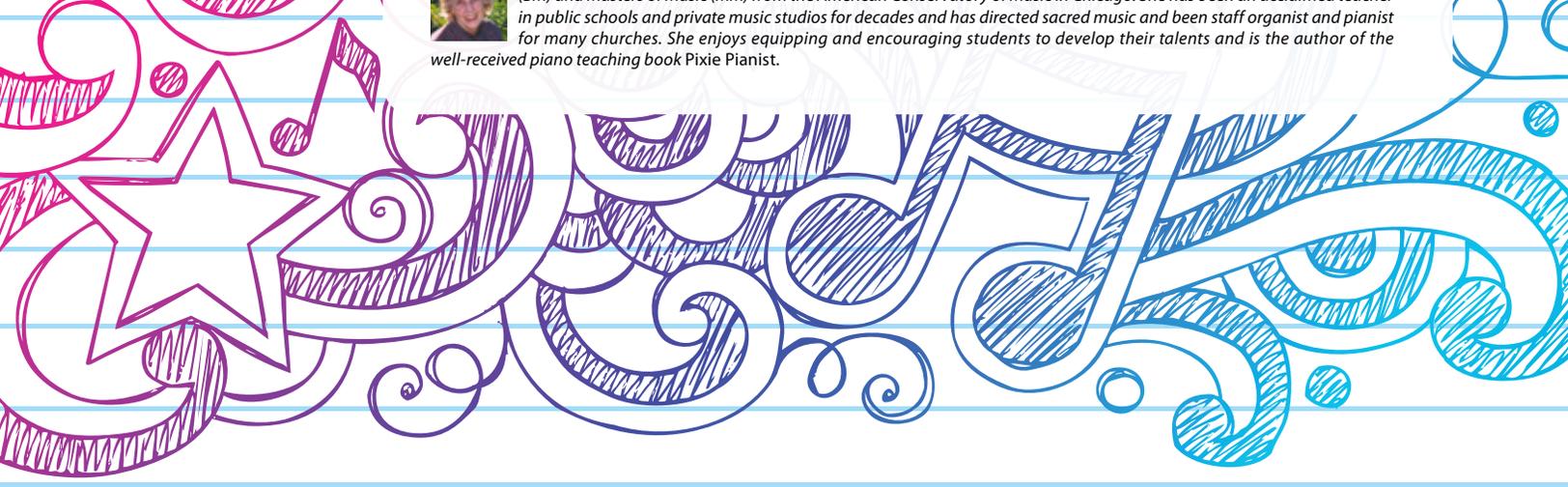
He has quite a story. He lived a long time ago...1854 until 1932. That was about the same time that Abraham Lincoln was President of the United States. He had 9 brothers and sisters. His father liked music and played in bands. Little John was very young when he began studying music. Imagine learning to play violin, piano, flute, cornet, baritone horn, trombone, alto horn, plus singing, theory, and composition! That's a lot to learn! John loved adventure and when he was 13 he wanted to join the circus band, but his father directed him to join the marine band as an apprentice. As he grew up he was very busy and well-loved for directing bands, performing, writing books and articles, and composing lots of music.

You may have the opportunity to play in your home school or local band. You will probably play John Philip Sousa music and I'm sure you'll have fun doing it.

If you want to play a drum and need an instrument, you can make one by cutting off the top of a balloon then stretching the balloon across an empty container. Tie some shoe strings together to make a strap and attach that to the drum so you can hang it around your neck and with pencils, beat your drum. Play some John Philip Sousa music and march in your make-believe parade. Fun! ■



Else M. Perdicaris studied music and Christian education at the Moody Bible Institute, and earned her Bachelor of Music (BM) and Masters of Music (MM) from the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago. She has been an acclaimed teacher in public schools and private music studios for decades and has directed sacred music and been staff organist and pianist for many churches. She enjoys equipping and encouraging students to develop their talents and is the author of the well-received piano teaching book *Pixie Pianist*.



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