

Training for Triumph E-Newsletter  
Issue 018  
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**BACK TO SCHOOL ISSUE**

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## Section I: Training for Triumph (TFT) Events and Announcements

### 1. Letter From Donna

Dear Fellow Homeschoolers,

Welcome back to school...just a little late! Everyone is busily “doing the stuff” around here—our cottage classes here and in La Grange, Indiana are underway; my library card is maxed out with colonial America books; Jakie is reading short chapter books (Yipee!); and we are, yes, tweaking the schedule and the chore chart for more efficiency!

We got Kara back full-time from Summit the first part of September—and we all had quite the reunions. The boys and Kara had late night snuggle parties (Jacob is still young enough for Kara to snuggle—and they love to lie four in a bed and talk and giggle!), followed by a serious “Graham Cracker Covenant” ceremony in which they pledged to each other and the Lord that they would be content in all situations and give their expectations to the Lord. (I know it isn’t binding to have a covenant of graham cracker eating, but I was so inspired by their maturity (outside of the crackers, of course!) that I didn’t correct them.) The girls had some rough reunions—crying, laughing, and communicating to each other how one felt like she was being displaced, how lonely they were for each other this

summer, how others cannot replace sisters, etc. etc. I stood in awe of the entire process as they did on their own what we have done with them week in and week out, month in and month out for many years now. What a blessing to see it stick within them without Mom and Dad telling them that they should give their expectations to the Lord or put their sister before others, etc.!

Cami (third child, nineteen, ministry student and disability ministry director at First Assembly) got to go to California for a long weekend of planning the Joni and Friends national retreats for next year. She spent some time with Joni, who remarked that someday Cami would be out there working for her! Of course, we promptly flew her back home and brought her back to reality—I can't see the child who had to have the timer set for thirty minutes every afternoon in which she could not talk to or bother Mom moving across the country! Anyway, her work at First Assembly is going strong, and we don't envision her leaving us any time soon. ☺

Kayla (second child, twenty-one, ministry and nursing student) started working in the Emergency Room at a large hospital in Fort Wayne this week and is loving every minute of it. (She was formerly in the Orthopedics department, but put in for a transfer as she wanted to do work that would be more similar to what she would do on the mission field—and knee replacements are not that common in poor communities across the world!)

We (all four of the kids still in school) participated in the Academy of Arts drama seminar in Fort Wayne again and had an incredible experience. If you want quality drama training brought to homeschoolers in your area, check them out online. You won't be disappointed.

We also spent the night at the zoo again (my fourth time throughout all of my homeschooling years). This time I slept on an air mattress; I'm really starting to feel my age here! But I still had one "little girl" to snuggle with as Kara went with us—call it her "senior trip"! ☺

We are thrilled to have become part of the Timberdoodle family this month! Yep, CQLA is being offered by the time-tested, homeschool-honored curriculum (and more!) provider Timberdoodle. Check us out in their catalog and online. They have been a joy to work with, and we appreciate them putting their trust in CQLA.

Little heads up—*The Well-Trained Heart*, our first non-curriculum book, will be available the first of the year. We have been having an awesome time putting it together (as well as many trials and testings!), and we pray that it will bless many, many homeschoolers from all walks of life with an approach to

homeschooling that we have found to be far above any other. Next newsletter, we will give you a sneak preview with a chapter from it. If your homeschool group, company, or organization would like to carry *The Well-Trained Heart*, contact Ray, and he will get you fixed up for next spring's convention season.

Speaking of homeschool books, how many of you started out homeschooling with the incredible, inspired books by Dr. Raymond Moore? I cried off and on for days this summer when I found out about his passing. He was literally the first introduction to homeschooling we had, and I feel such immense gratitude to him that I found myself teary-eyed often as I thought about the fact that if it weren't for him, my life might be entirely different—and not nearly as joy-filled and rewarding—as it is with homeschooling. Anyway, I decided to get some of his books for our local library in honor of him and his contribution to homeschooling. I would encourage others to do the same. He has such a wealth of help for parents starting out in homeschooling. Christian Book Distributors has some of his books for under ten dollars. Invest in other homeschoolers and honor Dr. Moore's legacy by purchasing his books for your local library.

This newsletter has some tips on chores, memories of homeschool days past, and encouragement to keep up the good race of homeschooling. We might not see the fruit right away, and sometimes it may not seem that the fruit is even there—until we overhear our seventeen, fourteen, twelve, and nine year olds having a “Graham Cracker Covenant” ceremony, then we know it's worth it all—and we're on the right path.

Keep training hearts well,  
Donna

P.S. Check out our newly-updated, professional web site, designed by our daughter-in-law's brother and his wife (Aaron and Brenda Prentice at Digital Creations). We are thrilled with it! [www.trainingfortriumphhomeschool.com](http://www.trainingfortriumphhomeschool.com)

## **2. Upcoming Events for TFT:**

We don't have a lot of traveling and speaking planned for the winter. We will be home revising Volume II and tweaking *The Well-Trained Heart*.

Check out our website occasionally for new class listings for our cottage classes, etc.

### **3. Friendship Vouchers Extended Through December 31<sup>st</sup>!**

We have had warm reception to our Friendship Voucher Program, so we are extending it to the end of the year! That's right. Until the end of December, every time someone buys CQLA and tells us her friend recommended it to her, that friend will receive a \$10 voucher towards her next CQLA purchase **for each CQLA book her friend orders**. There is no limit to how many vouchers you may earn, so share CQLA with your friends and earn your books for free!! (See our website for more info on Friendship Vouchers or email Jonathan to receive more info.) **Homeschoolers everywhere are benefiting from our vouchers, and we are pleased to be able to offer them. Keep telling your friends, and earn more products.**

### **4. Representatives: Join us Now!**

It is the perfect time to become a CQLA rep—*The Old Schoolhouse*, Timberdoodle, Cathy Duffy's website, etc. are all doing the work for you! All you have to do is tell friends, "Yes, I sell that curriculum." And wahla! If you would like to get in on the spring homeschool sales of CQLA—at your state convention, your local support group, your own website, or just to friends—contact us to find out more about our no-risk representative program—and get your CQLA at extremely reduced prices.

## **Section II: Kitchen, Household, School, and Family Organization**

### **5. Organizing Tip: Chore Times (revisited!)**

#### **Chore Times Revisited---Part II of II**

Whatever chore schedule you use, keep these tips in mind:

1. Children must be trained to do chores. They do not just automatically separate whites and darks! (And neither do husbands, for that matter! ☺)

2. Children can do much more than we think or realize they can—if they are properly trained and motivated.
3. Children do much better with chores when something is “theirs.” For example, my little guys have “taken ownership” of their specific jobs---laundry, dishes, etc. Give them jobs for the long haul, and they will want to make you proud.
4. Put the most important tasks in the first chore session, the medium-importance items in the second chore session, and the least important jobs in the last chore session. Often, we run students to music lessons, to research at the library, etc. later in the day. By organizing chores by order of importance, we ensure that those items that cannot be skipped (two loads of laundry, dishes, evening meal preps, general picking up, and daily bathroom care for us) are done regardless.
5. Have a check off or chart system and follow up on their work. At first (and even later if we slack off), children will do the same things we adults sometimes do---try to get out of things, take the easy way out, etc. It is only through follow-up that we can train them in the character that is required to become diligent workers.
6. Be available to either work with the children or at least be around to oversee them as much as possible. (Choring with three little boys---despite the fact that they are sweet and eager to please---is a whole different world than choring with three teenage girls! I have had to put myself in the chore schedule and work with the boys during Chore One in order to be sure the kitchen work is done properly---and as a teaching time for the boys in cooking and various kitchen tasks.)

Reishes' Daily Chore Chart (20-30 mins per session)

**Chore 1** (Before breakfast)

**Kara, Jonathan, Josiah, and Jacob:** Room to room and jurisdictions

~Room to room—time when everyone goes through the main rooms and gets up anything that is out that belongs to them

~Jurisdictions—five minute period of time when (after room to rooms) each person straightens up (and in cases of bathrooms, wipes down) their assigned areas

**Evening Cook:** Get out food for evening meal if needed to defrost; start food in crock pot for evening meal, if needed, etc.; let Mom know if boys need to peel, chop, etc. while we read aloud today

**Jonathan:** Move laundry around, do one load of laundry (hang ups), help in kitchen

**Josiah:** Fix breakfast, cut up fruit, clean kitchen

**Jacob:** Unload dishes, wash big dishes, rinse other dishes, reload dishes, all small trash cans in house, sweep dining room and kitchen, sweep porch, trash in school room, trash in one van (Hey, he's nine years old—what does he have to do all day???)

**After breakfast:** All boys clean kitchen and dining room including loading dishes, wiping out micro, wiping all surfaces, and sweeping both rooms

### **Chore 2** (Before lunch)

**Kara, Jonathan, Josiah, and Jacob:** Room to room and jurisdictions (see above)

**Evening Meal Person:** Any evening meal preps needed

**Jonathan:** Move laundry around, do another load of laundry

**Josiah:** Fix lunch, do extra kitchen work

**Jacob:** Clean up lunch, do all dishes, run dishwasher, extra chore or two

**Chore 3** (Before free time—between three and four, depending on ages; Kara does hers anytime as she does not stop schooling, music, speech, editing, or doing secretarial tasks until she has to and usually volunteers to do extra work to help the family later in the day if she has time)

**Kara, Jonathan, Josiah, and Jacob:** Room to room and jurisdictions (see above)

**Evening Meal Person:** Fix dinner and oversee Jake's kitchen work for Chore 3

**Jonathan:** Work for TFT

**Josiah:** Work for TFT

**Jacob:** Unload dishes, wash big dishes, rinse other dishes, reload dishes if any, extra load of laundry if any, set table, water glasses, any other jobs the kitchen person has for him

**After dinner:** Most of family clean dining room and kitchen; one or two work on school or business with Dad or meet w/ Dad for discipleship; most pack K and C's lunches as needed

**Before bed:** Room to room, jurisdictions, run dishes

**Weekly:**

1. Each girl cleans a part of the house for one hour on W, Th, or Fri.
2. Each girl makes an evening meal, except Kayla who cooks something I need (for potluck, company, special family night, etc.) whenever I need it—once a week.
3. Everyone does an "organizing blitz" together for an hour on a part of the house that "mom can't take anymore,"

\*Note: We have three tapes that specifically discuss the ideas presented above: Organizing Your Life, School, and Home; Scheduling Your Life, School, and Home; and Training Children to Be Diligent Workers. See our website for descriptions of each of these.

## **Section III: Language Arts and Homeschooling Helps**

### **6. New CQLA Yahoo Group!**

Imagine my surprise when I googled CQLA the other day and found there is a Yahoo Group of CQLA users! Anyway, they have a few dozen subscribers, and they are a great group of moms. If you are interested in learning more about CQLA, seeing how people use the samples, hear people's pros and cons of CQLA, etc. etc., this is a great FREE group to check out. You can get the posts in digest or individually throughout the day. Join them today at <http://groups.yahoo.com:80/group/CQLAUsers/>

## **7. CQLA Grammar Question**

Question: The grammar in CQLA seems a little disjointed? Is it not in order of skills?

Answer: The grammar may seem a little disjointed at first, simply because it is in context--the contexts of the passages and Editor Duties--and also because it is not always in the same order (again due to the context of the passages). The exception to this is that all books introduce prepositions, prepositional phrases, and finding main subjects in the first two units since that is a needed skill for all subject-verb agreement in their writing.

However, after a couple of months, it will not seem disjointed at all for several reasons: (1) Each grammar concept is taught at least twice a year at each level (according to level--i.e. direct objects are not taught at all in Level A, etc.)--oftentimes a grammar concept is taught an additional time or two if it is needed for the type of writing being done that week (i.e. quotations for dialogue) or if it is in the passage and just lends itself to be instructed again; (2) The grammar is repeated over and over in the Editor Duty (i.e. last week they learned about subordinators, so this week they find them in the Editor Duty as a review); (3) The grammar is repeated over and over again in the Checklist Challenge--this is the real kicker--they will NOT ask you if dog is a verb after circling every verb in all of their papers for three months(!); (4) Grammar taught in context is more easily retained--yeah, we learned about double adjectives when we had to write a descriptive paper or yeah, I remember that split quote stuff in the passage about Job, etc.

Also, remember, it doesn't matter if your student learns pronouns first or adjectives first! Whenever it does matter—or it is more advantageous to go in a certain order (i.e. prepositions before prepositional phrases), CQLA does.

Like we say in the TG--give CQLA a three month learning curve--then you will never have to learn another program at any level again. It will be like clockwork--and your kids will always know what they're doing any given day of any week.

## **Section IV: Heart Helps**

### **8. Cami got a car!**

Cami has had an eventful summer—it began with her getting hired half time as the director of our church's disability ministry (something she had been doing on a volunteer basis for two years this month) and ended with getting a new car. And somehow, the two are linked in a

sweet, naive, incredible way.

Cami's car that she purchased for herself a year ago (when she and Kayla were finished with their two year ministry school program and went to college and church in Fort Wayne on different time tables, so they could no longer ride together) died. Well, actually, she wrecked it last winter trying to avoid hitting a deer, and it has been dying a slow and painful death ever since then. We have nursed it along—picked her up along the road a few times and shared my van with her more days than I wanted to (i.e. went without a vehicle for myself!).

Well, she had been saving all spring to buy a new car (new to her anyway), and she knew her limits—prior to getting hired by the church, she did tutoring, typesetting, and newspaper delivery for us (while going to college) and had many school bills to pay, so extra money wasn't something she had. Well, the cute thing about this story is that when she got the job at the church and had a real salary coming in twice a month, she announced, **"Wow! Now maybe I can get a more expensive car—not just a thousand or two dollars, but maybe even three thousand dollars!"** How cute and frugal is that?

To make a long story short, she ended up getting a car worth twice what she could ever have afforded given to her by someone from church who wanted to invest in someone in ministry—and she now has, by far, the nicest vehicle in our driveway. And she often brags about how *everything* works in it—windows, locks, doors, air conditioning—all the things that do not work in our vehicles!

Oh, and as a side note, when she took her broken down car in to leave it as she picked up her new one, **she had quarters on the floors** (from our newspaper delivery to businesses and newspaper boxes)—**that were worth more than her old car was worth!** 😊

## 9. "Kara-Less" Existence

The boys were lost without Kara this summer. Josiah, age twelve, especially took Kara's absence hard. He could often be found in tears after he hung up the phone from talking to her. Well, this, of course, made me feel pretty bad (and glad all at the same time!). So, I found myself giving them special privileges—extra computer time, more treats, etc.—especially Josiah.

I caught on to them after a while though, as they milked Kara's absence for all it was worth—they took their plight to unusual, dramatic extremes with such pleas as “Can we please have some extra computer time in our miserable, Kara-less existence?” and “Watching a movie tonight would be like a cold pack on our “Kara-less” third degree burns of life.” I don't know where they get that drama! ☺

## 10. Heart Strings: Memories...of the Way We Were

For two years now I have been on this nostalgia kick. I can't seem to shake it. I recently heard that song (that I remember my mom having a record (remember, a large cd????!!) of Barbara Streisand singing) “Memories.” Those words sum up my nostalgia kick: “Memories, light the corners of my mind; misty, water-colored memories—of the way we were.”

Now, you are going to think I am an emotional basket-case a lot of the time when you hear my nostalgia problems, but I'm not always this “fussy”—for lack of a better word. It's just that, well, my kids are growing up on me, and frankly, I am absolutely not ready for it.

It began two years ago when Kayla (freshman in college at the time) and Cami (senior in high school at the time) joined our church's two-year ministry school to jump-start their four year ministry degrees for which they planned. Now, mind you, that up to this time, we were pretty much “together” people. We made fun of (I know, not very nice!) those who drove two to five vehicles to church because they all went different directions. *Why would a family even need more than two vehicles?* We used to wonder. We couldn't understand why when we traveled with the debate team, kids wanted to stay together rather than in family groups. I mean, what fun are other people when you can be with your parents and siblings???

Then it hit me. (Is that a common theme—last month I couldn't understand why people didn't keep their kids from being presumptuous, then got a presumptuous child. I better control my thoughts more!) Kayla and Cami were gone. Not moved away, mind you. But gone—all day most days and many evenings. I cried every day the first couple of weeks of their school—in spite of them calling me several times a day to update me—and check on me! ☺

Worse yet, the first weekend of their school and “interships” at the church came—and they left the house together on Saturday evening—one to go to deaf church and one to go to church prayer. The weekend--our sacred family time. We rarely spent Saturday nights apart. Even when we traveled to tournaments and conventions, we were together. Kayla and Cami pulled out of the driveway early that Saturday evening, and I went to my bedroom, locked the door, and threw myself across the bed, and wept, literally wept. I could not

bring myself to face a Saturday night without them, especially knowing that this is the way it would often be from now on.

(I had some of the same problems when Joshua went to do internships, but he had worked during high school and was often gone during the day at his job, then did school in the evenings. The girls had done school (read alouds, chore times, etc.) with me for longer than Joshua had. Also, I still had a lot of younger kids to school at the time Joshua graduated. With Kayla and Cami gone, it just felt like my homeschool clock was running out!)

Well, it's been downhill from there. Before I knew it, that school year was over, and it was time for Cami's high school graduation. Now, I had been emotional and teary-eyed during Joshua and Kayla's graduations, but Cami's was worse yet. You see, when Cami was a little girl (and even still now), she wrote whatever she felt (I don't know where she got that!!). Thus, as we unpacked her boxes of school memorabilia to prepare her memory tables, we were faced with notebook after notebook of Cami's journaling from when she was little: **"Today was a good day. I love homeschooling! We read with Mommy for hours. Then we had to help with Baby Jakie. He was so fussy! Then I helped Kayla make spaghetti for her servant day."** But it didn't stop there. Every third page of language arts, math, scribing, etc., contained little notes in the margins—and well, all over the page. **"I love my brothers. I love my sisters."** **"I have the best parents in the world!"** **"I love Jesus more than anything!"** **"I love homeschooling!"** **"Jesus is the best!"** **"Mom and Dad are awesome!"** and on and on. I am crying even as I type this! She and I sorted through the boxes and both of us just bawled and bawled. All five of the other kids left the room. It was just so emotional.

Then last year, every time I saw Gregg Harris or Ken Ham at a homeschool conference, I got teary-eyed. They were so influential in so much of our homeschool life. I just felt an immense amount of gratitude—and nostalgia. (You never know the influence that you have on others!)

Next, I was speaking in front of a few hundred people about preschoolers at a state homeschool convention. In this workshop, I use a picture book I wrote (that is still picture-less!) that I wrote called *Jonathan's Journal* to describe a day in the life of a homeschooled preschooler. Of course, my subject was the title's namesake, my now-fifteen-year-old Jonathan. Halfway through, when I got to the part where **"Mommy swirled me and swirled me because she was so proud of how I treated Josie."** I lost it. Yep. Right there in front of hundreds of people, I had a meltdown. Someone had to bring me Kleenexes and everything. Not very professional! (The audience was nearly all crying too, so I am not the only emotional homeschool mom out there!)

Then to top it all off, this spring, I walked with my three little boys into the recently-re-opened skating rink that I had taken the older kids to for several years every other Friday afternoon for the homeschool skate, and as soon as I walked in the door, you guessed it, I began sobbing. So many good memories, so many happy times. **So many days...the way we were.**

This year I felt that I was doing extremely well in my nostalgia—I even let my little girl—seventeen year old Kara—go on a summer long ministry traveling with a drama company, then let her go to Summit in Colorado! (We did talk on an average of every other day the whole summer, but still, I have been making great strides!) Then, last week, I pulled out some old *Quick Cooking* magazines to mark recipes for the kids for the fall—and found a note from eight years ago: “Kay-Kay: Today is Daniel Day, so make these biscuits and cut up fruit for breakfast; then make potatoes, corn, and salad for lunch. You and I will make bread and vegetable soup this afternoon for dinner. I love you! Mommy.” And to make matters worse, every other recipe was marked (for her to try out someday) in her classic, dyslexic style: the backward check-mark. So much for my nostalgia-overcoming! ☺

So, why this long discourse about my mental and emotional well-being (well, not necessarily well...)? You see, when I had seven kids fourteen and under, people would say, “Oh, enjoy it now. They grow up so fast.” And “Before you know it, you won’t be braiding three little girls’ hair before church.” Etc. etc. And **I didn’t believe them.**

Sometimes the days were so hard. Physically, I was tired a lot—nursing, pregnant, up with sick kids, long days trying to “get it all done,” etc. Emotionally, I was often lonely—Ray worked sixty to seventy hours a week then. I stayed home a lot. Early on (when we just had four kids), I was the only homeschooler that we knew in our hometown! I didn’t have likeminded friends during my first twelve years of childbearing and homeschooling.

So, I’m telling all of you young homeschooling moms—**believe people** when they say the time goes so quickly. It truly does. Believe them when they tell you your kids will be grown up before you know it. **They will.**

And, most importantly, **act on it**, when people tell you to enjoy these years and to not wish them away. There will be plenty of time later for everything else you want to do in life (if it’s God’s plan)---**so just focus on the most important task you have right now—homeschooling your children—and enjoy the journey.**

## **Section IV: Encouragement From TFT**

### **11. Back to School Encouragement: The Beginning of a New School Year**

#### **The Beginning of a New School Year**

By Donna Reish

I'm always excited about school! I love summer school; I love regular school; I love school--and everything (almost!) having to do with it. I love planning it. I love thinking about it. I love school supplies. I love books and bookcases (which is why we have twelve bookcases spread throughout our small 1,400 square foot house!). I love homeschooling more than I could ever explain in person or convey in print--and I especially love the beginning of a new school year.

I love organizing the house for school....completing my last ditch effort of getting the whole house in order before "regular school" begins! (Like that will ever really happen!) Checking off each item in anticipation of the long days ahead. Organizing my freezer meals in order by type, ready to pull out and rescue me on "those days." Like the nesting instinct before birth, something about the initial days of school approaching makes me want to "get everything done"--for the beginning of a new school year.

I love school supplies--and finding the latest and greatest things that I only get for myself--secret tools that nobody should touch but Mother (for the first month anyway)--the stickier sticky notes, the click highlighters, and the fruit-scented markers. And, adding another dictionary, thesaurus, or "word" book to my shelf of the dozen-plus that I already have--you can never have too many words! Oh, my supplies--for the beginning of a new school year.

I love organizing my books for school. My books on shelves in my bedroom. Our library materials on other shelves in my bedroom--in historical chronological order--ready to pull off the shelf and read or assign. My desk drawers cleaned out. My library cards all in good standing--no fines, nothing lost or missing--not for the beginning of a new school year.

I love organizing the kids' things for school. Putting the books not finished from last year in their tubs, with renewed determination to get through

them this time. Smelling the newness of their "this year" books--and rubbing my hand over the glossy covers of texts with no tears, no missing pages, and no doodling anywhere on them. I love filling their crates with everything I hope and dream about getting to this year. No whistles, baseballs, comic books, or candy wrappers stashed in the crates' pockets. Not for the beginning of a new school year.

I love romancing about school...you know, thinking how awesome it is going to be with all three of the boys gathered around me, anticipating the next lesson--with a clean house and dinner in the crock pot in the background of the picture. All chores done for the day. No phone calls or interruptions. No bad attitudes. No slothfulness. Outstanding character by all (including Mom!). My older three daughters flitting in and out between their college classes, ministries, and music lessons. Rubbing the tops of the little boys' heads as they walk through the room we are schooling in--smiling at the memories of when they were the ones gathered around me learning together. (And they never sat on whoopie cushions, opened every tool on a pocket knife, or snuck candy from the treat tub as I read!) In my perfect scenario, the girls never interrupt us--the boys never tickle them as they walk by or stop to talk to them about the Boxer Rebellion in China or proper wheel chair etiquette--that wouldn't be "real" school, you know! Romancing...about the beginning of a new school year.

And then it happens. The beginning of the new school year passes. The fruity markers became less fruity--or the ink leaks out of the bottoms of them. The stickier sticky notes are not really as sticky as was advertised--and my idea to write Scriptures on them and put them on the bathroom mirrors every morning fades away. A library book turns up missing--and I have to pay \$29.99 to replace it--plus, a restocking fee. My little guy's math book's cover gets torn off--and it is no longer glossy or pretty. My historical chronology of books gets wrecked as we began "stuffing" on the shelves rather than "filing" somewhere in the third week. Something happens to the little guys gathered around me, smiling as I read, too. You see, my freezer meals ran out, so now they have to peel potatoes while I read--and cutting long strips of peeling or designs in the potatoes becomes more exciting to them than listening to Mom read. Oh, and the character...let's just say those flaws were not quite as noticeable when they were playing outside or mostly doing independent work during the summer. They never are. It's passed--the beginning of a new school year.

But I'm not discouraged! I have been at this long enough (twenty-four years this fall when I began homeschooling my younger sister!) to know that each "beginning of a new school year" passes--and some of the excitement fades, but my efforts are not in vain. I'm not in this for just the

first few days of a new school year. I'm not in this for a few short years of each child's life. I'm in this for the long haul (for thirty-four years by the time my last one graduates!--and it's "doing the stuff," regardless of how new, lovely, easy, or romantic that "stuff" might *not* be, that matters. You see, I love homeschooling--the end of the year, the summer school days, the holiday school times--and the beginning of a new school year.

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