

B.A.S.H.E.R.T.

Bulletin

February 2004

"Teach us delight in simple things
And mirth that has no bitter springs;
Forgiveness free of evil done,
And love to all men 'neath the sun!"
Rudyard Kipling

Baltimore Area Support for
Home Education with Regard
to Torah

B.A.S.H.E.R.T.

Baltimore Area Support for Home Education with Regard to Torah is a homeschool support group for Jewish Homeschoolers in the Baltimore Area.

We are dedicated to providing opportunities for Jewish homeschooling families to network, find resources, develop friendships and receive encouragement along the homeschooling journey.

Our primary focus is to meet the unique needs of Jewish homeschoolers that cannot be met within a purely secular context.

Next Meeting

The next BASHERT parent's meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 12, 2004 at 7:30pm at the home of Yehudis Eagle - 2814 W. Strathmore Ave. Please bring any curriculum or other useful homeschooling oriented items that you are willing to give away and a refreshment to share. We will be having a resource sharing meeting and time of reflection on the past school year.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Baltimore Jugglers Association

Attend a meeting of the jugglers association. Watch jugglers of various skill levels and get some pointers, too.

The next meeting is Monday, March 1 from 7-9pm. There is no charge. Meeting is at Bedford Elementary School, 7407 Dorman Dr. Pikesville, MD 21208
www.baltjugglers.com

Youth Reaching Out (YRO) meeting

YRO is a non-profit service organization for teens. They are opening a junior branch for kids 8-12. If your pre-teen is interested in making new friends and helping people, this is a great opportunity.

Come join them on March 19 from 1-3pm to help plan this new group. The meeting is at the home of Anne Marie O'Lone in Olney. Call (301) 774-6881 for more information or directions.

Six Flags Homeschool Day

Thursday, May 27th, 2004
\$15.00 per ticket plus \$1.65 tax
children under 3 free
parking is \$9.00 per vehicle
for more information call (301) 249-1500 ext. 3700
www.sixflags.com

It's All About Community

This has been an interesting year for me. I have learned a lot about myself. I have also learned a lot about other people. I have learned a lot about interacting with other people. The process was a growing one, and as we all know, growing hurts. One of the best things I have learned, in a backwards sort of way, is why I chose to homeschool my children, and this if nothing else, may have been the most important thing I have learned all year.

I tried an interesting experiment this year, in which I ended up running a small school in my home. I had the fantastic opportunity to observe peer pressure, teasing, disruptive behavior in the classroom and what happens to a child who just can't "keep up". There were many other things that I had the opportunity to observe, but I won't bore you with the details. I think everyone who homeschools needs to have an (I'havdil) epiphany like this every once in a while. It helps us to retain our focus and drive and enthusiasm about why we are doing this. It definitely helped bring me back on track.

In 12 years of homeschooling, I have had my good years and my no-so-good years. Now that my children are all older, we all wonder occasionally if regular school might be something to give a try. However, after this year's experiences, everyone in my family is ready to vote a unanimous "NO!" to that idea.

So, you may ask, what does all this rambling have to do with the title of my article, "Its All About Community"? Well, I'll tell you. Every once in a while we all need something to happen to help us get back on track and focused on our mission. Right now BASHERT is going through some growing pains and re-establishing its focus and mission. But besides that, it is in the context of community that we can each give and get from each other whatever it is that we need to help us stay focused on our homeschooling journey. This applies to unschoolers as well as school-at-homers and everyone in

between. Sometimes as we trudge through the days and weeks and months, we get distracted, or bored, or frustrated and it helps so much to know that we are closely connected to others who have been through what we are going through and have come out the other side unscathed. Or maybe just to know others who are going through the same things we are going through and can be a shoulder to lean on and a hand to hold. That is what community is about - that is what BASHERT is about.

The definition of “community” from the dictionary is really quite simple:

A group of people living in close proximity, having common interests and forming a distinct segment of society. This group has a similar identity and shares or participates in activities which benefit the group.

This is what we are. As Jewish homeschoolers living in the Baltimore area, we are a distinct group of people, living in close proximity and having common interests (homeschooling, Judaism).

In order for a community to flourish and all its members to benefit, the community must put forth effort to create an environment that will allow for its members to grow and be healthy. As a homeschooling community, we must join together and create a network that will facilitate the creation of such an environment, and it takes everyone working together to do so.

BASHERT is designed to be a support group whose goal is to give homeschooling parents the resources they need to be good home educators. This means providing opportunities for friendships, encouragement and emotional support, resources for educational material and events that celebrate the uniqueness of being Jewish and being a homeschooler. Please join us as we embark on this wonderful journey called community.

Things that may be of interest to you

The Baltimore Zoo is offering a series of educational programs exclusively for homeschool students ages 5-7 and 8-11. The programs offer a mixture of classroom and on-grounds activities. Students observe and learn about the animals featured on exhibit throughout the zoo. Each session will also include close encounters with their Animal Ambassadors. The cost of each class is \$4.50 per student. Admission to the zoo is free for homeschool students. Register soon - space is limited!

Schedule of Programs

Ages 5-7

The theme for the classes will be the diverse habitats and animals found in Africa.

March 17	1:30-3:00	Grassland habitats of Africa
March 31	1:30-3:00	Carnivores of Africa
April 14	1:30-3:00	Rainforest habitats of Africa

Ages 8-11

The theme for the class will be biodiversity.

March 17	1:30-3:00	Intro to Biodiversity
March 31	1:30-3:00	Biodiversity in Maryland
April 14	1:30-3:00	Problems and Solutions

Please call the Education Department at 410-396-6164 for registration information.

From <http://www.nationalhistoryday.org/>
The National History Day Contest

The 2003-2004 NHD national contest will be held June 13-17th at the University of Maryland.

Show your creativity by making history come alive in an exhibit, documentary, paper, or performance. By producing one of these projects, you have opportunities to win awards and scholarships, as well as learn about your history. If you are in grades 6-12, you may enter the contest in either the junior (grades 6-8) or senior (grades 9-12) divisions. You may participate individually, or as part of a group of up to five students. Public, Private & Home Schools are welcome to participate. Prizes, including substantial scholarships.

C-SPAN in the Classroom is pleased to announce:

CAMPAIGN CAM: A Student-Produced Video Contest for Middle and High School Students. <http://www.c-span.org/classroom/campaigncam/>
\$50,000 in prizes**Winning videos air on the C-SPAN
Networks**Deadline May 17, 2004**

2004 is an election year--a time when people think seriously about issues that affect our communities and our nation. C-SPAN's CAMPAIGN CAM is a competition inviting students to IDENTIFY AN ISSUE of interest and to then produce a video that creatively explores and persuasively presents a point of view on that topic. Student videos may take any form--i.e. straight documentary, interviews, entertainment, promotional, news report, magazine style, or public service. Videos may not include copyrighted material, but may include clips of C-SPAN-produced programming. In addition to expressing an opinion on a campaign issue, SUCCESSFUL ENTRIES will also follow C-SPAN's principles of "editorial balance" and "fairness" by including at least one other point of view on the chosen topic.

You are cordially invited to celebrate what is fun and fascinating about science. Tired of explaining your fascination with science to your non-scientific friends - want to get your children excited about science - BRING THEM ALL ALONG.

Neil A. Downie, lead scientist with Air Products and Chemicals, Inc., and author of "Ink Sandwiches, Electric Worms, and 37 Other Experiments for Saturday Science," will also be appearing March 10 at 7 pm at the WYPR Author Series, held at the Episcopal Diocesan Center located at the northeast corner of N. Charles and University Parkway.

Make a clock out of an ice cube? Send messages using bubbles? Make money using a tube that waltzes? Downie is bringing his collection of curious and offbeat science experiments to Shriver Hall. In addition to entertaining children and adults of all ages, he will provide historical anecdotes about the relevant phenomena, a list of equipment, detailed instructions, and a full explanation - requiring only high school mathematics (so your non-scientific friends will understand) - of the science behind the procedures. For those intrigued by any experiment, he includes follow-up suggestions in "Ink Sandwiches, Electric Worms, and 37 Other Experiments for Saturday Science," published by Johns Hopkins Press, which describes ways to tinker with the initial recipe.

Join us for a thoroughly entertaining demonstration. The date again is Wednesday, March 10, at 7 pm at the Episcopal Diocesan Center. Hope to see you there.

Note: If you can't make it then, Downie will also be appearing that afternoon (March 10) at noon at the JHU Shriver Hall Noontime Series located at on the JHU Homewood Campus.

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This Spring at Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary:

Cycles and Chains

A Short Course for Home School Families, Ages 8 to 11

April 6, 13, and 20: 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Cost: \$5 per child, no fee for adults

Spring is the time to witness the cycles of the Earth. Join us as we explore the changing seasons, the life cycle of the forest, metamorphosis of insects and amphibians, and revival of the wetlands. We'll see how food chains link plants and animals and yes, dirt.

Through hands-on activities, stories, games, and field exploration, we'll learn that Nature is an awesome recycler. Please bring a lunch, wear sturdy walking shoes, and dress for the weather, including rain gear.

Registration and payment in advance are required.

Vernal Pools

A Short Course for Home School Families, Ages 12 - 16

April 8

10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Ages 12 - 16

Vernal pools--forested wetlands that are dry for part of the year--provide vital habitat for amphibians. Come and see what's happening in our vernal pools this spring. We'll search for frogs and salamanders in various life stages, delineate the vernal pool environment, and devise methods to estimate populations. Please bring a lunch, wear wading boots or shoes that can get wet (plus a change of

shoes) and dress for the weather.
Cost: \$1.00 (payment on arrival)

To register for either program, go to www.jugbay.org, print out application form, complete, and mail to: Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary
1361 Wrighton Road Lothian, Maryland 20711

Free Washington and Lincoln Posters and teacher info kits

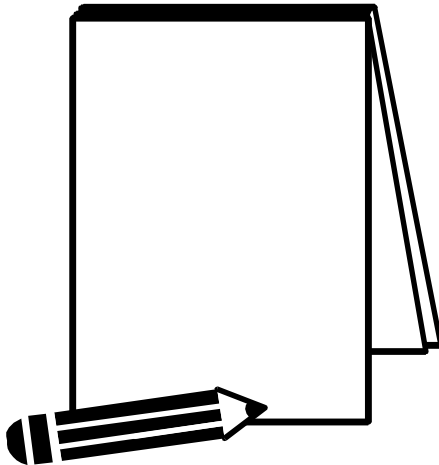
FREE Abraham Lincoln Poster

<http://www.lincolnbicentennial.gov/poster.html>

FREE education kit for teachers

<http://www.georgewashington.si.edu/kids/teacherguide.html>

Order a FREE education kit, which includes a 30-page Teacher Resource Guide, plus a 19 1/4" x 31" full-color museum quality poster reproduction of the "Lansdowne" portrait of George Washington by Gilbert Stuart for your classroom



New Things Happening with BASHERT

Membership Policy: From now on, all Jewish homeschoolers will be regarded as welcome members of our group, there will be no membership fee, and no registration form. We will, however distribute a survey and ask for information to be published as a directory of Jewish homeschoolers in the area available only to other homeschoolers in the directory.

Newsletter: The newsletter will be available the day after the monthly meeting online at www.kosherhomeschool.org in adobe format. It is available for download or printing. Anyone without access to the internet or desiring a hard copy subscription may subscribe for an annual fee of \$14 to cover the cost of printing and postage. Please sign up for your subscription at the meeting or online.

Identification Cards: Teacher Identification cards will be available for purchase. If you desire a Teacher Identification card for the purpose of Teacher discounts at local stores, you may sign up at the meetings or online. The fee for the identification card is \$5. If you are owed a card from last year (in other words, you paid your membership fee but never got one), please indicate this on the sign up sheet.

New Homeschooler Orientation: This will occur in the month of July for all new homeschoolers as has been done in past years.

Parent's game night: Four times a year we will host a parent's game night.

Planning committee: Each year the group will elect a group of four people to assist as a planning committee. This group will serve as "officers" of the organization and will plan up coming events. The planning committee will meet bi-

monthly for a business meeting.

E-mail list: kosherhomeschool.org now has a functioning e-mail list for the purpose of “getting the word out” about upcoming events. Please sign up to participate.

Phone Tree: Those who wish to participate but do not have e-mail may choose to be part of the phone tree for reminders of events. Sign up at the meeting to participate.

This space
available for your
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