

CLCN CHRONICLES

The official newsletter of the Christian Learning Center and Network

March

2005

ANSWERING YOUR QUESTIONS REGARDING...

...Beating the winter “blah’s”

This column is intended to be a resource for those new to homeschooling, as well as veterans looking for new ideas to incorporate into their homeschool. In January, we asked for your thoughts on beating the winter “blah’s.” Here is what one of our members had to share:

Activities are the key to surviving the winter. We love outings like Fun Friday and skiing. They give us something to look forward to and encourage us to work harder on the days we are home so that we will be ready for the activity.

For me as the mom, I love to plan a trip. It could be a weekend get-a-way or a full blown vacation. I love to go through all the brochures and internet info to plan our itinerary. Hunting for the best prices is like finding buried treasure. I like to plan in advance, so I have lots of time to look forward to the trip. A great trip to plan for this time of year is the IAHE Homeschool Convention in Indianapolis. It is so uplifting to be with so many homeschoolers. The speakers are encouraging with concrete ideas of how to improve our homeschooling. We'd love to see you there. If you go make plans to eat at the Spaghetti Factory, just a few blocks from the convention center. It is great food in a great atmosphere at very reasonable prices.

--Submitted by Dawn

NOW, FOR A NEW QUESTION...

...What is your favorite educational place to travel to? Tell us why. It can be a museum or even a vacation spot. Email your responses to Monica during the month of March with your answers written in paragraph form (please put “March Question” in the subject line). Responses will be published in the May newsletter.

FIELD TRIPS/SOCIAL EVENTS

Fun Friday at Liberty Bible Church on Friday, March 11th from 1 to 4 p.m. Join other homeschool families for fun and games. For more information call Laurie. Liberty Bible Church is located at 824 N. Calumet Avenue in Chesterton. It is on the west side of N. Calumet (Old Highway 49) just north of the intersection of Route 6 and N. Calumet Avenue (just east of the intersection of Highway 49 and Route 6). Please note: **Fun Friday will not be held on Good Friday, March 25th.**

Maple Sugar Time at Chellburg Farm at the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore on Monday, March 14th from Noon to 2 p.m. Learn about “horse-power,” examine maple trees, and see the Native American, pioneer and sugar shack methods of making maple sugar and syrup. The first half of this tour will be spent exploring the woods, with the 2nd half in the house and barn where guides will be at work in period costumes. This field trip is geared to students in grades K-12. The cost is \$2 per family and includes a tour information packet and tour-related classroom activities which will be mailed to you upon receipt of your payment and reservation. Reservations and payments must be received by Monica by March 4th. Please include the names and ages of children attending, and the number of adults attending per family.

***Singin' In The Rain* at Memorial Opera House** in Valparaiso on Sunday, April 24th at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$15 per adult and \$12 per child. If we have 20 or more people attending, tickets for adults are reduced to \$12. Advance registration and payment is due by March 20th. Please email Jeannie with questions and/or reservations.

Albanese Candy Factory in March or April. More information coming soon.

Potawatomis and Fur Traders at Bailly Homestead at the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore on Friday, May 6th for students in grades 3-12. More information coming in a future newsletter.

BOX TOPS FOR EDUCATION

The deadline for turning in Box Tops for Education coupons has been extended to March 24th. Coupons may either be given to Jeannie at co-op or mailed to Tricia (must be received by the 24th).

SWIMMING LESSONS

The Valparaiso YMCA would like to offer homeschool swimming lessons next fall. They are making plans now and would like homeschoolers with interest or suggestions to please call the aquatics coordinator, Yadi Lockard, at 462-4185 ext. 230.

NURSING HOME MINISTRY

Mark your calendars for the third Thursday of March which falls on St. Patrick's Day. We are planning a St. Patrick's Day Party with our friends at Life Care Center. Each resident will receive a shamrock pin to wear. Anyone interested in doing a craft at 3 p.m. at the next Fun Friday (March 11th) can help make these pins. We will also be listening to Irish music and singing Irish songs. If anyone can play an Irish piece of music, you are encouraged to do that also. We will be enjoying a snack of Irish Soda Bread and Green River pop. We need volunteers to make some extra loaves of bread to be given as prizes to the residents. If you are able to do this, please contact Holly. The recipe is listed below.

Please remember to wear green and join us on St. Patrick's Day (Thursday, March 17th) at 1:30 p.m. at the front door (corner of Campbell Street and Ransom Road). Also, remember to mark your calendar for the third Thursday of each month to share in this ministry.

IRISH SODA BREAD

*2 c. all-purpose flour
2 tablespoons brown sugar
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
3 tablespoons butter
2 eggs
3/4 c. buttermilk
1/3 c. raisins*

In a bowl, combine flour, brown sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Cut in butter until crumbly. Combine 1 egg and buttermilk; stir into flour mixture just until moistened. Fold in raisins. Knead on a floured surface for 1 minute. Shape into a round loaf; place on a greased baking sheet. Cut a 1/4-in. deep cross in top of loaf. Beat remaining egg; brush over loaf. Bake at 375 degrees for 30-35 minutes or until golden brown. YIELD: 6-8 servings.

MCHE 11TH ANNUAL CONVENTION

Michiana Christian Home Educators' 11th Annual Convention will be held at the Trinity Evangelical Free Church at 61770 Miami Road, South Bend, on Friday, March 11th at 7 p.m. and Saturday, March 12th from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. For additional information please visit www.mche.net.

RIGHT TO LIFE ORATORY CONTEST

The Porter County Right to Life Oratory Contest will be held on April 9th at Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church in Valparaiso. The contest is a chance for juniors and seniors to give a short speech on abortion, infanticide, euthanasia or stem cell research. The winner's videotaped speech will advance to the state competition, with the possibility of advancing to the National Right to Life contest.

Prizes for the Porter County Right to Life contest are as follows:

- 1st place - \$100
- 2nd place- \$75
- 3rd place - \$50

The state contest winner will receive a \$500 expense allowance to attend the National Right to Life contest in Minneapolis, MN on June 18th. The 2nd and 3rd place state winners will each receive a \$100 savings bond.

The National Right to Life Oratory Contest winner will receive \$1,000. The 2nd place winner receives \$750. The 3rd place winner receives \$500, and the 4th place winner receives \$250.

Porter County Right to Life has a lending library full of information on all of these topics that is open to the public. Students are encouraged to use these resources to research for their speech. Please call or email Stacie if you would like more information about this exciting contest.

HOMESCHOOL RECYCLING

Denise has started a new internet group for homeschoolers to share items they no longer need with other homeschoolers. This group is designed to pass down educational materials and items that are no longer being used to other homeschool families who may benefit from them. Instead of throwing things away, we can help each other. She also hopes this website will be used as a way connect with other homeschool families in our area, as well as an outlet to encourage and inform homeschoolers on different issues. Please visit this website at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/homeschoolrecycle>.

SPELLING BEE WINNER DOES IT AGAIN!

Congratulations to Caroline who was the champion at the Region 1 Spelling Bee in Rensselaer. Successfully spelling the words *lozenge* and *cribbage* won her first place in the senior division and qualified her to compete in the State spelling bee at the IAHE Conference on February 26th. However, she chose instead to compete in the Scripps-Howard Spelling Bee, which was on the same day. She competed against many public- and private-schooled middle-school students from all over Northwest Indiana. Unfortunately, results were not available from that contest at the time this newsletter was written.

VALENTINE BAKE-OFF WINNERS AND RECIPES

Thanks to all who participated in the Valentine's Day Bake-Off. The entries were scrumptious and difficult for our judges to score. Your hard work was certainly seen and tasted in the final products. The winners this year were as follows:

Breads & Muffins—Ethan (K-3) and Caitlyn (4-12)

Cakes & Cupcakes—Beka (K-3) and Hannah & Stacie (4-12)

Candy—Jenny (K-3) and Josiah & Kayla (4-12)

Cookies—Christopher (K-3) and Alexis (4-12)

ZUCCHINI BREAD (Ethan)

3 c. flour	1 t. cinnamon
3 eggs	1 t. salt
2 c. sugar	1 t. soda
1 c. oil	¼ t. baking powder
2 c. grated zucchini	1 c. nuts or raisins
½ c. sour cream	

Mix all ingredients. Pour into greased loaf pans. Bake at 350 degrees for 1 hour.

BETTY CROCKER SWEET YEAST BREAD SWEDISH TEA RING (Caitlyn)

Sweet Dough:

½ c. warm water
2 pkg. active yeast
1 ½ c. lukewarm milk
½ c. sugar
2 t. salt
2 eggs
½ c. softened margarine
7 c. flour

Mix all, except 1 c. flour. Add extra flour gradually when all mixed. Knead for 10 min.
Let rise for 1 ½ hrs. until doubled in size.

Tea Ring filling:

½ stick of butter
2 cans of solo pastry filling

Melt ½ stick of butter and cool. Roll dough out. Spread butter and then pastry filling.
Roll up and seal. Cut 2 layers down at an angle and fold back one side all the way around.
Let rise 30-45 min. Bake at 375 degrees for 25-30 min.

STRAWBERRY HEART CAKE (Stacie)

1 Extra Moist Duncan Hines Strawberry Cake mix

Follow directions on the box. Divide batter between a square and round cake pan. Bake as directed. When cool, invert onto serving platter. Place the square cake in a diamond form on the platter. Cut the round cake in half, placing each half on top of the diamond to form a heart shape. Frost with Duncan Hines whipped strawberry frosting. Decorate with sprinkles. Enjoy!

SCOTCH CRISPIES (Jenny)

12 oz. butterscotch chips
6 c. crispy rice cereal
1 c. peanut butter

Melt chips and peanut butter in microwave; stir until smooth. Add to cereal; press into foil lined 9x13" pan. Chill and cut into squares.

CARAMELS (Josiah)

2 c. sugar
1 c. brown sugar
1 c. light corn syrup
1 c. whipping cream
1 c. milk
1 c. butter
1 ¼ T. vanilla

Combine sugars, syrup, cream, milk, and butter in a large saucepan. Cook slowly, stirring occasionally to firm ball stage (248 degrees). Remove from heat and add vanilla. Pour in greased 8x8x2 pan. Cool. If desired add ½ cup pecans. Cut pieces to desired size and wrap in wax paper or Saran squares.

PEANUT BUTTER FUDGE (Kayla)

2 c. Sugar
2/3 c. milk
1 c. marshmallow creme
1 c. peanut butter
1 t. vanilla

Boil sugar and milk to soft ball stage (no longer). Remove, and stir in the remaining ingredients. Pour into an already prepared (greased) 8x8 in. pan. Cool, cut and enjoy!

SUNBURST LEMON BARS (Christopher)

Base:

2 c. all-purpose flour
½ c. powdered sugar
1 c. margarine or butter, softened

Filling:

4 eggs, slightly beaten
2 c. sugar
¼ c. all purpose flour
1 t. baking powder
¼ c. lemon juice

Glaze:

1 c. powdered sugar
2-3 T. lemon juice

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly spoon flour into measuring cup; level off. In large bowl, combine all base ingredients; beat at low speed until crumbly. Press mixture evenly in bottom of ungreased 13 x 9 inch pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 to 30 min. or until light golden brown.

Meanwhile, in large bowl, combine all filling ingredients except lemon juice; blend well. Stir in ¼ c. lemon juice.

Remove pan from oven; pour filling over warm base. Return to oven; bake at 350 degrees for an additional 25 to 30 min. or until top is light golden brown. Cool 1 hour or until completely cooled.

In small bowl, combine 1 c. powdered sugar and enough lemon juice for desired glazing consistency; blend until smooth. Glaze cooled bars. Cut into bars. Makes 36 bars.

WEBSITE RECOMMENDATION

Now you can get the SAT® Question of the Day delivered right to your email box! Test yourself with a new question and explanation every day. Increase your familiarity with the types of questions on the actual test. Practice for an upcoming SAT. Nancy has recommended the following website as a very low key way of preparing your children for standardized tests such as the PSAT and SAT. Subscribe now.

<https://ecl.collegeboard.com/account/login.jsp?applicationId=111&destinationpage=https%3A%2F%2Fapps.collegeboard.com%2FEmailSubscription%2FUserSubscription.jsp>

KUMON MATHEMATICS

Students need to have a command of elementary operations before they move on to more advanced problem solving exercises. In the Kumon Method, our initial emphasis is on mastery of computational skills. The curriculum has minimized peripheral, non-essential elements from its program. Calculation skills are presented in a step-by-step approach, which maximizes mastery and the retention of facts.

Unlike math textbooks, the Kumon Method is organized in a sequential order. Students advance at an incremental pace, studying each concept until it is mastered. The curriculum is a streamlined system with the specific objective of providing the most direct route to high school mathematics. An emphasis on calculation from the early levels onward carries a student toward this goal.

We believe that children can most effectively learn the skills they need by applying themselves to practical tasks. Concepts and theories can come later after the child has achieved a complete grasp of the mechanics. Our mathematical experience has taught us that concept learning should follow skill learning. Students will develop mathematical thinking skills as a consequence of gaining total proficiency in computation.

Regular practice motivates students by providing a sense of steady progress. As students acquire math facts, they augment their overall understanding of mathematical functions. The skills that students acquire are fundamental building blocks not only of mathematics—but also of learning itself. Kumon’s sequential method helps to foster independent study skills. Students experience the “joy of learning” most dramatically when they are able to figure things out on their own.

The materials contain valuable example problems that readily enable students to accomplish this. Indisputably, students need to acquire critical thinking skills for academic success; equally as important, students need to be able to calculate. The method produces students with both of these abilities. Kumon’s emphasis on calculation skills has proven to be the best technique for long-term success in learning math.

For further information on the Kumon Method, see <http://www.kumon.com>. Also, Kumon workbooks for the beginning levels are available at Barnes & Noble bookstores. Please contact the Kumon Math and Reading Center located near you for a free placement test to determine how your student can benefit from the Kumon Method.

--Article Submitted by Steven
Kumon Math and Reading Center

BOOK REVIEW

BY SUSAN

I read a book for myself this month, not planning to use it for this book review. Before I had finished reading it, I knew I would use this book for the book review. The book is a classic by Kathleen Norris, published in 1911. The title is *Mother*. It is light reading, and I don't think it is quite what I had expected. I am not sure exactly what I expected, but it is a book I am recommending. It is not some deep, philosophical or theological theme. It is the story of a young woman who is elated to embark upon a career in the big city as the secretary for a wealthy woman. She hobnobs with the rich, travels to Europe, etc. She comes to view her family and background as poor, insignificant, even embarrassing. However, this woman finally comes to realize what true happiness and contentment are and what motherhood is all about. She is told that she is who she is because of her family. It was an eye-opening moment for her and just what I needed at this point. I learned that the whole controversy about career vs. mom/homemaker is not as modern as we think. I was encouraged to keep on keeping on. There is no finer call in life than to be a mother and caretaker of a home and family. This story also reminded me of my great responsibility as a mom to 3 kids. My job has been the launching of 3 destinies. That calls for self-sacrifice, kindness, discipline, warmth, etc. The children that we are raising will go out to affect the world one way or another. What an opportunity for those of us who homeschool and have these children with us all the time! You may feel that life is speeding by (I do), but there is still time! Pray daily for strength and wisdom. And pick up a copy of the book, *Mother* by Kathleen Norris. It will speak to your heart (even if you are a dad). Have a great month!