



Nebraska Homeschool

The Home Educators Network, Inc.

August 2018

Back-to-School Edition

Volume 12, Issue 3



Has Homeschooling Produced Mediocre Students? (A Spelling Bee Journey)

Douglas County Bee 2019 ~~~ Homeschool Picture Day ~~~ Win a Year of Books

OHBO & Ensemble Auditions ~~~ Fall Play Auditions ~~~ Homecoming Dance



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***Our High School Series
Begins in September***



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Scripture Version Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from NIV.

Columnists The views of guest columnists do not necessarily reflect the views of NH-HEN.

Submissions to newsletter must be received by the 20th of each month via email at info@nebraskahomeschool.org.

Sponsors & Advertisers please email info@nebraskahomeschool.org.

Notes from the Board...

I don't know about you, but getting set for this coming school year has been crazy! So many things are happening – good things. Our group recently had the privilege of collaborating with NCHEA in bringing you the *NCHEA Pre-Conference Survey 2019*. We hope you participated and shared what you would like to see in upcoming state conferences.

We recently attended a Round Table with Congressman Bacon and key community leaders regarding STEM education and the *App Challenge*. We met some really neat groups who want to work with us in bringing new technology/computer education to our homeschool community. You'll be hearing more about this in upcoming Network News and Facebook posts. In the meantime, your kids need to get working on those apps.

We'll also be starting our new High School Program series this fall. We plan to cover various topics and bring in a few speakers to help us all learn a bit more about navigating the high school years.

* Cover art: www.allthingsharvest.wordpress.com



Nebraska Homeschool
The Home Educators Network, Inc.

Network News

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Has Homeschooling Produced Mediocre Students? Not Necessarily, If You Partner With God.

Ken & Bin Soh

A friend from Asia asked, “Why do you want to homeschool your children? Do they have special needs? Will they receive a quality education? How about their social life?” I am sure most of us homeschool families are familiar with these questions. As for us, since we are originally from Asia, homeschooling is a new concept and practice for us.

We ‘discovered’ homeschooling when Ken was a university professor, after observing students who had character as well as academic excellence. Ken was curious about this set of students and with further inquiry, he learned that they were homeschoolers. Since then, we have started talking to people, doing research about homeschooling, attending conferences, and joining homeschool groups and associations. Now here we are, a homeschooling family in Omaha, Nebraska.

We have to be honest, homeschooling is not always an easy task. It is a mixed experience. Though it gets stressful sometimes we also experience moments of success and satisfaction. Nevertheless, to quench our Asian friend’s curiosity, we told him that we homeschool for many reasons, but the three major reasons are as follows:

1. We believe that by homeschooling our children, we have a greater influence in shaping their character, as well as instilling in them a love for Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, who loves us and died for us. We want our children to grow up to become men and women of character as well as to love God and others.
2. We also believe in academic excellence, yet not in a stifling manner. For example, we want our children to know the value of hard work, to learn to do hard things, to work efficiently, and to be responsible for seeing things through. Realistically, we are not always successful, but at least this is the direction we are going.
3. We enjoy the flexibility of our schedule, since Ken is a concert pianist and speaker. If he is invited to perform, teach, or speak, then we can travel as a family.

That being said, when Nebraska Homeschool invited us to share about our son Immanuel's journey to the Scripps National Spelling Bee 2018, we were glad to do so. As followers of Jesus, we want to testify how God was with us throughout this entire process. (By the way, Immanuel means 'God with us' in Greek.) As followers of Jesus, God has a wonderful plan for us as stated in Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." He has a plan and platform for each of us if we are willing to follow Him and let Jesus lead us – only then we can serve and glorify Him.

Our Bee Journey (so far):

- 2015 – we first learned about the Nebraska Homeschool (HEN) Spelling Bee, so we participated. Immanuel misspelled the word *raisin* as *r-a-i-s-n* due to clumping together the *i* and the *n*.
- 2016 – two of our children, Immanuel and Agape, participated in the Nebraska Homeschool Spelling Bee, winning 1st and 2nd place. They advanced to the Douglas County Spelling Bee as the homeschool group's champions, yet they did not move on to the Midwest Regional Bee.
- 2017 – we did not participate in the Spelling Bee because we were in Asia.
- 2018 – we returned from overseas just two weeks before the Nebraska Homeschool Spelling Bee event. The two kids worked hard, and by God's grace they won – 1st and 2nd place! Once again, they had the privilege of representing the homeschool community at the Douglas County Bee.

Long story short, Immanuel became the 2018 Champion of the Douglas County Bee, and Agape, along with two other children, tied for 2nd place. So Immanuel moved on to compete in the Midwest Regional Bee. This was our first experience at the Midwest Regional Bee and we did not know what to expect or how to prepare, but we did what we could. It turned out that Immanuel placed 3rd regionally. At that time, we thought that our experience with the Bee was over for the year. Yet, on the very same day, our Lord Jesus spoke to us at the same time in two different places – Ken was driving home and Bin was at home. The Lord wanted to give us a second chance. But how?

Then we remembered about the Scripps RSVBee program that Kathryn Dillow from Nebraska Homeschool had told us about. We looked into it and Ken took a look at the airline ticket prices to DC, and after looking at most major travel sites, we did not think we could afford it. But again, the Holy Spirit prompted Ken to look at another airline. We could not believe our eyes – the cost for our family of five to fly was only about the cost of two tickets offered by most of the other airlines! So by faith we booked the airline tickets. We also filed our application to the Scripps RSVBee program.

This year, 2018, is the first year Scripps National Spelling Bee has offered the RSVBee program to help level the competition field. For example, some states will sponsor more than one contestant to compete at the Scripps National Spelling Bee, but in other states like Nebraska, only one child is sponsored to go to the National Bee. The RSVBee program allows local champions to apply and be competitively selected for an invitation to the National Bee.

After waiting for a few days, we learned that over 800 students had applied to the RSVBee program, but only 225 would be invited to participate. We waited a few more days. Miraculously the invitation for Immanuel to compete at the Scripps National Spelling Bee arrived. We were thankful he would be one of the total 515 contestants competing, whether via the conventional method or RSVBee program. According to Scripps, these 515 contestants were winners from among over 11 million students who competed at different levels across the nation.

Scripps also sent us information on hotels in the area, but they were way beyond our budget. So again we prayed and asked Jesus what we should do. Again He led us and helped Ken find a place that was only a 5-minute drive from the competition location. Additionally, it cost us only 1/3 of the price. Praise God!

When the logistics were in place, we started to prepare for the National Bee. The official word list/dictionary for the Scripps National Spelling Bee is the *Merriam-Webster Unabridged Dictionary*, which contains close to half a million words, so we just did our best to prepare on top of our regular schooling and a piano recital. After Immanuel's school year was over, we spent more time preparing for the National Bee. Most days he tried to learn and memorize over one thousand difficult words. It was quite intense but he worked hard at it.

In the midst of all this, one Saturday morning, the Lord woke Ken up and gave him an idea about writing a brochure about what happens if one misspells a word and gets disqualified. While still lying in bed, the content and details came to Ken, and he quickly jotted them down on paper. By the afternoon he had a chance to type it out, and with Immanuel's and our friends' help, to proofread it – the brochure was ready. After that, we published it. If you are interested in reading the brochure, you can contact us at nbfomaha@gmail.com.

Finally, the day of the Bee arrived! On May 27th, the grand opening was a blast and on May 28th, all of the contestants had the opportunity to attend a picnic where they had a ton of fun and got to know each other. The following day, May 29th, we began the preliminaries where all contestants took a written test in the morning and participated in an oral round in the afternoon. The subsequent day, they participated in a second oral round. Contestants advanced in rounds when they spelled the given word correctly and were eliminated when they misspelled the word. They also earned points for multiple-choice vocabulary and spelling tests. All contestants who competed in preliminaries received a score based on their performance. By the grace of God we are pleased to say that Immanuel ranked 42nd out of 515 contestants. Unfortunately, he did not make the cut-off to compete in the National Bee finals.



Now is our time to shine!
Volunteer TODAY!!

When a homeschool family wins the Douglas County Bee, they are tasked with hosting that bee the next year. Please help us support the Soh family in hosting a great bee for the entire county. Let's show everyone how the homeschool community can work together! To volunteer, email: 2019DouglasCoBee@nebraskahomeschool.org

As we reflect on this experience, we know that God has a journey for us. He has good work that He has prepared for us to do as explained in Ephesians 2:10, "For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." Out of the 515 kids who competed, only one became the Scripps National Spelling Bee 2018 Champion, and a handful received some large monetary awards. It is still amazing to see how God used (and possibly is still using) our little brochure to encourage and bring hope to those who did not make it to the top. Above all, we are grateful for the opportunity to bring the love of Jesus and the Good News (also known as the Gospel) to everyone we encounter: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16

This story is not finished and is to be continued... we hope your life is not simply a "to-do list," but an adventure with a loving God and Father! – Soh Family, 2018

About our authors: Ken and Bin Soh, homeschooling parents in Omaha, founded New Bright Future in 2005 to provide premier piano and Chinese lessons to the community in the Omaha metro. New Bright Future has helped many aspiring musicians achieve their dreams. One recent graduate received a full ride scholarship to the college of her dreams and was selected by the Department Chair to perform in China. Students of Chinese range from Pre-K through adult, including one who pursued his PhD in Chinese language and literature. To learn more please visit www.NewBrightFuture.com or email the Ken and Bin Soh at nbfomaha@gmail.com.



Fall Play Auditions

Open auditions on August 22nd from 3-5pm @ at Southwest Church of Christ in Omaha for the Omaha Homeschool Learning Center's fall play – a modern adaptation of "The Gift of the Magi."

All students ages 15 and up are welcome to audition for this class. Tuition is \$120 plus a \$40 class fee for theater rental, scripts, and production costs.

Rehearsals: Wednesdays, 3-5:30pm. **Production dates:** Nov 14th -17th. If you're interested please send an email to jdsimmons@cox.net for audition materials. If you would like a backstage position, you should come to auditions prepared to interview for the position.

It's School Picture Day at the Omaha Homeschool Learning Center!

The years seem to fly by so come create pictures you can re-create years later!

Have your school pictures taken (photo packages and school ID cards will be available).

Capture your homeschool memories with the 2018-2019 Legacy Yearbook. You can also pick up your 2017-2018 Legacy Yearbook and reminisce about the past school year!



Where: Southwest Church of Christ located at 2600 S. 124th St., Omaha, NE 68144

Date: Tuesday, August 28th, 2018 at the Annual (Aren't-You-Glad-You're-Not) Going-Back-To-School Day!

Time: 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

Also offered: Free hearing tests conducted by Boystown National Research Center!

Boystown Research speech-language pathologists will offer screening for Developmental Language Disorders which may later result in reading problems or dyslexia.

This is a great time to register for classes offered at OHLC!

omaha homeschool band & orchestra

Phone: 402.227.2147

homeschoolmusic@windstream.net
www.ohbo.org

*Band and Orchestra instruction
in a Christian environment*

Contact us for more info about
the upcoming 2018 fall semester!

Classes held at the
Omaha Conservatory of Music,
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Tuesday afternoons

For beginning to advanced players

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Win a year of free
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Starts
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8/31/18

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OHBO Ensemble Auditions

We want to remind those who would like to try for a more advanced group, auditions will be held **August 28th, from 4:30-6 pm in Room 114 at the Omaha Conservatory.**

This is for those wanting to advance from junior to senior intermediate orchestra, senior intermediate to advanced orchestra, and from intermediate to advanced band. Visit with your teacher if you are unsure whether to try out.

These auditions are also for those players who have played for some time who are new to the program and need to be placed in an ensemble. **If you are already in an advanced ensemble or if you do not wish to advance from an intermediate ensemble at this time, you do not need to audition.** The audition material is located on our website, <https://www.ohbo.org/auditions>

Also, new this semester! Due to the large number of potential auditions, you may sign up for a time slot via our website. Under "More" then "Book Online" or this is the direct link: <https://www.ohbo.org/book-online>

Rick Brown
Director, Omaha Homeschool Band & Orchestra

Register online at omahasymphony.org!

OMAHA
SYMPHONY

THOMAS WILKINS
MUSIC DIRECTOR



ADVENTURES IN MUSIC

Margre Durham Concerts for Youth

Prepare for an orchestral odyssey where music and language arts collide, as students hone their quills and imaginations to become storytellers.

(5th - 7th Grade)

Mission Imagination

Mozart is preparing to premiere his latest composition when disaster strikes! Students take the reins to help Mozart recover his musical prowess.

(Preschool - 3rd Grade)

Link Up - *The Orchestra Swings*

This all-new, *swingin'* addition to any recorder curriculum culminates in a play-along Omaha Symphony concert.

(3rd - 5th Grade)

Celebrate Creativity

Join us for an arts-infused excursion, featuring hands-on workshops, Joslyn Art Museum tours, and an interactive concert.

(Middle School - High School)

Visit omahasymphony.org for more information

WHAT WE DO & WHY YOU SHOULD JOIN

Nebraska Homeschool - The Home Educators Network, Inc. is an all-volunteer, registered 501(c)3 charitable organization which offers support to the public and specific benefits to our members. Your membership helps us provide the following services and supports numerous homeschooling families each year. Together we're building a stronger homeschool community. ***Just look what your \$30 membership helps us do!***

PROGRAMS & SERVICES

- 1:1 Mentoring
- New Homeschool Program
- Preschool thru High School Support
- National Home School Honor Society
- Homeschool Picture Days
- Legacy (Homeschool) Yearbook
- Used Curriculum & Book Sale (Buy & Sell)
- Nebraska Homeschool Event & Exhibit Hall
- Special Sponsored Events

COLLABORATION

- Homeschool Library, Sports Leagues & Clubs
- Metropolitan Area Homeschool Graduation
- Nebraska Homeschool Spelling Bee (Scripps)
- Box Tops for Education
- Rose Theater Homeschool Group Rates
- Homeschool Group Leadership Support

RESOURCE NETWORKING

- Nebraska Homeschool Website
- Nebraska Homeschool Facebook Page
- Nebraska Homeschool Pinterest
- Nebraska Homeschool Newsletter (4x/year)
- Network News (formerly HEN eTree)
- Nebraska Homeschool Resource Directory
- Local Community & Businesses Partnerships
- Corporate & Private Sponsorship Opportunities



MEMBER PERKS

PRIORITY ACCESS...

- NH-HEN Events

WAIVED FEES...

- Homeschool Honor Society
- Book Sale Admission
- Book Seller Table

DISCOUNTS...

- NH-HEN Events
- Legacy Yearbook Orders
- HSLDA Membership

A **SMART CHOICE** for your education

- Start year-round classes in September, December, March or June.
- The **College Track** program is available for **home school students**.
- Nebraska high school students pay **half-price** tuition.
- Register for General Education classes, a certificate or degree program.
- Take classes online, on campus or as a hybrid format.
- MCC has transfer agreements with more than 30 institutions, making the possibility of transferring to a four-year university easier.



METROPOLITAN
Community College

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

mccneb.edu | 531-MCC-5231 | enrollmentservices@mccneb.edu

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OMAHA HOMESCHOOL HOMECOMING 2018

The Hills Event Venue
September 28th 7p-11:30p
8-12th Grade Students
\$25

[Register Today](#)

Support Our Homeschool Volleyball Leagues
Come out and watch the games!



20th Annual National Homeschool Volleyball Tournament

October 31st - November 3, 2018

Follow the event on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/events/2014230832228575/>



SAVE THE DATES!

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| August 28, 2018 | Homeschool Picture Day @ OHLC (10a – 2p) |
| September 17, 2018 | Homeschool Picture Day @ TBA (9a -12p) |
| January 11, 2019 | Nebraska Homeschool Spelling Bee |
| March 8-9, 2019 | NCHEA Homeschool Conference & Curriculum Fair |
| April, 2019 | Class of 2019 Homeschool Graduation Ceremony |
| June 8, 2019 | Nebraska Homeschool Resource Expo 2019 |

Watch for details in the Network News!

[Subscribe to the Network News HERE](#)

**We're getting a jump-start on our 2019 Resource Expo.
If you are interested in participating as an exhibitor,
please join our Resource Expo mail list:**

<http://eepurl.com/dCJDRH>

SAVE THE DATE

JUNE 8, 2019

Next Issue:

Omaha Homeschool Band & Orchestra (Guest Writer)

Member Survey

Meet Our Project Managers