



The Ford children, Kristine, Matthew, Ben, Tim and Joshua, in their dining room, which Kathy Ford converted into their homeschool classroom.

## Homeschool

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"Then Kristy and Matt work from their lesson plans in the morning. They can read so they are able to work fairly independently. The afternoon we spend mainly on art, music, gym, and computer," she said, pointing to a Macintosh on a nearby table. "Ben and Tim also follow the same schedule, but I spend more of my time instructing them. However, they can read pretty well now themselves."

Attempting to teach two different grades, as well as keeping up a home and tending to a younger child all at once may seem a bit overwhelming. But Kathy takes it in stride, and ties the lesson plans together for all the children as much as possible.

"Personally, I use a unit study plan where we pick a theme to tie all the subjects together, like the American Indians for example. Then we tie in as many subjects as we can to that theme, like our reading, history, and geography." Household chores can also be accomplished while home-schooling, Kathy explains. "I try to incorporate those life skills like cooking and laundry into their day, much like home economics."

Homeschooling wasn't always a part of the Ford's life. "My oldest daughter asked to be home-schooled," said Kathy. After attending kindergarten and most of first grade in a public school setting in a rather large district, Kristine wanted to try homeschooling. "She was overwhelmed to be in a school with seven first grade classes," said Kathy.

After being homeschooled for the end of first grade and all of second grade, the Fords moved to the Lake-Lehman school district and Kristine once again attended public school for third and fourth grades. "Even though this is a smaller district, my daughter asked to be homeschooled again. We weren't unhappy with the education or the teachers in this district. I think it's primarily be-

cause of the way children behave toward each other. At home they're more relaxed and feel more themselves. They're able to concentrate on learning with no peer pressure."

Kristine has now completed fifth, sixth, and seventh grade through homeschooling. "We anticipate she'll graduate as a homeschooler. That's her goal," said Kathy confidently.

Said Kristine, "I like homeschooling better because if I'm stuck on a certain subject we can take more time on that area, before going on to the next topic."

Her brother Matthew, who attended public school from kindergarten through third grade, agreed. "I like homeschooling better because I can get through more things faster than at regular school where I had to wait for the other students."

However, the Fords are able to combine some strengths of the public school system with their homeschooling system. Matthew, a member of the gifted program at Lake-Lehman, attends 45 minute classes three times a week at the school, and all the children participate in physical education classes once a week at the school.

Matthew appreciates some aspects of public school as well. "I liked public school because I like being with my friends, but I still get to be with them in gym and field trips and the gifted classes."

There are homeschoolers who get together at least once a month to support one another, known as the Wyoming Valley Homeschoolers. Here, the parents can discuss not only the problems they're having with homeschooling, but also any new or innovative ideas they might want to share. It was through this group that Kathy Ford met another area homeschooler, Shavertown resident Lisa Robbins who homeschools her two daughters, Jessica age 9, and Rachel, age 7.

"It's like anything else," said Lisa good-naturedly. "Some days you have good days, some days you don't want to begin. You establish a routine and stick to it as best as you can."

"I don't have a real strict schedule," she admits. Of course, flexibility is one of the advantages of homeschooling, as Lisa points out. "We can work Saturday instead of a weekday if someone is sick or we can take an extra holiday and make it up on the weekend."

Homeschooling makes learning a way of life, adds Lisa. "The majority of homeschoolers use the unit study approach to life. When we go for a walk for exercise, we identify trees and bugs. When we go to the store for a field trip, we compare prices and do math."

"We have formal math about four times a week," she said. "On Wednesday, we do computer work, workbooks, and educational games in math, or maybe have a field trip."

Of course, it's not always easy, admits Lisa. "The hardest thing for me was to become more self-disciplined. It's not always easy when some days you just want to relax." However, the children have responsibilities, too. "Everyone gets involved; the kids learn to do the cooking and other chores. If I'm sick in bed, they can fix lunch for me or themselves."

Kathy said anyone interested in homeschooling can attend the local support group of the Wyoming Valley Homeschoolers or contact her at 639-1572. The Christian Homeschool Association of PA holds a curriculum fair each year in Harrisburg, where vendors display curriculums, supplies, educational games, and workbooks for sale. There is also homeschooling help on line with many sites on the Internet and America Online. Another group, the Pennsylvania Home Education Network, Meadville, PA is not religiously affiliated in any way.

## Fund opens for area man with leukemia

Hugh Hall, Jr. was born and raised in Shavertown. He is the son of Barbara Hall of Dallas, and the grandson of Wilson and Hazel Honeywell of Shavertown. He is a member of the Shavertown United Methodist Church. Recently he started new employment at Ertley's Motor World, where he was very happy.

On April 29, 1996, only three months after he started his new job, he was diagnosed with leukemia and immediately transferred to the Geisinger Medical Center in Danville, where he is currently undergoing treatment.

Hugh and his wife, the former Tina Miller, reside in Pittston. He is the father of Brittany, age 7, who attends first grade at Pittston Elementary School, and Damien 4, who attends preschool.

Due to this serious illness and related treatment, he has been unable to continue his employment. This family is facing great economic hardship. Immediate help is greatly needed.

Anyone wishing to help may send donations to: The Hugh Hall Family Fund, c/o The Franklin First Savings Bank, 168 North Memorial Highway, Shavertown, PA 18708.

## Kingston Twp. issues zoning permits

Kingston Township zoning officer Ben Gorey issued 66 permits and collected \$6,646 in fees during May.

Three permits were for new homes, for P. Deats at 296 Terrace Ave., valued at \$88,000; for J. Simchek at 166 Green Rd., valued at \$86,295, and for C. Hackett at 1220 Morgan Ridge valued at \$274,340.

Other large projects included roof repairs valued at \$9,987 at the Shavertown Methodist Church, exterior repairs valued at \$20,000 at the Hodle residence at 65 Dug Rd., a fence valued at \$15,000 at the M. Bendick residence at 360 Howell Rd., an in-ground pool valued at \$13,749 at the Thimot residence at 339 Crane Rd., a carport valued at \$7,500 at the Marquis residence at 139 Henry St. and a garage valued at \$8,000 at the Novitsky residence at 37 Sutton Rd.

## Flea mart at Grange Hall June 15

Mountain Grange #567, 1632 Eighth Street, Carverton, will hold a Flea Market June 15 at the Grange Hall from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Refreshments will be available all day.

For information, please call 696-1452 or 287-6354.



POST PHOTO: GRACE R. DOVE

## Adding to Earth Day flag

Dallas Elementary School students Melissa Snyder, Katie Crompton, Jackie O'Brien, Tanya Heuer, Jeremy Hoskins, Robbie Tomko, Samantha O'Brien, Kirs Szulborski, Sara Swepston, Amy Austin, Caitie Hession, Alyssa Austin and Kyle Hession, and superintendent Gerald Wycallis showed off the enormous Earth Day flag which 400 students made. Each student drew and lettered a square, which was incorporated into the flag, which takes up an entire wall in the cafeteria and will be shipped to Nashville to become part of the International Earth Day Flag. Fabric was donated by Touch of Eyelet, while the project was coordinated by the PTO. Dallas is the only area district to contribute to the flag, which contains sections from every state in the country and 12 other nations.

## Kingston Twp. recreation starts June 17

Kingston Township's summer recreation program will be held from June 17 through August 9 and is open to resident children who have completed kindergarten up to and including fifth grade and are 12 years old or under. Proof of residency, such as a tax bill or driver's license, will be required at registration, when a \$10.00 registration fee will be collected.

The program will be held weekdays, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Center Street Park each morning. Children should bring a bag lunch and drink each day.

Counselors Tammy Dickson, Trisha Swire, David Jackubowski, Randy Moss and Leigh Sabol will supervise sports, games, guest speakers, music, arts and crafts and several field trips throughout the summer. Each Tuesday and Thursday, the children will swim at Frances Sloeum State Park pool.

Registration will be June 15 at the Center Street Park Pavilion, 10 a.m. until noon. The last day for registration is June 21.

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