

Homeschool Excellence Day Service Project

from *Katie Spangenberg PHAA 2004*

The Excelsior, Pennsylvania Homeschool Accreditation Agency's High School newsletter, arrived in the mail, announcing Home school Excellence Day. It was the first we had ever heard of it. And since they entered a new category this year, Service and Entrepreneurship, my mom thought it would be a good idea if I entered the puppet ministry that I am involved in with our church. Home school Excellence Day was to be held in Harrisburg on October 9th That left us with a week to fulfill the requirements, which were to build a display and write a report on what I was entering. I thought it would be fun to enter. It would be something to work at, and then 'show off for other homeschoolers to see.

First my Dad and I had to decide what kind of display we were going to make and how we were going to make it. We decided to make the display kiddy-like and fun, with lots of colors to capture your attention. I also wanted lots of pictures; so I had to go through all my puppet pictures and pick out the ones we needed. After we figured all that out, we had to put it together. My Dad and I worked late every night to get the display finished. I picked out bright blue and red poster board to cover the display, which was made out of foam board. We photo-copied all the pictures at Staples, and after arranging them where I wanted them to be, I sprayed them with spray glue and pasted them onto the display. Needless to say, I had to take a few off and re-glue them because I had put them on crooked, or I didn't flatten them out enough. I then cut out big cartoony letters made of foam board, and hot melt glued them onto a foam cloud for the name of our display. My Dad cut out a big hole just wide enough to fit a TV behind it, so we could play a video that we puppeteers had made.

My mom helped me finish my one thousand word paper on time. Finally, after much work, our Puppet Display was completed. We were very careful as we loaded it into the car, and got everything ready to go.

The big day finally came. My family and I set out early for the Capital Building in Harrisburg, where the fair was to be held. I was very proud as I set up my display on the table assigned to us. The finished product was before my eyes. A huge smile spread across my face as all the hard work that I had put into it paid off.

A very special thank you to all the many, many families who took part in this year's Homeschool Excellence Day Project Fair—we had more entries than ever before, and all the projects presented were of fine quality, really demonstrating the broad range of studies in home education programs across PA. At least one of the Representatives said that she wished that all public school students were *required* to do projects like this to demonstrate their in-depth learning on a topic.

I stood next to my display, holding a puppet on my left hand. This, added to the fact that we were playing a movie, attracted people's attention. As part of the display, I handed out stories about our puppeteers and information about our church. It was fun to look around at other homeschoolers' displays and see what they had entered.

I felt so proud standing next to my display as the judge walked up. I was nervous as she read my paper and looked over my display. She told me that she had been a puppeteer when she was a girl. She

seemed to really like my display as I told her all about our puppet ministry.

When she was finished judging, she moved on to another display. The reward ceremony wasn't going to be for another hour or so after that, so we decided to visit our representative. He was out to lunch when we got to his office, so we went back to the fair. But not long after, as we were looking through all the other displays, Representative Paul Clymer came walking up to us. He had heard that we had visited his office, and came looking for us! He even had his own photographer with him who took pictures of him, my family, and me with my display. He told us that he was going to put them in the newspaper, which really got me excited! Then it was time for the judging.

Everyone who entered the fair sat on the main staircase of the Capital during the judging. My heart began to race as my category was announced. I felt like my heart was beating out of my chest! Third place, then second place ribbons were handed out. My name wasn't called, so I began to get excited. Then finally the announcement came; "And first place - Katie Spangenberg." I had won first place! I was so excited! I walked joyfully down the steps to receive

my First Place ribbon. After the judging, I proudly displayed my first place, blue and gold ribbon on my display for all to see.

Needless to say, I had a great day! It was an experience that I can look back on with pride and a sense of accomplishment. Not only was I able to encourage others to be a part of a ministry, but I was able to show them the excitement of being a member of a "puppet ministry"! 🎭

Homeschool Excellence Day — October 9, 2002 Winners in Project Fair:

History:

1st: Cecilia Grugan
2nd: Eric Lugg
2nd: Justin Moran
3rd: Christopher Rebmann
HM: Ryan Lease
1st: Emily Sherry
2nd: Hannah Lugg
2nd: John Lugg
3rd: Jillian Strayhorn
HM: Brianne Smelser
HM: Bryce Wall
HM: Sarah Brumbaugh
HM: Cody Wild
1st: Katie Merkel
1st: Olivia Grugan
2nd: Robert Lugg
3rd: Jeremy Wall
1st: Rebecca Blakeslee
2nd: Laura Bishop

Science Display:

1st: David Harris
2nd: Hunter Romanic
3rd: Kramer, Graham, & Tess Hardman
HM: Stuart Ryerse
1st: Timothy & Jonathan Blakeslee
2nd: Brianne Smelser
3rd: David Lonie
3rd: Jacob Miller
HM: Jame Littleton
HM: Joy Best
HM: Zachary Lease
1st: Adam Smelser
2nd: Cassie Bishop
3rd: Amanda Zook
1st: Matt Hockley
2nd: Rebecca Blakeslee
3rd: Zachary Brumbaugh

Science Experiment:

1st: Julia Swieson
1st: Cody Wild
1st: James Swieson
2nd: Eric Fischer
2nd: Aaron Jones
3rd: Annmarie Moore
1st: Colleen Moore
1st Joshua Frear

Visual Art

Open — 2-dimensional

1st: Sepp Grugan
1st: Emily Newman
2nd: Cody Wild
1st: Thomas Rutt
2nd: Lauren Busfield
Drawing
1st: Jeremy Rutt
1st: Graham Hardman
2nd: Josiah Neuman

2nd: Nathan Shaeffer
3rd: Kramer Hardman
1st: Katie Merkel
2nd: Adam Smelser
3rd: Thomas Rutt
HM: Amanda Zook
1st: Robert Lugg
1st: Andrew Spangenberg
HM: Caleb Swieson
1st: Paul Moore
2nd: Trevor Wall
Art — Open Category
1st: Faith Best
2nd: Anna Jacobeen
3rd: Tess Hardman
3rd: Graham Hardman
HM: Julia Swieson
HM: Jacquell Horn
1st: Shane Jacobeen
1st: Kramer Hardman
2nd: James Swieson

2nd: Cody Wild

3rd: Joy Best
HM: Jared Shaeffer
1st: Kelly Tate
1st: Justin Jacobeen
Art — Painting
1st: Isaac Neuman
1st: Jacquell Horn
2nd: Jonathan Blakeslee
3rd: Heather Shaeffer
1st: Emily Sherry
2nd: John Lugg
1st: Amy Shaulis
1st: Stephanie Wagner

Service/Entrepreneurship

1st: Fiona Grugan
2nd: Shane Jacobeen
1st: Kaitlyn Spangenberg
2nd: Justin Jacobeen
3rd: Stephanie Wagner
HM: Paul Moore 🎭