



## SPELLING BEE FEVER

Are spelling bees becoming a national phenomenon? It sure seems that way! The latest movie *Akeela and the Bee* is wonderful viewing as it depicts the success of a student in her gift of spelling. Bee scenarios can be seen in recent TV commercials for advertising their products. Hopefully your students and support group have caught the bee fever and are participating in the bee process this year. By now, all subscribed support groups should have received the packet needed for bee participation. If not, it is not too late! SETHSA can help organize and prepare your support group for the spelling bees, both the K-8th Spelling Bee and the Just For Fun Spelling Bee. If your family is not in a support group but would like to participate, contact a support group in your area and ask to participate in theirs, or, contact SETHSA to find out how you can participate. The packet includes two Spell It study books (no longer called Paideia), a copy of the Just For Fun Study List, a support group registration form, and other helpful information. Additional Spell It study books can be ordered from The Houston Chronicle using the form from the website: <http://www.chron.com/cie/>, and the Just For Fun Study List in the packet can be photocopied. The SETHSA Level II Bees and the SETHSA Just For Fun Bee will be held on Saturday, February 17, 2007. The location is that of recent years, Lindale Assembly of God in Houston.

## READ TO SUCCEED 2007 COMING SOON!

Do your students wait with great anticipation for summer to arrive just so they can spend a whole day at a Six Flags Theme Park for free? Well, Read to Succeed is the program for them. Your students in grades K-6th can earn a free ticket which can be used at any, yes I said any, Six Flags Theme Park in North America. The program begins in January and runs through mid-February and involves 360 minutes of recreational reading. Further details including exact dates of the program will be published in the January Teaching Pioneer so be sure to watch for it.

## GEOGRAPHY GIVES YOU AN EDGE

Name the capital of a country that is farthest north. Which U.S. State has the longest coastline? Need some help? Promote your great geography knowledge by entering the upcoming National Geographic Bee!

The National Geographic Bee will be held in the Earl Elliott Room at the Barbara Bush Library (northwest Houston) on **Friday, January 12th**, from 10:00 am - 1:00 pm, and homeschool students in Grades 4-8 can participate. SETHSA also provides a multiple choice Just for Fun! GeoBee for children in Grades K-3. Register your student by Dec. 31, 2006; call 281-370-8787 (leave a message) or e-mail Rhonda at [contestcoordinator@sethsa.org](mailto:contestcoordinator@sethsa.org).

Texas State Bee is March 30, 2007; the winner of the SETHSA Geo Bee will complete a written test and wait to be notified if he or she may participate at State level (as many as 100 in each state will advance). State winners are invited to National Geographic headquarters May 22-23, 2007, to compete for scholarships of \$25,000, \$15,000, and \$10,000! National Geographic Bee is a nationwide competition that encourages student knowledge in geography, people, culture, environment, & history. Some great online resources are: GeoBee Challenge: [www.nationalgeographic.com/geobee/People & Places](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/geobee/People%20&%20Places): [www.nationalgeographic.com/places](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/places)

MapMachine: [www.nationalgeographic.com/mapmachine](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/mapmachine)

Animals – brand new!: [www.nationalgeographic.com/animals](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals)

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

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<i>December 1, 2- BEST, FIRST LEGO Robotics Competition</i>	<i>pg. 06</i>
<i>December 06 - Scholastic Warehouse Sale</i>	<i>pg. 06</i>
<i>December 08 - GFBC Support Group Meeting</i>	<i>pg. 05</i>
<i>December 9 - EARLY Robotics Competition</i>	<i>pg. 07</i>

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## HSLDA News

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The following excerpts and articles are taken from the HSLDA website and Weekly Updates

October 25, 2006

### HOMESCHOOL FATHER: 'I THOUGHT I WOULD GO TO JAIL!'

After a year attending public school while living with his grandmother in New Mexico, Justin returned to his family in Texas. His father looked into the different education options and decided that homeschooling would be the best for his son.

The Burns started homeschooling and all was going well. A month into their first school year the family needed to have Justin's records, so Mr. Burns requested them from the public school Justin had attended in New Mexico. After receiving the records, the Burns also received notice that Justin was considered truant and that he must be enrolled into school immediately. The Burns called the New Mexico public school officials and told them that Justin had moved to Texas and New Mexico had no jurisdiction over him. Read the entire story at <http://www.hslda.org/hs/state/tx/200610250.asp>

HSLDA

October 23, 2006

### FEDERAL REGULATION: SCHOOL DISTRICTS MAY NOT EVALUATE HOMESCHOOLERS WITHOUT PARENTAL CONSENT

On October 13, 2006, the United States Department of Education placed regulations into effect that explicitly deny school districts any ability under the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) to override a parent's refusal to have their homeschooled child evaluated for disabilities. Over the last several years, Home School Legal Defense Association has seen an increase in such cases where the homeschooling parent denies consent for an evaluation and the school district files a due process procedure against the family.

The new regulations are in part a result of HSLDA's victory in the case *Fitzgerald v. Camdenton R-III School District* (2006), in which the court ruled that a school district did not have the right to override a parent's consent. "Where a home-schooled child's parents refuse consent [for an evaluation], privately educate the child, and expressly waive all benefits under the IDEA, an evaluation would have no purpose. . . . [A] district may not force an evaluation in this case." The entire article can be read at <http://www.hslda.org/docs/news/hslda/200610230.asp>

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## HSLDA Perx

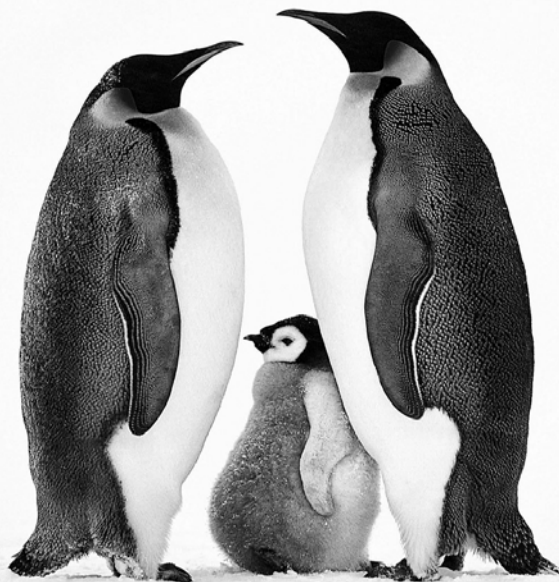
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### HOME SCHOOL MINDER

HomeSchool Minder is the complete, affordable, and easy-to-use software solution for organizing your homeschool. HomeSchool Minder provides you with a secure, reliable, and intuitive place to easily create and store records, grades, calendars, assignments, lesson plans, and transcripts for all of your students. Special pricing is available for HSLDA Members.

You don't have to move to the antarctic



to protect your homeschool . . .

HSLDA. Here for you—every day.

Get free email alerts on what's new in your state at [www.freetohomeschool.org](http://www.freetohomeschool.org).

HOME SCHOOL  
LEGAL DEFENSE  
ASSOCIATION



HSLDA  
e-Alert Service

Southeast Texas Home School Association (SETHSA) is a volunteer, non-profit 501(c)3 organization committed to ministering to home schoolers in the southeast area of Texas. We receive over 4000 phone calls per year in which we inform and encourage new and veteran home educators. SETHSA provides central communication through our monthly newsletter *The Teaching Pioneer* as well as on the web, which contains information on legal updates, local news, and activities. SETHSA hosts two conferences each year with more than 130 workshops and 250 vendors, as well as sponsoring Bees, reading incentive programs, home school days, and much more.

Individual subscriptions to *The Teaching Pioneer* are available. Contact SETHSA through e-mail or by the phone number listed below to find out more information.

Your financial contributions help SETHSA better minister to the home school community and are tax deductible. For more information or suggestions, e-mail, call, or write to:

SETHSA  
PMB 297 4950 FM 1960 W. #A-7 Houston, Texas 77069  
Answering Service 281-370-8787 FAX 281-655-0963  
web page: <http://www.sethsa.org> e-mail: [sethsa@sethsa.org](mailto:sethsa@sethsa.org)

Submissions to *The Teaching Pioneer* are accepted and must be received electronically or in writing by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month. The newsletter is mailed or electronically sent on or before the 22<sup>nd</sup> of each month. SETHSA reserves the right to edit articles for content and length. Articles and reviews do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the SETHSA board. Send articles to the address above.

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## KID'S CORNER

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### December Elementary Question:

1. How come Beethoven's name is actually written VAN, and not VON Beethoven?

### December Jr. High/High School Question:

1. What was the name of the poison that killed Socrates?

### November Elementary Question:

1. You are a housewife living in Denver, Colorado in 1870. Which item would not be available for use: safety pin, washing machine, carpet sweeper, or sewing machine?

ANSWER: The safety pin was invented in 1849. A successful washing machine was patented in 1846 and sold through the Montgomery Ward catalog. Sewing machines went into mass production in the late 1850s when Issac Singer finally built the first commercially successful model. The carpet sweeper came later.

2. When the two met, one was half the other's age plus seven years. Ten years later, when they married, the bride was thirty, but this time one was nine-tenths the age of the other. How old was the groom? (no fractions, no partial years—whole numbers only.)

ANSWER: The bride was 30; the groom was 27.

### November Jr. High/High School Question:

1. Where would you find a reach, a hound, a jockey box, and a bolster?

ANSWER: These were all a part of a wagon.

2. You have a huge box of beautiful decorated tiles, enough to provide a border in two rooms. You really can't figure out how to arrange them, however. If you set a border of two tiles all around, there's one left over; if you set three tiles all around, or four, or five, or six, there's still one tile left over. Finally; you try a block of seven tiles for each corner, and you come out even. What is the smallest number of tiles you could have to get this result?

ANSWER: There are 301 tiles. This is the smallest number that will give you a remainder of 1 when divided by 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, but divided by 7 leaves no remainder.

We encourage all students to respond to our Kids' Corner. The first students with the correct answer mailed, emailed, or faxed each month will have their names published in the following month's edition of The Teaching Pioneer. Our fax number is 281-655-0963, or e-mail: [sethsa@sethsa.org](mailto:sethsa@sethsa.org), and our address is SETHSA, PMB 297, 4950 FM 1960 W. #A7, Houston, Texas 77069

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## LEGISLATIVELY SPEAKING

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### WHO'S KIDS ARE THEY?

As mentioned last month, parental rights will again be at the forefront of my agenda in advocating on behalf of Texas families in the upcoming legislative session. Home-schooling families receive both direct and indirect assaults from government. Here are two indirect assaults: One legislative proposal would almost double the amount of dollars the state contributes per pupil over the current amount. While there may be benefits with regard to lower property taxes, such a funding increase could also increase the zeal with which public schools view your children as potential increases to their coffers by getting them into, or back into, the public school system.

Reduction of mandatory school attendance from age 6 to age 5 (already pre-filed by Senator Zaffirini) Such a requirement could increase the burden on parents to begin their home-schooling earlier.

And the eye of big government seems always to be on our children through Children's Protective Services. Last session I supported HB 1014 introduced by Rep. Harold Dutton, the best bill to protect children and the fundamental rights of parents during CPS investigations. It not only gave parents the authority to designate a caregiver during the investigation but set time frames to hold CPS accountable for swift background checks on those prospective caregivers. Thus children would be able to stay with a familiar face, absent failure of the background check, and CPS would have to complete the background check quickly to maximize the best interests of the child.

I look forward to fighting again for limited government and the fundamental rights of parents to raise their children. You can contact me through [www.texansforlimitedgovernment.com](http://www.texansforlimitedgovernment.com).

Respectfully,

Gary W. Gates, Jr.  
President

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## WHAT'S HAPPENING LOCALLY

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### GFBC HOMESCHOOL SUPPORT GROUP MEETING

Please join us on December 8th at 7:00 pm for the next in a series of special presentations for home schooling parents. Our speaker will be Paul Renfro, one of the elders of Grace Family Baptist Church. He will be speaking on the topic "Loving God With Your Mind." Paul is a graduate of Southwestern Seminary, a former headmaster of a classical Christian school, a sports missionary, and minister to international students. This meeting will be held at the clubhouse of the Canyon Gate Subdivision in Tomball, TX. (Hwy 249 at Canyon Gate, five miles north of FM 1960) The support group is a ministry of Grace Family Baptist Church, a new family integrated church in Spring, Texas and is open to all current homeschoolers or those interested in homeschooling. For more information, please visit our website at [www.gracefamilybaptist.net](http://www.gracefamilybaptist.net). Click on HSG (Home School Group).

# HEP BOOKSTORE

*"Serving home, public, and private school families"*

## CHRISTMAS SALE 15% OFF!



**Holiday Gift ideas include:  
Folkmanis Puppets, Usborne Books,  
Science Kits, Educational books, Games,  
Toys, Art Activities, Gift Certificates,  
and much more! Sale is Dec. 1-31<sup>st</sup>!**

11665 Fuqua, STE A-100  
(I-45 South, exit #33, east side of I-45)

Houston, TX 77034

281-922-0472 or 281-922-0478

[www.hepbookstore.com](http://www.hepbookstore.com)

10-5pm Monday-Friday; 10-3pm Saturdays

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## WHAT'S HAPPENING LOCALLY CONT.

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### EVENINGS FOR EDUCATORS AT MFAH

On January 9th come to the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston from 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm for "Experiencing Color through the Senses." You may find out more information at 713-639-7590 or e-mail [schools@mfa.org](mailto:schools@mfa.org) <mailto:schools@mfa.org> The cost is \$5.00 per person and includes refreshments, pre-registration is not required. <http://www.mfa.org/>

### NORTH HARRIS COUNTY 4H CLUB BUSINESS MEETING

The next business meeting for North Harris County 4H is scheduled for January 11th from 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm at Trinity Lutheran Church Family Life Center - Room 213 A upstairs, 5201 Spring Cypress, Spring, TX.

### GREEN MONKEY 4H

The Green Monkey 4-H Club welcomes 3rd-12th graders to visit and see if 4-H is what you need to supplement your home school. If you want us to keep you posted on upcoming meetings to visit, just email us with your name and a request to be put on our guest list. Feel free to visit several meetings. Your student is welcome to participate in the activities at the business meeting, however, in order to attend project meetings and competitions, a student must become a member by filling out an enrollment form. See you there!

Clover Kid Program K-2nd: a program that we can set up to take place at the same time and location, however, we need enough members and one adult volunteer to make it happen. We have a curriculum to follow and it helps prepare these students to be a full fledged member of 4-H! Project Web Site: <http://texas4-h.tamu.edu/projects/Project%20SelectionGuide/index.htm>; Email: [greenmonkey4h@yahoo.com](mailto:greenmonkey4h@yahoo.com); Website: <http://www.geocities.com/greenmonkey4h/>

### HANDS-ON SCIENCE FAIR WORKSHOP

Don't delay!! Take the time to register now! This is a wonderful opportunity for the whole family to participate in a hands-on workshop to help prepare your students for a science fair! This event is scheduled for Saturday, January 13th from 8:30 am to 1:30 pm at Tomball College, Beckendorf Convention Center.

**Skills** - A science fair project is similar to a research paper or a book report with visual aids. The skills learned can be applied to other subject areas, so even if you don't participate in a fair this year, your time is honored.

**Family Affair** - A project that goes into any depth ends up involving the whole family. It is a growing and learning process of specific study. As a parent, you need to know how to direct your student. As a student, you need to have a vision for what you are doing and where you are headed.

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## WHAT'S HAPPENING LOCALLY CONT.

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### CHRISTIAN YOUTH THEATER CLASSES AND AUDITIONS

Don't miss the fun! Come join this exciting group new to Houston! On Friday, January 5th, Christian Youth Theater-Houston (CYT-Houston) will be holding auditions for the musical POCAHONTAS, to be presented in late February or early March in the Spring/Woodlands area. The auditions are open to all students ages 8-18 enrolled in our winter session. The ten-week class session begins January 4th, and will run through March 8th. Classes are in the theater arts and include Acting Up (beginning drama), Advanced Drama Workshop, Broadway Bound (musical theater), Movin' & Groovin' (stage movement), Set Design, and Voice, as well as Our Gang, a class for 6-7 year olds in beginning drama. The classes are Thursday evenings from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm, except for "Our Gang" which will be 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm, and will meet in the Spring/Woodlands area. For more information, or for a registration form, see our website, [www.cythouston.org](http://www.cythouston.org), or e-mail us at [cythouston@hotmail.com](mailto:cythouston@hotmail.com). Although new to Houston, CYT has been around for 25 years. Founded in San Diego, CYT now has expansion programs in 10 other states. For information on the national program, see the CYT website, [www.CYT.org](http://www.CYT.org).

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## WHAT'S HAPPENING LOCALLY CONT.

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**Learn by doing** - What better way to learn and get excited about diving into a science project? We will set up grade groups to work together on brainstorming and presentations of ideas. If 2 parents come from the same family, we desire to put one parent in another group to give that family more ideas and experience to take home. We will verify this arrangement is suitable when confirmations are sent out. We also encourage parents of high schoolers to be with other groups to allow your high schooler to rise up and get involved!

**Information:** For up to date information or to register, please visit: [www.geocities.com/texasregionalsciencefair/](http://www.geocities.com/texasregionalsciencefair/) For more information contact Karen Garza at 281-370-6222 or [texasregionalsciencefair@yahoo.com](mailto:texasregionalsciencefair@yahoo.com).

### TEXAS REGIONAL SCIENCE FAIR

We don't plan to fail, we fail to plan!! Go from meaning to, to doing!!  
**Mark the date** - Saturday, March 31, 2007 at Tomball College Beckendorf Convention Center from 8:00 am – 3:30 pm.

Yes, the time is now to start making a commitment to participate in our regional science fair. Not all home schoolers have this opportunity. Isn't funny how we travel out of town to take advantage of something and miss what is in our area due to familiarity. We have been around for 11 years! We hear often how families think it is a good idea and would like for their students to do it, but then the date comes and goes. It is always incredible to see and hear about what exhibitors have done and learned. Make sure your student gets to reap the benefits of participating. Don't let your insecurity with science keep you from jumping in to this incredible educational adventure. Get prepared by attending the January 13th workshop. (See details in separate article.) The administrator is also available to assist in helping direct your student's projects from getting them off the ground to addressing questions that come up during the project. Stay up to date and download a registration packet at [www.geocities.com/texasregionalsciencefair/](http://www.geocities.com/texasregionalsciencefair/) or contact Karen Garza at [texasregionalsciencefair@yahoo.com](mailto:texasregionalsciencefair@yahoo.com). Thank you and we look forward to serving you! (Formally known as Regional Northside Science Fair.)

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## MISCELLANEOUS

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### HEAVEN SENT CHORALE

Eleven students from Heaven Sent Chorale were chosen to sing at the TMEA Region 9 Choirs performance held in Brenham in November. The new semester of HSC begins in January and auditions are currently being scheduled for students in grades 1 through 12. For more information call Kathie Fleming at 281-572-5083. HSC is a non-profit organization which strives to provide a high-quality, Christ-centered, music education program for the homeschooled student.

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## MISCELLANEOUS CONT.

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### APOLOGIA CHEMISTRY LAB

We are off to an exciting year. There are 3 openings available for your high school student to come take advantage of this hands-on lab utilizing a curriculum that focuses science on God. This year the lab includes the supplemental labs from the MicroChem Lab kit. Students work with chemistry lab equipment from mass scales to Bunsen burners to real chemicals. Karen Garza has a love and passion for teaching science. Her goal is for your student to learn the material and get excited about science. She is a 15-year veteran home school teacher and has been the administrator of the Northside Science Fair for the past ten years. Come expecting to be challenged. The classes will be at 7327 Root Road in Spring in a free standing classroom set up with lab equipment. For details regarding the classes, please visit <http://geocities.com/revelationscience/>. To request a registration packet, please email [revelationscience@sbcglobal.net](mailto:revelationscience@sbcglobal.net). Thank you for your consideration and your prayers. Contact number is 281-370-6222.



**Now Registering for Spring Semester!**

Three Locations—Spring, Katy and South Houston

**We meet one day a week for a complete Classical Education Program.**

Coming Soon ~ February 2007

Barry Stebbing and **HOW GREAT THOU ART**

**Locations**  
Katy Area—February 12-14 (Mon-Wed)  
Spring Area—February 15-17 (Th-Sat)



**Class Times:**  
9:00am—11:30am

Cost is \$25.00 before 12/1/2006

For more information please contact :

Josanna Gaither  
[field.trip@pacesinfo.org](mailto:field.trip@pacesinfo.org)  
or call 832-767-5208

Registration forms can be found online at:  
[www.pacesinfo.org](http://www.pacesinfo.org)



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## WHAT'S HAPPENING LOCALLY CONT.

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### SCHOLASTIC WAREHOUSE SALE 50% OFF

Each December and May, Scholastic Warehouses hold special half-price sales to thank educators for their support. There are thousands of books for all ages to choose from - all at 50% off. Fill out the online Fast-Pass, print it out and take it with you to the sale. Houston (281)894-8146 - 8270 Willow Place North #100 next door to the Aerodrome near Willowbrook Mall. Wednesday, 12/06/2006 - Friday, 12/22/2006.

Dec. 6th: 9:00 am – 7:00 pm Purchase Order Day

Monday - Friday: 9:00 am – 7:00 pm

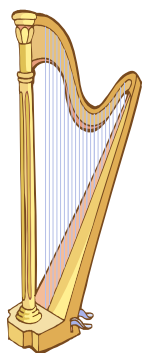
Saturdays: 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Closed Sundays

<http://www.scholastic.com/bookfairs/events/warehouse/states/tx.asp>

### TEXAS STARLETTES

The Texas Starlettes have a new practice time and location. We are now meeting on Wed. morning 10:00 am -1:00 pm at Springwoods Baptist located at 10131 Emnorra. Just east of Gessner and just North of Hammerly. If you are interested in joining the Homeschool Dance Team please e-mail Brandi Coppens at [brandiann75@consolidated.net](mailto:brandiann75@consolidated.net). We practice and perform to Christian music, wear modest dance wear and perform modest versions of pom-pom, hip-hop, lyrical, jazz and military. This year we are pleased to announce the addition of a Master Level instructor to choreograph and work with the team. Don't miss out on this unique dance opportunity for girls ages 6 -18.



*Susanna Campbell*

*Harp & Piano*

*Weddings & Special Events*

E-mail: [harpandpiano@juno.com](mailto:harpandpiano@juno.com) Phone: 281.342.1220

*Susanna is a home educated student in her senior year. She has studied harp seven years and piano eleven years. She is in her third year as principal harpist and pianist with the Fort Bend Symphony Orchestra, and she has been a guest harpist with the Galveston Symphony, the Symphony North of Houston and the Mobile Symphony Orchestra. Susanna is available to play for weddings, graduations, and other special events.*

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## WHAT'S HAPPENING LOCALLY CONT.

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### WINTER MUSIC CLASSES

Firehouse Music, owned by Paul and Marsha Kipp (15 yr home school veterans) is offering winter music classes for voice, music theory, and guitar. Classes are 50 minutes once per week for 12 weeks and the cost is \$119.00. Private lessons in guitar, bass, piano, and drums are available. Private Lessons are 30 minutes once per week and cost \$69.00 per month or buddy packages are \$99.00 per month (2 students/30 min). There are three locations to choose from: Seabrook, Tomball, or Montgomery/Lake Conroe. For more information visit the Firehouse Music website at [www.firehousemusic.net](http://www.firehousemusic.net)

### MEN'S MINISTRY

After 14 years at HSLDA, Scott Somerville has set out to tackle one of the biggest (non-legal) challenges homeschoolers face today: fathers who aren't living up to their potential. His mission is to figure out (1) **why** some dads are falling short, (2) **what** they need to succeed, and (3) **how** to reach them effectively. Scott believes this untapped "father power" could provide new momentum for the homeschool movement.

Scott calls this new ministry the "K-Dad Network." [Link: <http://k-dad.net> ] Traditional "K-12" education leaves fathers out, but family-based life-long learning draws dads in. As fathers grow into their irreplaceable role in their own homes, they can network with other dads who haven't seen successful fathering modeled. With an effective man-to-man ministry, the K-Dad Network may turn the hearts of fathers to their children—and unleash a new wave of homeschool activism.

### SHARE CLASSICAL CO-OP

S.H.A.R.E. Classical Co-op is accepting applications for the Spring 2007 semester. We are offering a reduced registration fee for second semester sign-ups. SHARE meets at Founder's Baptist Church in Spring on Wednesdays from 9:30 am - 2:30 pm from January 10th - April 4th. Subjects are Latin (Spanish for non-readers), World History (Early Modern Times), Science (Chemistry), and Art. Preschool uses a literary unit study curriculum. Parents teach on a rotating basis. Tuition is very affordable. Visit us on the web at [www.shareco-op.com](http://www.shareco-op.com). To register contact Cathy Rape at 936-273-0460.

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## FUN & EDUCATIONAL OUTINGS

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### BEST ROBOTICS

The BEST Robotics competitions will be held December 1-2 at Texas Tech University, Lubbock. Several Houston area homeschool teams including the Woodlands Homeschoolers will compete. For more information visit <http://www.texasbest.org/>

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## FUN & EDUCATIONAL OUTINGS CONT.

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### CHRISTMAS TREE FARM TOURS

High Star Christmas Tree Farm located at 19020 Becker Rd. Hockley, Texas, 77447 will be conducting tours for schools, scouts, Mothers Day out and Day Care Groups. Starting November 1st - February 28th, weekday hours are from 9:00 am to Noon and the cost per person is \$7.00. Make your reservations now at 281-255-9888 or 281-384-2056. You may also visit the website at [www.highstarfarm.com](http://www.highstarfarm.com)

### HOMESCHOOL THEATER DISCOUNTS

There are several active offers for homeschool discounts that will expire in early December for Broadway in Houston shows. Once these offers expire, you will not be able to get the discounts, so order now. For details see: <http://www.jsoft.com/archive/taffie/Broadway.html>  
Save on ticket prices and service fees. Questions, contact Susan Frederick at [sjf@jsoft.com](mailto:sjf@jsoft.com).

### FIRST LEGO COMPETITION

South Texas FIRST LEGO League Competition Saturday, December 2nd at University of Houston Student Recreation and Wellness Center located at 4800 Calhoun Dr., Houston, TX 77004. FLL teams will compete for the 2006 challenge Nano Quest. All visitors should park at Parking Lots 20A or 20C across from the UH Student Recreation and Wellness Center. Parking is free. Watch homeschool, private and public school teams, admission is free. <http://www.houstonrobotics.org/> <http://core.tech.uh.edu/>

### ROBOFEST 2007

Robofest 2007 is currently in the planning stages with a proposed date of Saturday, April 14, 2007 at Saint Matthews Lutheran Church. This competition is for 5th-12th grade students. The Houston regional event will include both a competition and exhibition and is coordinated by homeschoolers Gary, Susan and Elizabeth Frederick. We will need volunteers, sponsors and teams. Previous robotics experience is not required. We hope to hold a Robofest workshop in January to explain how it works. Questions: [robofest@jsoft.com](mailto:robofest@jsoft.com). <http://www.jsoft.com/ts/robotics/RoboFest/>

### HIGH SCHOOL FIELD TRIP OPPORTUNITY

The Dallas Federal Reserve Bank Houston Branch is sponsoring a High School Homeschool day again this year on Friday, **February 16th** from 8:45 to 11:10 am. The Federal Reserve Bank will have a complimentary Continental breakfast available at 8:45 am and the program begins at 9:00 am with Dr. Bill Gilmer. The topic this year concerns Houston's economy with a specific focus on immigration policy and how immigrants affect our area. We will also be touring again, with more of their museum area completed. Space is limited to 75, including parents. To sign up, please contact Melinda McNicoll at [mrmcnic@earthlink.net](mailto:mrmcnic@earthlink.net).

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## FUN & EDUCATIONAL OUTINGS CONT.

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### SPACE CENTER HOUSTON HOME SCHOOL DAY/ OVERNIGHT

Homeschoolers can take advantage of this exclusive opportunity to participate in exciting hands-on activities and gain valuable experience with science concepts. From Space Bingo to a Moon and Mars fossil dig, your students are sure to enjoy this exciting opportunity! The cost is \$10.95 per person for Friday, **February 23rd**. A Home School Overnight will be held February 22nd which includes one night stay in area hotel and admission to the Home School Day. Registration must be received one month prior to the event. Space is limited and fills quickly, so call and make your reservation today. To register call 281-244-2164 or email [edprograms@spacecenter.org](mailto:edprograms@spacecenter.org). Details and registration form can be found at <http://www.spacecenter.org/SchoolVisitsHomeSchool.html> for the Homeschool Day and Homeschool Overnight details can be found at <http://www.spacecenter.org/SchoolOvernightHomeSchool.html>

### EARLY ROBOTICS TOURNAMENT

Come on December 9th to Hogg Middle School, 1100 Merrill Street, Houston, TX 77009 (Heights area) to watch the EARLY Robotics Tournament. There are more tournament details will be posted at: <http://www.earlyrobotics.org/>

### HOMESCHOOL HIGH SCHOOL SPRING SEMI-FORMAL

This school year's spring semi-formal will be on Thursday, **April 19th** at The Woodlands Waterway Marriott. Hosted again by CACHE, it will be held in a larger ballroom (Waterway 4). Many thanks to those who helped make our last event a success. Who can come? All Area Homeschool High Schoolers (Grades 9-12) and Homeschool Alumni are invited. Parents, grandparents and invited guests are also welcome. Early Bird Registration is until December 15th and is \$45.00 per person. For registration information, contact Susan Frederick at [sjf@soft.com](mailto:sjf@soft.com).

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## CONTESTS

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### STUDENT ESSAY CONTEST

Sponsored by Sul Ross Camp #1457, Sons of Confederate Veterans, Brig. General Lawrence Sullivan Ross

**Topic:** Next year marks the bicentennial anniversary of Confederate General Robert E. Lee's birth (b. January 19, 1807). In celebration of such momentous occasion, the topic for the 2007 essay contest is: "What I admire about Robert E. Lee"

If you would like an entry form or have any questions regarding the contest, please contact Matthew Lee at 936-394-3123 or e-mail us at [sulrosscamp@yahoo.com](mailto:sulrosscamp@yahoo.com).

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## CONTESTS CONT.

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### “BEING AN AMERICAN” ESSAY CONTEST

Bill of Rights Institute is sponsoring an essay contest for students in grades 9-12. The essay's goal is to explore the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and the civic values that unite us as Americans. The contest has already started and the deadline for submission is January 5, 2007; winners will be announced on May 1st. For more information and a list of prizes, please visit [www.beinganamerican.org](http://www.beinganamerican.org) or contact SETHSA at 281-370-8787. Good luck and happy writing!

### ALL ABOUT ART CONTEST AND EXHIBITION

Student Artists - Ages 3-18

Open Call for Entries

Show Your Best Work

Public Exhibition: January 1st and 2nd

10:00 am - 5:00 pm each day

Cash Prizes awarded to Top Artists in the SENIOR Division for Ages 14 - 18

ALL Participants will receive an “Award of Merit”

Entry forms are available on the website or at KVPAC located in the Great Southwest Equestrian Center, 2501 Mason Road #290, Katy, TX 77450. More details at [www.KVPAC.org](http://www.KVPAC.org). You may also contact KVPAC at 281-829-2787.

### ESSAY, ART CONTESTS ACCEPTING ENTRIES

HSLDA's annual contests for essays and art are now accepting entries from homeschoolers in two categories: ages 9 to 13, and ages 14 to 18. As in past years, prizes will be awarded, winners announced in the Court Report magazine and winning entries posted online. Read more about it at <http://www.hsllda.org/elink.asp?id=3267>

### NATIONAL WRITING CONTEST

Announcing a national writing contest that, surely, will interest parents as well as teachers and librarians! Letters About Literature invites children to write a letter to an author, living or dead, explaining how his or her work somehow changed their view of the world or themselves. Typically, about 50,000 letters each year are received. Deadline for submission is **December 8th** and there are free teaching resources for educators available. Teachers who learn about the program late generally don't have the time to work the lessons into their schedules, so get your materials now! For more information you can contact visit the Library of Congress Letters about Literature website: [www.loc.gov/letters](http://www.loc.gov/letters).

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## CONTESTS CONT.

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### THE NATIONAL PEACE ESSAY CONTEST

How Do You Build Peace? The international system has witnessed dramatic changes in the recent past. Developments around the globe and at home challenge us to rethink the role of the United States in the world. The postmark deadline for the 2006-2007 contest is February 1, 2007. Get all the information at the United States Institute of Peace website – [www.usip.org/npec](http://www.usip.org/npec)

### BEST COMPETITION: LOCAL HOME SCHOOLERS TEAMS TAKE TWO OF TOP FIVE!:

Two home school teams placed in the top five schools at the recent BEST Robotics Five Star competition, held at Kingwood College on Saturday, October 28. The Woodlands Home School robotics team won first place for the BEST award, and will be going to regional playoffs in Lubbock TX, along with second place winner St. Agnes Academy.

The Magnolia-Tomball Homeschoolers (MaTH) robotics team, in its fledgling year of competition and mentored by The Woodlands team, placed fourth in the same competition. They placed in the semifinals as a wild card team, thanks to their technical notebook score. “Which goes to show you that writing classes DO count!” exclaimed MaTH Robotics technical notebook advisor Robin McDonald.

The BEST award is judged on a project summary notebook, oral presentations, spirit and sportsmanship, game day displays and interviews, and robot performance. “We worked very hard on this project,” noted MaTH coach Susan Garrett. “And in our very first year, special technical schools - in BEST competition.”

The first and second place winners advance to regional competition in Lubbock. Other schools in the competition include third place winner Northland Christian School, and competitors Academy of Science & Health Professions, Academy of Science & Technology - College Park, Academy of Science & Technology - Oak Ridge, Atascocita Middle School, Cypress Ridge High School, Cypress Springs High School, Humble High School, Kingwood High School, Klein High School, Saint Agnes Academy, Strake Jesuit College Preparatory, and The Woodlands High School.

For more information on the MaTH team, check out the web site at [www.math-robotics.org](http://www.math-robotics.org). BEST, which stands for “Boosting Engineering, Science, and Technology” is a non-profit, volunteer organization whose mission is to inspire students to pursue careers in engineering, science and technology through participation in a sports-like, science-and engineering-based robotics competition. For more information on this Robotics league, go to [www.bestinc.org](http://www.bestinc.org).