KHEA NEWS FALL 2003

Our choice...our right...our children

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KERA - How it impacts homeschool families -By Jan Fletcher

"Kentucky is leading the nation with a cutting-edge, break-the-mold education act," said Scott Somerville, an attorney for Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA).

Somerville spoke on the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) at the Christian Home Educators of Kentucky Conference in Louisville, July 11. He discussed the cultural pressures which are driving education reform and how that affects the homeschooling community.

Outcome-based education is at the heart of education reform in Kentucky, and those outcomes are being defined, by and large, by business interests, said Somerville. "They're supposed to get workers who don't have to be issued a calculator to add two and two," Somerville said. As a result of the decreasing quality of high-school graduates, business interests began demanding answers and teachers offered them exactly what they wanted: outcome-based education.

Somerville told conference attendees that, in his opinion, outcome-based education "is an unholy alliance between big business, big government and teacher unions."

The question, with outcome-based education, is who is defining those outcomes, he said. "That kind of power is very appealing to those who want to change the world," Somerville said.

Somerville said the U.S. Constitution's First Amendment establishes a zone of thought, communication, and opinion that is a sacred, government-free zone. Outcome-based education threatens that freedom, because students in public schools are taught to think in a way most beneficial to business and labor interests, said Somerville.

Defining outcomes isn't the only problem with KERA, said Somerville. "A funny thing happened on the way to transforming Kentucky's education system. KERA is a high-stakes system. If the children don't do well there will be consequences," said Somerville. "In theory, we punish the teachers for not teaching. KERA scores define what happens to local schools."

As a result, he said, the pressure increases on schools to "dump" students on the low end of the testing scale: those children who pull down KERA averages for a given school. When faced with a youth who is failing, school officials find themselves asking, "wouldn't it be wonderful if those kids went somewhere else?" said Somerville. That somewhere else may be a homeschool. "We call this dumping. It's a problem we see in states where they have high-stakes testing and good homeschool laws," said Somerville.

Statistics indicate that up to half of all gifted students in the country are being homeschooled, Somerville said. "It's not the gifted they are trying to get to homeschool," said Somerville. "They are dumping children who are troubled." Although Somerville said the Kentucky Department of Education is in full agreement that this should not happen, it still happens, he told conference attendees.

As a result, people who contend for stronger homeschooling regulations point to these troubled families as an example of why such laws are needed.

There is also a strong incentive for schools to encourage students who are, essentially, "dropping out," to say they are "transferring" to a homeschool. This benefits the school, which must keep its dropout rates below 5.3 percent a year or lose their eligibility for rewards under the KERA mandates. According to an Aug. 23 article in the *Louisville Courier Journal,* a key legislative committee called for an audit of the state's high-school dropout rate. In "Audit of Dropout Rates is Sought," reporter Chris Kenning said legislators requested the audit "after a new report questioned its accuracy."

The Program Review and Investigations Committee asked for the investigation because "the system does not ensure

Continued next page

How to Reach Us

If you have an urgent matter and need to reach a KHEA board member right away, please use our home phone numbers or email addresses listed above. Otherwise call (859) 779-6574 or email us at: kheahomeschool@hotmail.com. To contribute news for the newsletter, we have a new address: kheanewseditor@hotmail.com.

KHEA Articles by YOU!

The next KHEA Newsletter is expected to be published in early November. Have you ever thought about writing an article for the KHEA newsletter? We'd love to have more membership involvement as to what goes in the Newsletter. If you have an announcement you would like to submit, or an article to submit to the Winter KHEA newsletter, please send it to **kheanewseditor@hotmail.com** by Nov. 1st.

You can help KHEA!

Do you sometimes feel like you'd like to give more back to your homeschooling community? Have you considered getting involved at a higher level?

The KHEA Board is looking for volunteers to help manage our communications and improve our service to Kentucky homeschoolers.

Some areas where we could use your help are: creative input to our website, newsletter assistance, secretarial tasks, and managing our email. Feel free to make your own suggestion if there's something you can do that you think we need.

We have lots of opportunities for you to help without ever having to stand up in front of a group and make a presentation. But, if you *want* to stand up in front of a group and make a presentation we can arrange that too!

Contact any of the Board members if you'd like to talk about it. We're always happy to talk to folks who are interested, and we won't twist your arm.- *Bill Monroe, KHEA Board*

Need to join HSLDA? (Home School Legal Defense Association)
You can access an application online at www.hslda.org. KHEA members may use the KHEA discount number, # 291057, to receive a 15% discount on HSLDA membership.

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that transfer students are actually enrolled in another school," according to researchers.

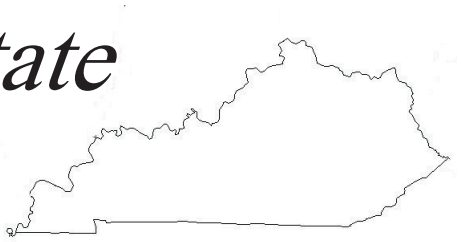
Encouraging failing students to "transfer" to a homeschool instead of dropping out may also give troubled teens a way to preserve their driving privileges and circumvent other legislation aimed at decreasing the dropout rate.

For homeschooling families who are dedicated to providing quality education for their children, the unfortunate "side-effects" of KERA are not welcomed.

Furthermore KERA is not solving the problems it was supposed to. "There is no evidence we can find that Kentucky education quality has improved," said Somerville. "In national testing, Kentucky seems to be flat."

In summary, KERA's catch-22 impact on homeschooling families is not beneficial.

Across the state



'Tis the season for DPP contacts' By Connie Laffin

The beginning of a new school year brings new opportunities for interactions between homeschooling families and school officials. Here's a roundup of the latest news from across the state:

Covington – The DPP there asked families for more information than the law requires a homeschool family to give. They asked homeschool families to submit the following: Social Security number, textbook list, and school day schedule, before the homeschool could be "approved."

Mayfield – The DPP asked for homeschool families to submit the following information in addition to the letter of intent they had already filed: school calendar and daily schedule; curriculum list; a syllabus for each course; and immunization records, medical exam and birth certificate all submitted on a school district form. The DPP also stated that "a DPP from the local school district periodically may visit a homeschool to ensure that quality instruction requirements are being met."

Madisonville – It seems that the Hopkins County school board has adopted a policy regarding homeschools. This policy clearly violates the homeschool family's right to privacy. They are asking for information in addition to a letter of intent. This struggle actually started last year and is continuing.

Ballard Co. – A member family went to get a letter from her local school board stating that her son had legally filed as a homeschool. She needed that letter so her son could file for a learner's permit (driver's license). The DPP asked to see all of the student's homeschool records and curriculum before he was willing to write a short letter.

Elizabethtown – The DPP went door-to-door one day to introduce himself and offer assistance to the families. He also asked what had made them leave the public schools. He never asked to see school records, but he sure made lots of families apprehensive and suspicious.

Louisville – A DPP there asked a family for additional information after they filed their letter of intent.

So what does this mean? No matter how safe you feel you are, trouble with DPPs can surface overnight. All of the above counties were places where the DPP never troubled folks much. Then all of a sudden, the homeschoolers there had big problems on their hands. If that happens, it sure is nice to have a local support group to rely on. It is pretty scary to stand alone against school authorities. Being a KHEA member and joining HSLDA can take lots of that stress away. You don't want to be caught alone.

One more note… If you get a letter from the local school district asking for information you are not required to give them, apply the "Golden Rule" – treat other people the way you want to be treated. Many times these DPPs are ignorant of the law. If you were in their shoes, you would like a homeschool parent to call and talk through the family's objections BEFORE they call in KHEA or HSLDA. You would rather have a chance to talk a problem over with someone before they take the matter to a lawyer. Give them the respect you want them to have for you. Call them up and go over your objections with them. Then if the DPP doesn't back down, call KHEA or HSLDA.

Salato Wildlife Education Center

This is a wonderful facility to visit for a field trip. It is part of the KY Dept. of Fish and Wildlife Resources' Game Farm on US 60, 2 miles west of US 127 in Frankfort. They have a great brochure with weekend activities and special classes all of the way through November. For a list of activites, and a look at what Salato Wildlife Education Center has to offer, visit their website and calendar of events at www.fw.ky.gov.

Support Group Spotlight

In each issue of KHEA's newsletter, we'll spotlight some of our affiliated support groups to let you know where they are and what they are doing. If you live near one of these groups, we would encourage you to visit them and get to know what they have to offer. If you are looking for support groups across the state, you can find an additional listing on our website at www.khea.8k.com.

Barren River Home School Association – Warren Co.

Twenty-two families new to homeschooling or interested in homeschooling attended an informational meeting hosted by the Bowling Green area homeschooling support group. Debbie Fox, president of BRHSA, and Lauren Jessen, BRHSA board chairman, shared with families how homeschooling had worked for their families, as well as discussing the legalities of homeschooling, and homeschool resources at the community, state, and national level. The meeting was held at the downtown branch of the Bowling Green Public Library

"It was real exciting," said Fox. "Most of these families joined our support group and they've come on like gangbusters."

BRHSA effectively promoted the meeting with newspaper ads, and flyers posted at bookstores, libraries, grocery stores and other community bulletin boards. "Before the event, we contacted major resources for curriculum," said Fox. "We asked for sample catalogs to give away. We also contacted several homeschooling magazines and asked for sample issues." As a result, the families who attended received a well-stocked information packet. For further information about BRHSA, contact Debbie Fox at 270-393-8817, or email budfox@neandertech.com

Capital Area Christian Homeschoolers - Anderson Co.

The Frankfort-area homeschoolers have begun a mentoring program for families new to homeschooling, or new to the area. "This year 22 new families started all at one time," said Angelica Monroe, president of CACH. "We thought about a mentoring program a few years ago, and when we had our annual picnic this summer and the topic came up again, we decided it was time to do something about it."

Monroe spent a week on the phone in late August matching up new people with families who were experienced homeschoolers. "I picked families with similarly aged children — I did the matchmaker thing," said Monroe, who expected the mentors to give the families help with resources, curriculum, and other topics of concern to new homeschooling parents.

Although the program is too new to evaluate, Monroe said she thinks it is already helping both new families and mentors, too. "We use the YMCA in Frankfort for activities every week. Generally, the first meeting there of the year is very confusing and crowded. I tried to get the mentoring program going before the first week at the YMCA, so that the mentors could meet up with new families. It worked out great. The first day we didn't have all these new families totally lost." The feedback Monroe has heard from mentors is positive, too. "They really enjoy talking to the new people," she said. Monroe is hopeful that mentors will introduce new members to more families so that their circle of friends expands.

Several of the newcomers are homeschooling middle-school-aged children for the first time. As a result, some mentors who had never had a child in the public schools got a fresh insight into the challenges facing families whose children attend public schools. As a result, one family who had been considering a future public school enrollment, decided to continue homeschooling, said Monroe. For more information about CACH, call Angie at 502-839-1960 or email angelica@mis.net

GOT A GREAT IDEA TO SHARE? Win a prize!

KHEA will award a prize to the affiliated support group with the best idea for publicizing or growing their support group. Email your tips to kheanewseditor@hotmail.com. We'll award a gift to a support group for every issue of the newsletter produced during the 2003-2004 school year.

Support Group Tidbits

Barren County Christian Home Educators invites homeschoolers to check out the Capitol Arts Alliance in Bowling Green.

The Alliance will hold their Educational Programs as well as School Day Performances this year.

Performances this year are: "Zoe Speaks", Bowling Green Western Symphony Orchestra, "Miss Nelson is Missing," "One Appalachian Christmas," "Amelia Bedelia 4 Mayor...and Other Stories", & "Stone Soup & Dragon Dumplings."

Educational Programs are Scholastic Art, Youth Art, Arts Education Showcase, Summer Arts Day Camp, Terrific Tuesdays, Summer Theater Experience.

For more information, contact the theater at 270-782-2787.

The Southeast Christian Church Home Education Ministry is hosting a 2-Day Writing Workshop with Dave and Neta Jackson, author of the Trailblazer series, on Feb. 2 and 3 at SECC. Please contact Denise Doyle at ZBOBBOB@aol.com for registration information.

Nature Programs

Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill offers nature programs for homeschool groups Some examples:

Project Wild
Project Aquatic Wild
Hunting for Fossils
Geology of the Kentucky River Palisades

Also, they are having two days of programming designed for only homeschoolers – Oct 7 & 14.

For info write to:
School Reservations Office
Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill
3501 Lexington Rd.
Harrodsburg, KY 40330
1-800-734-5611 ext. 1547
email marsha@shakervillageky.org
website: http://shakervillageky.org

ESSAY CONTEST

In an effort to raise student awareness about the freedoms that have made America great, The Rutherford Institute is sponsoring an essay competition for junior and seniors in high school. The essay competition focuses on the freedoms found in the First Amendment to our U.S. Constitution. Students are asked to explain the significance of one of the freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment and describe how the United States would be different today had those freedoms not been guaranteed.

Through participation in the essay contest, students will not only have the opportunity to utilize their knowledge of American history, but will be able to compete for national recognition, publication, and a college scholarship. Deadline: Oct. 17, 2003. For more info and rules check out their website at http://www.rutherford.org/essay_contest/default.asp

MUSIC INSTITUTE OF LEXINGTON
Musicorps, Inc.

Music enhances learning skills

"A new study shows children who take music lessons have better verbal memory skills than others and may find it easier to learn in school".* Music study requires both sides of the brain to work together in order to understand the concepts needed to comprehend the art. Therefore, studying music improves tasks supported by that area such as reasoning, verbal and memory skills.

"In the study, psychologists in Hong Kong studied 90 boys between the ages of 6 and 15. Half of the boys had received music training as members of their school's string orchestra, plus music lessons on Western instruments, for up to five years. The others had no musical training. Researchers gave the children verbal memory tests to see how many words they could learn and recall from a list and a similar test to measure their visual memory skills. The study showed that the students with music training learned, recalled, and retained more words than the other boys. And verbal memory skills rose in proportion to how long they had taken music lessons. "The more music training during childhood, the better the verbal memory," says researcher Agnes S. Chan, PhD, a psychologist at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. "This strongly implies that the better verbal memory in children with music training is not simply a matter of differences in age, education level, or their family's socioeconomic characteristics." *

"Another study showed children that did not continue their lessons after a three year period still remained stable with their memory skills and they did not lose the advantage they had gained from previous music study which means their training may have had a long-lasting effect. However the study also showed that students with as "little as a year of music lessons was enough to provide noticeable benefits in verbal memory skills." *

The Music Institute of Lexington believes in the benefits of music study and is dedicated to providing your children with the finest music instruction on all instruments and voice regardless of one's talent or financial means. We will be the first accredited community music school through the National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. We believe so strongly in the benefits of music that we work with other organizations in town to provide music opportunities to the children that live in underprivileged area of our community who could otherwise never dream of coming to our main facility to study.

We would like to extend a welcome to the home schooling community to let us know your needs in the area of music. We would like to offer band, orchestra, choir, percussion or guitar class along with our already existing program. We are the first to offer a music therapy program for the "community at large" for children and adults with special needs or those suffering from disease or injury. For additional information please call us at 859-273-9991.- Musicorps, Inc., 1321 Trent Blvd., Lexington, KY 40517

Curriculum Store in Louisville

Old Friends & New, a new kind of old-fashioned, neighborhood bookstore, offers deeply discounted books in an in-store Home School Center.

Categories include parent resource materials, curriculum materials, unit study books, classics, out-of-print book sourcing, and more! Special orders from most publishers receive the same deep discounts to home school families. Why pay more?

291 N. Hubbards Lane, next to Krogers' in the Woodlawn Center. Phone: 526-0024, Fax: 502-526-0025, Email: books@oldfriendsandnew.com, Web: www.abe.com/home/OFBooks.

Chivalry Concepts announces a new series of speaking engagements

As a homeschool father of four children, I am pleased to announce that Chivalry Concepts, Inc. is now accepting reservations for speaking engagements for the 2003-2004 academic year.

Honor, Integrity, and Character; more than just buzzwords in today's global marketplace, these are values that public and private school systems throughout the nation are attempting to impart upon their students. Chivalry Concepts is dedicated to accomplishing this by offering presentations to scholastic and corporate groups of all sizes, and I believe you will agree that the symbols of knighthood and chivalry are dynamic concepts which can be used to demonstrate the principles of building character and developing leaders.

For a free brochure, call Jefferson Pike at 877-717-2528 or email jtpike@bww.com. - *Jefferson Pike*

Know Something Special?

If you know of other events and resources that you want to share with homeschoolers through the KHEA newsletter, please send your announcements to:
kheanewseditor@hotmail.com.
Our next deadline is Nov. 1st!

Winter Seminar will refresh you!

This year's KHEA Winter Seminar for Support Group leaders will be held in Lexington and Hopkinsville on two Saturdays in February (dates to be announced). Our focus this year will be helping support group leaders build great relationships with key people within their communities.

We'll start with a workshop on the "ABC's of Public Relations," by Jan Fletcher. Learn how to promote a positive image and gain helpful, free publicity for your support group in your community.

In the workshop, "In Case of DPP Contact, Break Glass," Connie Laffin, president of KHEA, will encourage support leaders to equip their DPPs with accurate information about homeschool/DPP interactions as spelled out in the Best Practices document.

KHEA Vice President Bill Monroe will advise on the "Care and Feeding of Your Legislator." He'll share saavy tips for building a positive relationship with your local state representative and senator.

You'll also hear from two DPPs, and a panel of support group leaders willing to offer you sage ideas for all you underpaid, overworked parents. Don't miss it!

Aquarium offers homeschool programs

Ripley's Aquarium of the Smokies, located in Gatlinburg, Tenn., offers special days for homeschool families.

Dates & Programs:

September 9, 2003	Sharks and Rays
October 7, 2003	The Abyss
November 4, 2003	Reptiles
December 2, 2003	Habitats
January 6, 2004	Invertebrates
February 3, 2004	Fish
March 2, 2004	The Tiny Things You Never See
April 6, 2004	Pollution
May 4, 2004	Birds
June 1, 2004	Water Cycle
July 6, 2004	Survival
August 3, 2004	Marine Mammals

Time: Grades K-5: 11:00am-12:00pm
Grades 6-12: 1:00pm-2:00pm

For Rates and Reservations:
Phone: 888-240-1358 ext. 2142
Email: education@ripleys.com
Please note: Advance registration is required.

ANNOUNCING…..
The First (hopefully to be annual)
Homeschool Talent Show to be held in Lexington.

We are currently looking for TALENTED (that's ALL of you) homeschoolers who would be willing to share their talent with all of us!

The show will be scheduled for late October in the evening. Details are currently pending location and date confirmations.

If you are interested in performing in the talent show, please fill out the enclosed application form. You may either e-mail or snail mail the form back. And be sure to tell all of your homeschool friends about the talent show!! If you are performing in a group, each member of your group must fill out the application form. **We can't guarantee that we will have a piano at the show location. Please keep this in mind and be prepared to list an alternate talent if a piano is needed.**

Deadline for applications is October 3, 2003.

The plan is for everyone who participates to receive a small prize. We also hope to have "celebrity" judges for larger prizes.

Further details will be forthcoming. Get Involved! Get your application turned in NOW!!!

Homeschool Talent Show
Performer's Application

Name_____ Age_____

Address_____

Phone_____

Parents' Names_____

e-mail address_____

Please explain the act you would like to perform_____

_____

_____

Are you performing with a group?_____Yes _____No

Names of others performing in your group_____

_____

Please list any special equipment/needs you may have for your act _____

_____

Please return this form to:
e-mail—ksmansour@insightbb.com

snail mail—Kim Mansour
4524 Alverstone Place
Lexington, KY 40515

Questions? Please e-mail any questions you may have to the above address.
Deadline for performer's application is October 3, 2003.

Homeschool Mom's retreat

RDC Ministries Presents:
A Retreat for Home School Moms

2003 Theme:
Real Refreshment:
How to Get It, How to Keep It and How to Share It!

When: Friday October 31 - Sunday November 2, 2003
Where: Ridgecrest Conference Center (17 miles east of Asheville, NC)
Cost: $140 includes two nights and five meals plus all other retreat resources.

The objectives:
1. To AFFIRM the home school mom in her God given roles and calling. (Eph. 1.18)
2. To ENCOURAGE the home school mom in her walk with her Master. (2 Thess. 2.16-17)
3. To CHALLENGE the home school mom to be all that God desires. (Romans 12.1-2)
4. To INSPIRE the home school mom with the Truth of God's Word. (1 Thess. 1.3)

Come and join us for a weekend like no other. Mark your calendar, tell your home school friends, and start praying about what God is going to do!

You can register online at www.realrefreshment.org.

DON'T FORGET. The deadline is coming soon!

We hope to see you there!

In His Grace,
The Retreat Leadership Team,
www.RDCministries.org

Rachael & Davis Carman
RDC Ministries (John 3.30)
www.RDCministries.org <http://www.americanwick.com/>
www.realrefreshment.org <http://www.americanwick.com/>

Student Notebooking - Learning at its Best by Cindy Wiggers

Have you ever kept a journal? Were you faithful to it? When you were on a roll with it wasn't it a fulfilling experience? Have you looked back at any past journal and seen your growth since then? Maybe you've never kept a journal, but know someone who does. Did you know that most of what we know today about many of our founding fathers such as Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, and George Washington, we know from their personal journals? This started from their youth, when they formed the habit of writing down things they learned, drawing diagrams, listing goals and steps to reach them. George Washington wrote his own list of etiquette, which has since been published. Jefferson even designed a portable writing desk he could carry on horseback.

We have a wonderful opportunity to help students establish the art of keeping notebooks while doing everyday schoolwork. It is such a great boost to their joy of learning when they can see their own progress from year to year when they record what they are learning in their own personal student notebook. There is a sense of true learning going on, and I'm convinced a higher level of thinking skill is utilized.

Several programs (e.g. Principle Approach, Well Trained Mind) recommend establishing a student notebook approach to learning. If you've been interested in giving the notebook method a try I can give you some ideas to help you get started here. If you want more details and to see some first-hand examples be sure to check out my workshop on this topic at the conventions where I'll be speaking this year. (For a schedule of conventions See www.geomatters.com/workshops/default.asp)

Notebooks can be organized in a variety of ways. Find what works for your child and give him some freedom to make it personal. You can use a 3-ring binder, a sewn composition book, a store-bought journal, or report folders. My kids particularly liked using the sewn composition books, and I let them choose, from the wide selection of colors, which each wanted to use. This becomes your student's personal diary of a school year, and the more input they have in it the more it reflects their own tastes, skills and natural gifts.

Whatever type of notebook you choose be sure to make it interesting. Include pictures, (photographs for children who can't draw yet). Occasionally let them copy diagrams from the textbook, or trace a picture if their drawing skills have not developed yet. Have them design their own cover page, and use lots of color whenever possible. Encourage your students to form the habit to do their best work in this special notebook. Show it around. When Grandma comes over for a visit, you get together with other home school families, when Dad gets home from work, show their notebooks. When they know others will see the book they tend to take better care in doing their schoolwork. Once the notebook is established you will often see a pride of what your children accomplish reflected in their work. My kids still bring out their notebooks and look at them on occasion.

A student notebook can be done in a variety of ways according to your need, but be firm with maintaining quality. You can put one topic in a notebook, or place dividers for several school subjects in one notebook. It's strictly up to you. If you want to do a notebook for the first time, start with one topic. As you get going you will develop some great ideas of your own for making it really special. I like to include a vocabulary section at the end of each book where the student can add new words as they learn them. At the end of the year number the pages and add a table of contents in the front. Set guidelines for their notebook. Here are some of mine: use your neatest handwriting, only final copy of written work is included, no doodling, you are not allowed to lose this book! I suggest you keep it in a special place and make sure it is returned there at the end of each school day.

Space does not allow me to go into more detail, but know for sure, that you will not regret establishing a student notebook discipline with your child once you get it going. Start exploring ideas with others and get a look at the notebooks your friends have been keeping and if you want more info see me at the convention.

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Cindy Wiggers is an author and national speaker who operates Geography Matters with her husband and 3 children. She has home schooled for over 10 years graduating two children from high school. She has authored or co-authored a number of books on geography including; Trail Guide to World Geography, Trail Guide to U.S. Geography, The Ultimate Geography and Timeline Guide, and Teaching Geography Through Art. Cindy also teaches workshops on geography, timelines and student notebooks using practical examples of first-hand, tried and true experiences. Her heart is to help parents and teachers instill a love for learning in children.

For more information
contact Geography Matters,
www.geomatters.com. 800-426-4650

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