

March 2026

THE HOMESCHOOL *ISSUES*



**Fiddler on the Roof:
The Front Porch Players!**

Photo credit: Shannon Carlson

As you ascend the driveway of Harvest Baptist Tabernacle, you'll find an unassuming corrugated metal building. It could be mistaken for a church gym or other functional building, but your feelings will change as you enter. There is a warmth there. Like you've just bumped into an old friend, but it's the feeling you get from everyone you meet, whether they are staff or customers. It's as if something beyond flesh and blood is driving this connection, and honestly – in our current climate – this feeling is becoming rare.

Harvest Village, LLC is not affiliated with Harvest Baptist Tabernacle, but the church has allowed them to use the space. So, who is Harvest Village LLC? "We are a group of concerned community members, who want to enhance life for Clayton County," said Erica Zakamerek. "We offer these services for less than their value in the hopes that this will impact lives and make things better for people by giving access to things they wouldn't normally get to access. Your community becomes larger

HARVEST VILLAGE LLC – A HIDDEN TREASURE

because of the shared experience." I think this is the feeling of connection that is present here. Whether you are accessing classes, presentations, or pop-up markets, you are also experiencing a larger community and shared experience.





Since 2024, Harvest Village has offered everything from sourdough classes and Pilates to sewing and pottery classes. When asked, “What have been some of your best moments?,” Erica said, “When I see a grandma sitting next to a child and grandchild - the multi-generational opportunities are what I love to see.”

So, what specific opportunities does Harvest Village offer to homeschoolers? Many of the classes align with the classes that homeschoolers are looking for and are offered at an affordable

price. What’s more, Harvest Village is open to suggestions, since they are a community that is looking to grow. It’s a growing organization that first offered classes just a few days a week and now has something to offer daily. The goal for the future is to offer classes from 9 a.m. until 9 p.m. If you are interested in joining them to attend a class or start a class, reach out at:

<https://www.harvestvillage.com/>

- Joni Harrison

Photo credit: Harvest Villiage





HARVEST VILLAGE


MARCH MADNESS 2026




Weekly Themes: Favorite Sports Team | Sports Socks | Wear Green | Wacky Hat & Hair | Mix & Match

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	2 Sewing Series 6PM	3 Step 11AM Pickleball Acad. 5~7PM Beginner 7-8:30PM	4 Walk 9AM Chair Aero 10AM Rooted 9AM Pottery 12:30PM	5 Pilates 11AM  Pickleball 5-8:30PM	6 Walk 9AM Cardio 10AM 	7 Pickelball 10AM-8:30PM
9 Walk 9AM Chair Aero 10AM Art 11AM & 6PM Lego Club 11AM Ukulele 6PM	9 Walk 9AM Pickleball Acad. 	10 Step 11AM Pickleball Acad. 5~7PM Beginner 7-8:30PM	11 Walk 9AM Chair Aero 10AM Rooted 9AM Pottery 12:30PM	12  Sourdough 6PM 	13 Walk 9AM Cardio 10AM 	14 Pickelball 10AM-8:30PM
16 Walk 9AM Chair Aero 10AM Art 11AM & 6PM Lego Club 11AM Ukulele 6PM	10 Walk 9AM Pickleball Acad. 	17 Step 11AM Pickleball Acad. 5~7PM Beginner 7-8:30PM	18 Walk 9AM Chair Aero 10AM Wellness 11AM Pottery 12:30PM PE Hour 1PM	19 Pilates 11AM  Pickleball 5-8:30PM	20 Walk 9AM Cardio 10AM 	21 Pickelball 10AM-8:30PM
23 Walk 9AM Chair Aero 10AM Art 11AM & 6PM Lego Club 11AM Ukulele 6PM	23 Walk 9AM Pickleball Acad. 	24 Step 11AM Pickleball Acad. 5~7PM Beginner 7-8:30PM	25 Walk 9AM Chair Aero 10AM Rooted 9AM Pottery 12:30PM	26 Pilates 11AM 	27 Late Night Pickleball til 11PM! 	28 Worship 9AM 
30 Walk 9AM Chair Aero 10AM Art 11AM & 6PM Lego Club 11AM Ukulele 6PM	31 Step 11AM Pickleball Acad.  5~7PM Beginner 7-8:30PM					

SPECIAL EVENTS

 **March 18:** Wellness Wednesday 11AM
Grocery Shopping with Sonnet!

 **March 27:** Late Night Pickleball
Courts Open (till 11PM)

 **March 28:** Wake Up & Worship
9AM



PICKLEBALL HOURS:

MON: 5-8:30PM Open Play

TUE: 5-7PM Acad. & 7-8:30PM Beg.

WED: Courts Oosed

THU: 5-8:30PM Open Play

FRI: 5-8:30PM Open Play

SAT: 10AM-8:30PM Open Play



CLEP TESTS

Every four-year degree program is divided into different core credits including English, math, science, humanities, social studies and required courses. In Georgia, we get 30 Dual Enrollment credits for free, so if you are planning to use those in conjunction with CLEP, I would say focus your DE on some of your math and English college requirements.

If your student is planning to complete a master's or beyond, they will need a grade for those credits. However, often the degree program requires up to three classes of math and English, so it is possible to CLEP at least one of those. For example, you could DE for English Comp 1 and 2, then you could CLEP American literature.

“My experience with CLEP was incredible. I have been able to learn a lot from it and seen all the different things that you can learn from it. A lot of the colleges here in Colorado accept CLEP, so I have been able to knock off about a quarter of what I need to take for my degree. I learned about it in my freshman year of high school, two years ago. Since then, I have taken and passed four or five CLEP exams to get a total of twenty-four credits and I will take two more in the next couple of months before I graduate and head to college. CLEP’s cool. It’s a lot less money than you need to spend, and you can actually learn a lot if you use the right stuff.”

- Daniel Rickman, Colorado

Not all colleges accept all CLEP credits. It is important to check college’s websites for their CLEP policy. You can use the college board search feature here:

<https://clep.collegeboard.org/clep-college-credit-policy-search>



CLEP PROS

Earn over 30 hours of school credit. One young lady accumulated 30 hours of credit, was accepted into 11 colleges, eliminated two semesters of work, and double majored because of CLEP!

There is nothing to lose by taking CLEP tests! IF you go through Modern States it is \$0.

Great experience taking timed and proctored tests! Great for transitioning into taking the SAT and ACT

If a student is unsure of a career path, CLEP is a great way to earn potential college credit, understand strengths, and even if said college does not take the credit, it is experience in the subject!

Foreign Language is the most CLEP'ed subject! Some colleges even give up to 16 credits for high scores.

You can retake as many CLEP tests as you would like, as long as you wait after the 90-day interval

Language has two forms of the test! One with writing and one without.

CLEP is great for a busy schedule and it is low stress! One user's child started taking CLEP in the 7th grade and was able to earn history credits

CLEP CONS

Certain majors will not accept CLEP for math and sciences.

Some are advised to not take CLEP exams until their senior year of high school. Colleges might change their required scores for CLEP. Let's say you take the test your sophomore year, if the college changes the score requirements, you would have to take the test again. Still, not too much of a con!

Sometimes a student is not ready for rigorous, upper level coursework.

Dual enrollment does not accept CLEP credits except for electives. Good thing you can still collect college credits for the future!

Universities that don't accept CLEP:

- Georgia Tech
- Emory University
- University of Georgia

TOP 3 CLEP TESTS WHEN YOU DON'T KNOW YOUR MAJOR OR COLLEGE CHOICE

SOCIAL SCIENCES

Introduction to sociology is an easier course to CLEP. It also fits the social science requirements for all degrees. A lot of majors require two social science credits; it may be good to use DE for an economics credit which could fulfill a high school requirement.

American Literature, Analyzing and Interpreting Literature. They also fit in with a lot of degrees. Also easy to study for and CLEP.

ONE
LITERATURE
COURSE

A lot of college courses require at least one history credit so it is a great course to CLEP at the end of a year of studying American history for high school!

AMERICAN
HISTORY 1
AND 2

CLEP RESOURCES:



<https://study.com/clep/index.html>
- has practice tests available.

<https://store.rea.com/tstprep-clep.html>
- These books are great study guides. You can purchase inexpensive copies at thrift stores and used book sites.



<https://modernstates.org>
- They provide a free CLEP course and upon completion they will send you a voucher to complete the CLEP test for free, saving you \$97.



<https://clep.collegeboard.org>
- Go here to review the CLEP exams available. Each topic shows what will be important on the test. Free sample tests and college CLEP search engine!



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Get in contact!



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MORE INFO HERE!

-Registration for the 2026-27 school year opens March 1st!

-Fayetteville, GA

-Serving the homeschooling community since 2011!





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noun · the art of zapping unwanted hair

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Grant for Homeschool Co-Ops?

*How the VELA grant changed the
LOL Homeschool Group*

In August 2023 our small homeschool group learned about a grant that was available to non-traditional education groups. The grant was called the VELA Grant, and they were offering \$10,000, which could be used for educational purposes for any non-traditional education group. Our group was not a traditional co-op, but we did offer regular extra-curricular classes such as a STEM club and LEGO club. As a group, we tended to offer classes that required a group but weren't standard curriculum classes, and we wanted to expand this opportunity.

To apply for the VELA grant, you begin by filling out an application form, which includes yes/no questions and long-form answers. The questionnaire is quite extensive with approximately 50 questions to answer, so make sure you have a quiet space and some coffee before filling it out. This is probably the most extensive part of the application. After that, you wait to hear back. I applied in the middle of August and heard back saying we were tentatively approved in the middle of October 2023. The application was officially approved in the middle of November, and we received the funds shortly afterwards.





We have used the funds to buy the equipment needed to start a robotics and art club. We make these classes available to our members for free. We also bought some physical education equipment, which we use on a periodic basis, as well as added supplies to our STEM and LEGO club.

The goal for us was to use the money to help fund extra-curricular educational programs and make them free for our members, and we were successful in that aim. However, the money can be used for any educational purpose. They are particularly interested in this money being used to open doors for those who struggle to access good educational opportunities. Since our group likes to focus on creating programs at low cost, we felt we were a good fit for this grant.



One year after the money was received, VELA sent out a questionnaire so we could let them know what we did with the money. This was short and they didn't ask for receipts. Since this reporting, they haven't made any demands of our group, and the only communication I receive is emails in my inbox letting me know what else is available. At this time, our group is not in need of further assistance, however, if your group would like that extra support, should you choose to apply, they are there to help.

—Joni Harrison

“Teach Your Child How to Read in One Hundred Easy Lessons” Book Review

As I sat at the dining room table of a new mom friend's house, three kids deep into parenting, I asked which curriculum she used to teach her kids to read. Her kids were older and always seemed to be carrying a book around, so whatever she was using seemed to have worked. She looked up sheepishly, took a moment to assess whether I was a safe person to share this information with - as if she was going to share a new angle on the death of Diana - and in whispered tones asked, "Have you heard of the book, Teach Your Child How to Read in One Hundred Easy Lessons?" I hadn't, but whatever facial expression flashed across my face must have revealed I was a safe person to speak with.

I was. This sounded exactly like the kind of book was looking for. Teaching reading for me, it was just a means to an end. It was the necessary evil required before I could teach the

subjects I enjoyed. Like British Comedian Sindu Vee says, the problem with small kids is that everything they know or need to learn in this case you already know. I knew how to read so I knew teaching reading would be a struggle for me.

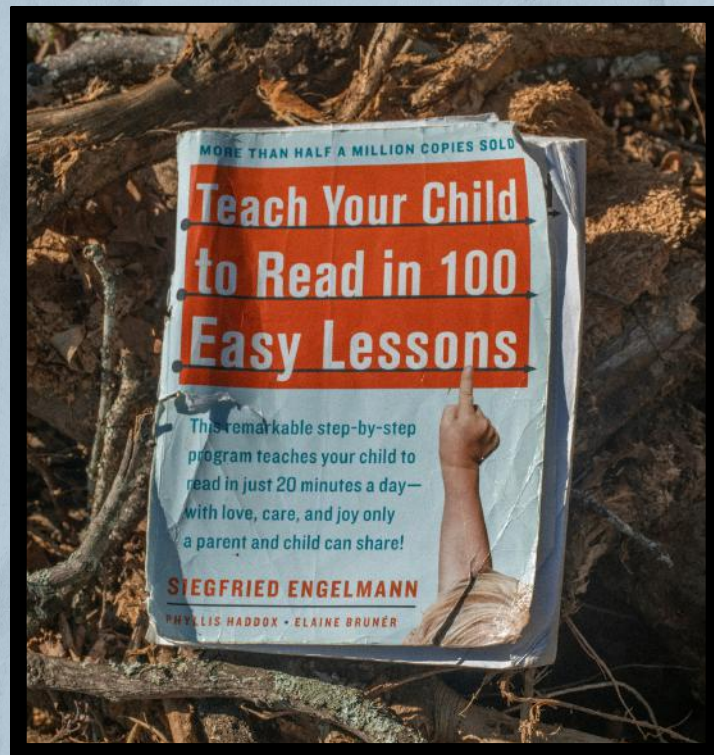
The mom reappeared at the table holding a worn-out book. It was indeed just called, "Teach Your Child How to Read in One Hundred Easy Lessons." I was surprised by its bold claim as well as excited to learn that this could be a reality. Now five children deep and all well beyond the reading age, I can confirm that it works and you can teach your child how to read in one hundred lessons - some may even do it in fewer lessons.

The word easy was doing some heavy lifting at times, depending on the day, or the child...or the mom's mood. With all my children, we have

hit a wall somewhere between lessons 40 and 60. There were times when we had to put the book down for a while or go back a few lessons and repeat some days. As it happened, I would end up learning a lot about myself and my ability to be patient and wait for my children to be ready to learn.

By the fourth read through, I won't profess to enjoying the book. I was so tired of all the stories of goats, ants, and eagles and their poor life choices, but the book did work. Are there better options out there? Probably. I think Abeka and Hooked on Phonics offer a more in-depth program that some children may need, which many parents have found to be successful. However, for our family, this book was a good option. Today, all my children read well and have a passion for learning. The book's claim of taking just fifteen minutes per day was mostly true, and there were days when we could double up on the lessons. When I purchased the book years ago, it cost just \$14.99. Since then, I have seen it at used bookstores many times for much less. I have even been given a copy for free. If budget is a concern for you, this book might be a good option to consider.

Over the years, I have seen this same sheepish reaction appear again when I have spoken to other parents



about their choice to use this book. It doesn't contain any of the bells and whistles other programs use. There are no flashcards or online elements. There are no daily lesson plans. As the parent, you read the sections in red and the child contributes the other parts. It even has "well done" written in red as if a parent needs to be reminded to compliment their child's accomplishments. Perhaps at times this can make parents feel like they aren't doing enough. For us, this book has done the job. It may not have been flashy, but it got us through a milestone that we needed to hit and helped us all to move on to the fun learning we are able to do today.

-Joni Harrison

EVENTS CALENDAR

March 6 - Newman Wetlands Center
10 a.m., Homeschool Fridays: Love Birds
www.newmanwetlandscenter.com

March 10 - Georgia Aquarium
9-1, Tuesdays in the Field www.georgiaaquarium.org










March 11 - Zoo Atlanta
10-noon, Homeschool Academy
www.zooatlanta.org

March 16 - Spivey Hall Children's Choir Music Makers
5-6 p.m., 2nd - 5th Grade
www.gastateparks.org

March 17 & 19 - Fayette Environmental Education Center
10:30-noon, March Fire Forest
www.sctlandtrust.org

March 19 - Atlanta History Center
10-12:30, Homeschool Day: A People on the Move

MARCH 2026

1	2	3	4	5	6 	7
8	9	10 	11 	12	13	14
15	16 	17 	18 	19 	20 	21
22	23 	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

March 20 - Atlanta Shakespeare Tavern

10 a.m., Shakesploration Days

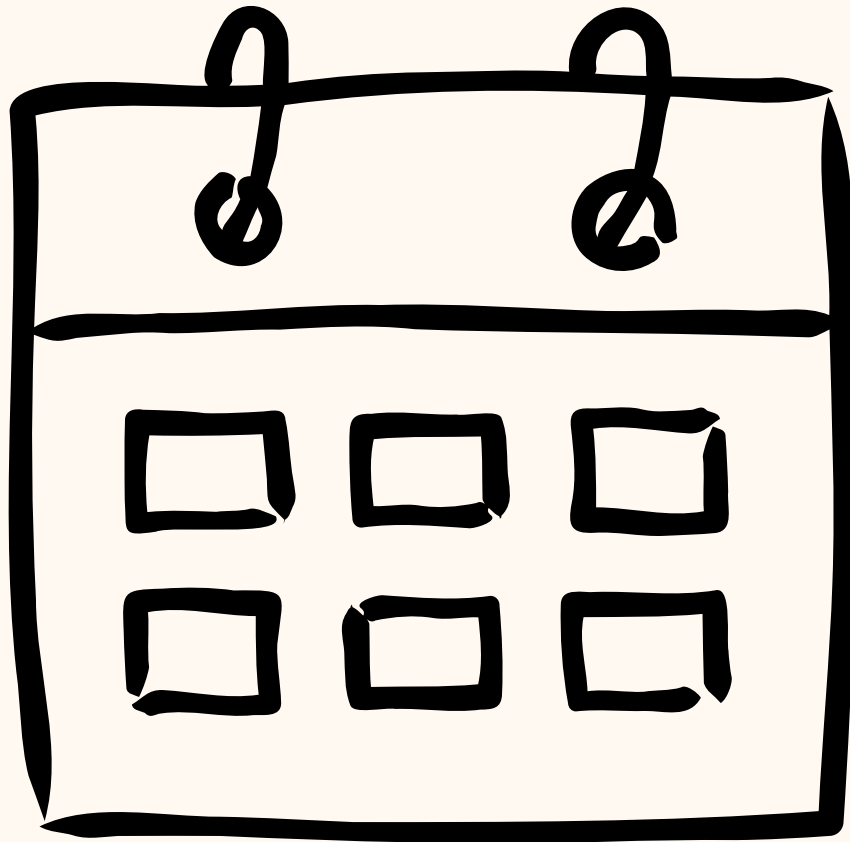
www.shakespearetavern.com

March 23 - Spivey Hall Children's Choir

7:15 p.m., Open House

www.spiveyhall.org/education/childrens-choir/

ADD EVENTS
TO OUR CALENDAR!



REACH OUT TO US
ON SOCIAL MEDIA:
@THEHOMESCHOOLISSUES





Photos by Shannon Carlson

FRONT PORCH PLAYERS TO PERFORM 'FIDDLER ON THE ROOF'

Set in 1905, Russia, “Fiddler on the Roof” is a stage play about challenges to tradition in a changing society and tests of faith against the backdrop of cultural division. Uncertainty reigned, and certainly we see many of these same themes in society today. The Front Porch Players have been practicing diligently for their upcoming performance of “Fiddler on the Roof”, and recently, we sat down with the homeschool parent and student cast members to ask what they gained from community theater and why they chose to be a part of this play. Their answer? Tradition!



Tradition

For many, it seemed, theater is in their blood. Lana Carlson came to love theater when she saw one of her mom's performances. "I saw [my mom] move here, and she just all-of-a-sudden found [Front Porch Players] really quickly, and I would have not even thought to look for this. Mom was 12 when she started doing theater, and "Fiddler on the Roof Jr" was her first performance and she loved it. She kept going for a while, and then she had all us kids and she had no time for that. Then we came down here, life was hectic, so coming here and doing theater - doing what she loved - was her getaway. Then I was like, 'that looks so fun.' I literally saw one show, and I said, 'Okay, I want to do that.' Now I love doing it and I can't stop doing it."



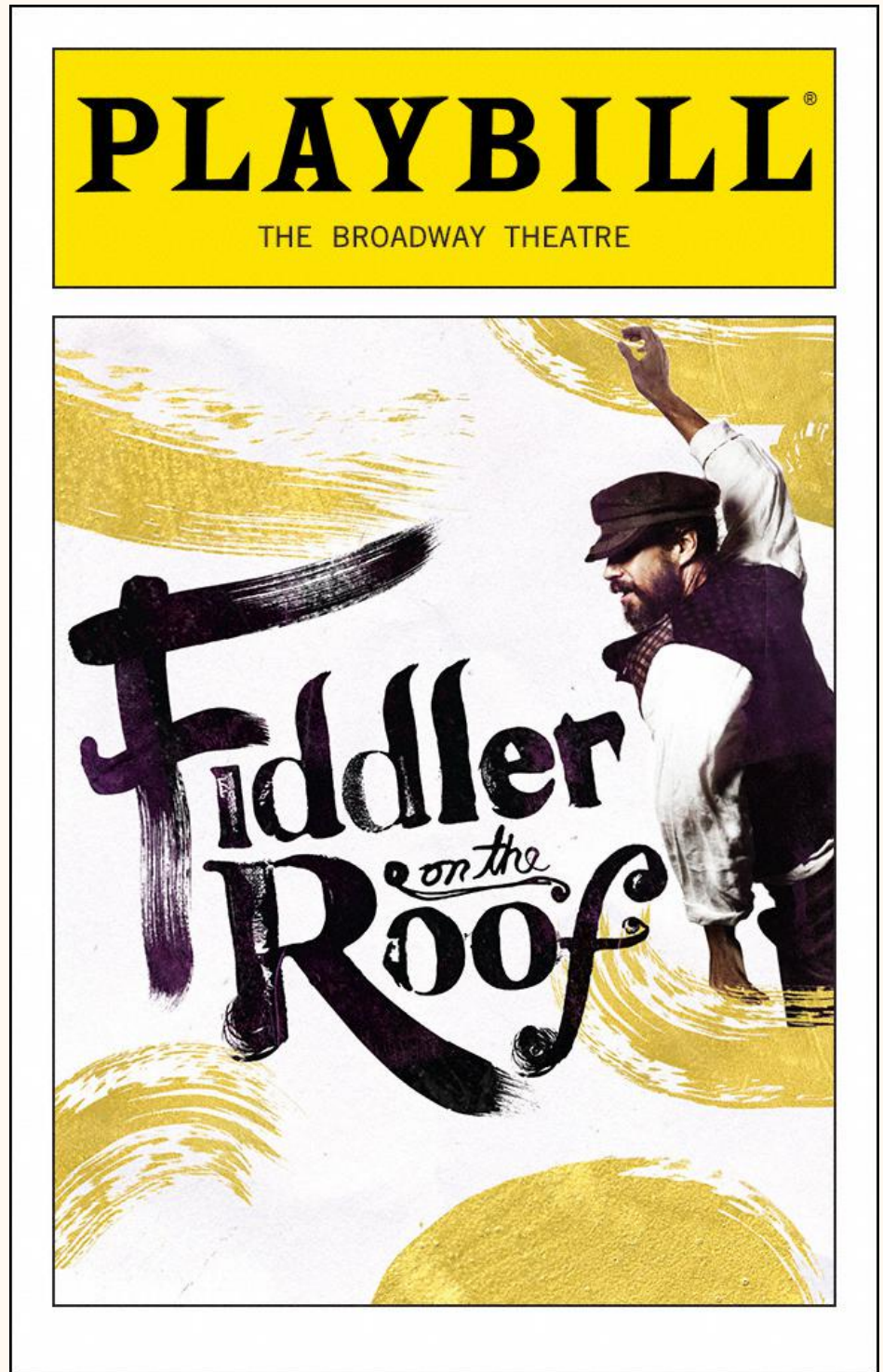
Lana has performed alongside her mom in many of the Front Porch plays and will perform with her again in this play. Charlotte Sanders, Lily Lee, Evy Griffin and David Stovall have also performed alongside their parents in this, and previous plays. Based in Georgia and California, Lily and her mom, Maria, have performed together in a variety of acting roles. David's extensive family of musicians and dancers have a long history of performing together. It was lovely to see that, like homeschooling, community theater is rooted in the family.

"I literally saw one show, and I said, 'Okay, I want to do that.' Now I love doing it and can't stop doing it."
- Lana Carlson

Changing Society

“Fiddler on the Roof” addresses the challenge to tradition swept in with modernity at the turn of the 20th Century. Many of those challenges have been cemented into our society and perhaps don’t feel that relatable to us today. However, social change continues its march forward while we as parents are left trying to help our children make decisions about their future as best as they can in the face of uncertainty. Many of the students we interviewed were interested in pursuing theater or were looking for a new challenge in life as they neared graduation.

Although Luke Dessez, 17, wants to pursue nursing, he also wants to travel and see America as part of that journey. “I have just stayed and enjoyed Georgia too long” He said, “I would like somewhere very different from Georgia just to see what it's like. It's a very big country, isn't it? There's lots to see.” The desire to not fear change seemed like a resounding theme amongst the theater crowd.



Original “Fiddler on the Roof” Broadway poster

We asked the parents if they would encourage the arts as a career and Maria fully embraced the change. “I absolutely would encourage any homeschoolers who are passionate about it to pursue it.” She said, “Especially in this day and age. It's not like when we were kids or previous generations, where people worked at one

company for 30 years and retired with pensions and retirements and all that. It's not like that anymore. There's no such thing as job security these days so you might as well do what you love because 'something to fall back on' doesn't exist, there's no guarantee that they're not going to outsource your job or downsize."

For Maria, social change was not only something not to fear, but she saw the cracks it was creating in society. She also saw an opportunity. "These days there are so many different avenues for building a career, especially with the Internet and social media. I would advise them to use the Internet. When I was starting out in the industry, there was no such thing as the internet or even computers. Nobody had email. Nobody used the computer to type your paper; that was still kind of new. In high school, I took keyboarding and it wasn't even in front of a computer screen.

Now, with the Internet and social media, there's a lot of initiative that they can take to create their own contacts, creating their own fan base. That just wasn't a thing when I was younger. There were a lot more gatekeepers. You had to wait for a 'yes' to have opportunities to work. Now you can create a whole web series, and write and cast yourself and direct, and get your friends together and do some amazing stuff just on an iPhone. Do the usual, traditional channels, but at the same time create your own content, because it's so much more accessible now."

Adam Stovell reiterated this idea, "My wife and I, we don't discourage college,

but we've told them, go to college if there's something you really want to do." He said, "College is the tool to get you that, right? But if there's something you can do without it. It doesn't hurt to take a year or two off and just try and see if it makes sense to go that route." Currently, Adam's older son is pursuing a career in tap and has a decent following on social media. He has been able to attend tap festivals and hold tap classes.

Tests of Faith

For a less gutsy parent (like me), this can be challenging. The conflict between being practical and pioneering can be hard. We may feel like Tacie: "If I try and bend that far, I will break." Conversely, Maria was confident in believing that "the best thing to let lead you in choosing what you want to do is what you are passionate about. What do you feel led to do? You know, if you're a believer, what do you feel like God has put in your heart and what gifts has he given you? And what path makes sense for that?" These are easy words to say but sometimes difficult in practice. It was inspiring to be in the company of brave parents willing to forge help this path. It felt good to be challenged and also to know that the family tradition provided a support system in this changing world.

A Divided Society

It was encouraging to see how theater is bridging a gap for students, who find theater offers a chance to meet people from all walks of life and all ages. Lana had moved from a different state and enjoyed the fact that theater gave her a

chance to be around like-minded people. Tacey said, “When you're in the show, you get to have a whole family. You see them a lot, so you get to know them.” Charlotte enjoyed the fact that this has given her a chance to meet new people. The diversity of experiences the cast members share and the community they get to build together seems like an antidote to a society that appears to encourage division. Many of the students have diverse interests and seem to embrace the entrepreneurial mindset that is often reflected in the homeschool community. Evy enjoys baking and wants to raise golden retrievers in her future, while Charlotte makes jewelry and sells it at different markets. David enjoys football in his spare time and plays lots of different instruments, Luke is in a band, and Lana is part of a professional children’s choir. She would like to work with animals and continue to pursue theater when she is older. While theater is a shared passion, they all enjoy varied experiences in life. The community that theater has offered these young people has helped them to become more confident and will perhaps enable them to stand in a society that at times can feel divided.

“Fiddler on the Roof” showtimes are: Friday, March 6 and 13 at 7:30, Saturday, March 7 and 14 at 7:30 and three matinee performances on Saturday, March 14, and Sunday, March 8 and 15, at 2:30, at 1842 Lake Jodeco Road, Jonesboro, Georgia. For more details, visit their website, www.thefrontporchplayers.com





Friday, March 6 & 13 @ 7:30

Saturday, March 7 & 14 @ 7:30

Saturday, March 14 @ 2:30

Sunday, March 8 & 15 @ 2:30

www.thefrontporchplayers.com

SPORTS JOURNAL

Editorial by Jen Wilmoth

Building Confidence, Character, and Strength: The Heart Behind Wilmoth Martial Arts & Wellness

For Tim and Jennifer Wilmoth, martial arts has never been just an activity – it has been a life journey, a calling, and ultimately the foundation of their family.

In fact, martial arts is where their story began. Over two decades ago, Tim and Jen met through the martial arts community while teaching and training. What started as a shared passion grew into a shared mission: helping others discover confidence, discipline, and strength through martial arts training.

For many years, they owned and operated a highly successful martial arts studio, serving hundreds of students and families in their community. Life eventually led them into other seasons – raising children, homeschooling, and various career paths – but the desire to return to martial arts never fully left.

Now, after much prayer and thoughtful planning, they are preparing to launch Wilmoth Martial Arts & Wellness, a new studio focused on whole-person growth for students of all ages. They believe deeply that martial arts is about far more than punches and kicks. It is about developing the kind of confidence, resilience, and character that carries into every area of life.

The Benefits of Martial Arts – Especially for Homeschool Families

Martial arts offers a unique combination of physical, mental, and character development that can be incredibly valuable for both children and adults. For young people, training helps develop:

- Confidence and self-belief
- Focus and attention skills
- Discipline and perseverance
- Respect for others and self-control
- Goal setting and achievement
- Coordination, strength, and fitness
- Bully awareness and self-defense skills

For homeschool families, martial arts can be an especially powerful complement to home education. Students gain structured instruction, positive peer interaction, mentorship from instructors, fitness, and opportunities to practice leadership and teamwork, all within an encouraging environment.

But the benefits are not limited to children.

Teens often discover increased confidence during critical developmental years. Adults gain stress relief, fitness, and renewed energy. Families can even train together, creating shared experiences and memories. Martial arts truly is one of the few activities that can grow with a person for a lifetime.

Flexible Training Options for Homeschool Families

As longtime homeschool parents themselves, Tim and Jen understand that flexibility is important for families who educate at home. In addition to traditional evening classes, Wilmoth Martial Arts & Wellness plans to offer dedicated homeschool martial arts classes in the early afternoon.

These daytime classes will provide homeschool students with structured physical activity, social interaction, leadership development, and skill-building opportunities during the school day, while still allowing families the option to attend evening classes if that works better for their schedule.

Their goal is to make high-quality martial arts training accessible and supportive for homeschooling families, recognizing that each family's rhythm and needs are unique. As parents of homeschoolers themselves for over 23 years (and counting!), the Wilmoths are especially passionate about supporting families on this journey.

Meet the Instructors

Instructor Spotlight: Mr. Tim

Mr. Tim began his martial arts journey when he was just 10 years old, and over the past 42 years he has developed not only deep technical skill, but a true passion for helping others grow through martial arts. He holds the rank of 3rd Degree Black Belt and has earned black belts in Shotokan, Shito-ryu, Tang Soo Do, and Okinawan Kobudo, along with additional training in MMA.

With more than 37 years of teaching experience (off and on throughout life seasons), Mr. Tim has worked with students of all ages and skill levels. Throughout the years, he has helped train multiple students who went on to become top-level competitors in their divisions – but what matters most to

him has never been trophies. His greatest joy comes from seeing students grow in confidence, focus, and belief in themselves.

Mr. Tim is also certified in cardio/aerobic kickboxing, and he loves incorporating fitness, conditioning, and practical movement into training in a way that builds strength and capability for real life.

Many people naturally call him “Mr. Tim,” and that reflects who he is – approachable, encouraging, and genuinely invested in the people he teaches.

Outside of martial arts, Mr. Tim enjoys spending quality time with family, cooking, pickleball, rock climbing, and staying active. He and Jen have built a life centered around family, faith, and serving their community, including coaching Pike County 4-H Archery and working with youth in their church.

For Mr. Tim, martial arts is about far more than techniques – it's about helping people become stronger, more confident, and more capable in every area of life. He is honored to share that journey with each student **who walks through our doors.**



Instructor Spotlight: Mrs. Jen

Mrs. Jen has been involved in martial arts for over 27 years and holds the rank of 3rd Degree Black Belt with black belts in Shotokan, Shito-ryu, and Okinawan Kobudo. She has also spent more than 23 years teaching martial arts off and on, working alongside Mr. Tim and helping students develop confidence, strength, and resilience.

Mrs. Jen is also certified in cardio/aerobic kickboxing, and she especially loves the way fitness training can support confidence, energy, and overall well-being – not just in the studio, but in everyday life.

In addition to martial arts, Mrs. Jen brings a strong passion for holistic health and wellness into the studio. She is a Certified Integrative Health Practitioner (Level 2) and a Certified High Performance Health Coach, with a deep interest in helping individuals build healthy habits, energy, and balance. This wellness perspective is part of what makes Wilmoth Martial Arts & Wellness unique – supporting not just physical strength, but whole-person growth.

Mrs. Jen is also a lifelong learner and a nature fanatic. Whether hiking, camping, homesteading, exploring outdoors with family, or leading community nature camps, she finds joy in helping people connect with the natural world around them and with their own potential.

Her faith and family is at the center of everything for her and Mr. Tim. Together they have eight children, five of whom are now adults, three married, and they are proud grandparents to ten grandchildren. She is also active in their church community, teaching youth Sunday School, and coaching Pike County 4-H Archery.



Mrs. Jen believes deeply that when people are encouraged, supported, and given the right tools, they can grow stronger than they ever imagined – physically, mentally, and emotionally. She feels honored to be part of the journey for each student and family involved in the studio.

A Unique Approach: Martial Arts + Wellness

One aspect that makes Wilmoth Martial Arts & Wellness unique is the integration of wellness principles alongside traditional martial arts training. Their goal is not only to develop skilled martial artists, but to help students build:

- Healthy habits
- Confidence and resilience
- Emotional regulation
- Physical strength and energy
- Leadership skills
- A growth mindset

They view martial arts as a powerful tool for lifelong development – not just a sport.

Looking Ahead: A New Studio Launch

Tim and Jen are currently in the process of finalizing details as they prepare for the grand opening of their new studio.

They are excited to bring high-quality martial arts instruction, leadership training, and wellness-focused programs to families in the community.

Their heart is simple:

To create a positive, encouraging environment where students of all ages can grow stronger — inside and out.

Stay Connected

Families interested in learning more about upcoming classes and programs can follow Wilmoth Martial Arts & Wellness online for updates:

Facebook: [Wilmoth Martial Arts & Wellness\(facebook.com/wilmothmartialartsandwellness\)](https://www.facebook.com/wilmothmartialartsandwellness)

Instagram: [@WilmothMartialArts](https://www.instagram.com/WilmothMartialArts)

Email: info@wilmothmartialarts.com



WHAT IS PANCAKE DAY?

By Lydia Harrison, homeschool middle school student

Pancake Day, or Shrove Tuesday, is a British holiday dedicated to - you guessed it - Pancakes! Originating as a Christian tradition in 600 A.D., Pancake Day was for using up rich foods such as eggs, sugar, and milk before the Lenten fast so as not to spoil. Over the years, however, Pancake Day evolved into a one-day holiday shared by many cultures around the world.

If you notice, Pancake Day this year, did not fall on the same day or month as last year. The reason for this has to do with Easter Sunday! Easter Sunday always falls on the first Sunday following the first full moon on or after March 21. This year, that will be April 5. Lent is the 40-day fast period before Easter, beginning on Ash Wednesday. As I said before, Shrove Tuesday was the day to use up all the rich foods in preparation for Lent. In the UK, Shrove Tuesday is also known as Pancake Day. Other countries call this day Fat Tuesday or Mardi Gras!

In the UK, Pancake Day is part of a high church tradition. Although our family is British, we have never been part of the high church, but who doesn't love a pancake? We celebrate it as part of our British cultural heritage. Pancake Day for us, is spending all day in the kitchen (with the boys preparing the house for



guests), sharing food with friends and family, spreading the table full of tasty fillings, and coming up with a new filling each year! This year it's mince pie filling and ice cream. Yum!

You're probably wondering how we fill these pancakes. Just to be clear, Pancake Day uses British pancakes.

Some have observed that these pancakes bear a strong resemblance to crepes, a.k.a. French pancakes. These are thin, flat, tasteless pancakes, meant for filling. Some people enjoy these pancakes with savory toppings (ham and cheese is an example). Our family tops ours with sweet fillings, with Boston cream pie filling being our favorite! A traditional topping we include in our spread every year is lemon and sugar. However, our favorite tradition is sharing this holiday with loved ones!

If you wish to celebrate this delicious holiday with your family, next year's Pancake Day falls on February 9! (Take a wild guess what day Easter falls on). Here is a delicious British pancake recipe to get you started:

- 3/4 cup of all-purpose flour
- 1 pinch of salt
- 1 cup of whole milk
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 tablespoon of butter (to coat the pan)

Whisk together all these ingredients (except the butter) and allow to rest for at least 30 minutes. Scoop some batter onto a heated pan that has melted butter in it. Spread the batter around until a thin layer covers the pan. Once bubbles appear on the pancake, flip it like you would a regular pancake. Cook the other side until golden brown. Allow to cool and serve with any fillings you like. Enjoy!

Small Business Spotlight:

Safe Suds Co.

An Interview
with Addy
Horton

My name is Addie Horton and I am 16 years old! I sell low toxic cleaning products and am continuing to experiment with different cleaners to expand my brand!



How long have you been making your own homemade cleaning supplies?

I started making my own laundry detergent back in June of 2025! I am continuing to try, and experiment with different products!

When did you decide to make your products into a business and why?

I started thinking about selling products back in November and then in January I started to bring that thought to life! I wanted other people to be able to find natural cleaning products that they know they can rely on! It was also an easy way for me to make some income as I am at home more often than not!

What inspired you to create your brand?

The world is full of toxins that are not good for us and these chemicals disrupt many things in our body. I want to be able to use better products that I know are safe yet efficient.



Why did you choose to make these products non-toxic?

I wanted simple ingredients that cut out harmful side effects as mentioned earlier! I've struggled with fatigue and some hormonal imbalances, I also struggled with POTS syndrome for years and I noticed that once I started eating more natural foods, along with reading and changing the ingredients that I was putting on and around my body, everything started to change! When you begin to understand that the products you clean with, the things you eat, and the clothes that you wear are a direct tie to your health, you can't help but begin to take action to be the healthiest version of yourself, and that's just what I've started to do! I knew that if I was the one who was making the cleaning products that I was in direct charge of what was going into everything. Therefore I am being in direct charge of my health. The benefits are really amazing and my hope is that everyone can begin to make small changes for their health one cleaning product at a time!



What would you say is the overall mission of your brand? Do you hope to bring more attention to the necessity of clean products?

I just really hope that everyone can begin to understand and take charge of the cleaning products that they use and see that the way that most people feel is not the normal and that we have so much more potential!



**Interview by Shelby
Gwinn, 2026**

**@safesudsco on
Facebook**

An Interview with

Missy Lemacks

Hi, I'm Missy. I'm a mother of five, and I focus on keeping everything alive from children to goats, pigs, cats, dogs, rabbits, hamsters, etc. If it breathes, we specialize in keeping it alive.

When did you begin homeschooling?

I feel that schooling is beyond K5-12, so to me homeschooling starts at birth... But if you want some realistic numbers, this is my seventh year homeschooling. I feel like I am always beginning homeschooling over again as the youngest get old enough to join the classroom.

How did you begin homeschooling?

I can't remember the year I submitted my first letter of intent, but I do remember making the decision to homeschool when I was pregnant with our very first child. I was a sign language interpreter for

the school system convinced that my situation was perfect; when they became school-age, my kids would have the same schedule as me. But that life was never for me. When I was about six months pregnant with my oldest, I became aware that God was telling me to quit my job and stay home to take care of our children. I finished out the school year, gave my resignation, and had our first child a month later. I have never looked back! The biggest obstacle to this life was scaling down to a single income, which, once we did it, seemed suddenly manageable. My reason to start homeschooling is because I knew life could be no other way for our family (now with five children). I am still blown away that I get to be home with my kids every single day to teach them. It is one of the fullest joys I have ever known in life.

HOMESCHOOL MOMS IN THE WILD

What type of homeschooler are you?

I enjoy an emphasis on outdoors and nature, but also learning basic life skills. We are a small homestead and our school day starts with my children waking up and going outdoors to feed our animals, rain or shine. This is teaching them stewardship. Once they're back inside, we work together to get breakfast on the table; this is teaching them the importance of every part supplying. It's in the name of education, but really it's just life together. Each person works together as a team to accomplish what we need for that day. Every day will look a little different. Some days we make sourdough, other days will do math or language arts. We may sew or read a book together. Sometimes, we might even have to bury a dead chicken, but that's another story. I'm not trying to prepare them for college, I'm prepping them for life. I'm prepping them for the homes and families they will lead when they one day start their own.

What is your favorite thing about homeschooling?

Getting to be with my children is by far my favorite thing about homeschooling. My second favorite thing is just getting to be outside at any time of the day and getting to set our own schedule depending on what we want to do for that day. If the weather is really nice, the books can wait.

What are/were your homeschool wins?

My homeschool wins look different day to day, from child to child. Some days I'm just glad we made it through the day without tears (myself or the children); other days it's wondering, "will they ever learn this!?" and getting to see things finally click weeks or months later. But if I could answer it more fully, the biggest win to me is when my kids are frustrated (and frustrating), at the end of it all, by working through it, we have grown closer.

HOMESCHOOL MOMS IN THE WILD

What would you do differently?

I'm always learning every day, but if I could change one thing it would have been the lack of patience I started off with. Patience with myself and the children. I wish I would've made it more about connection rather than completion. I do hope my children have a more patient version of me today, but I am not the same person I was when I started this homeschooling journey. Homeschooling has been just as much about me transforming as a mother as it has been for my children to transform as learners. I am thankful for the life lessons it has taught me along the way. I wish I could've started off with that same knowledge, but hindsight is always 20/20. But here I am halfway through my journey with my older children and not yet begun with my younger children. Every day is a new opportunity for grace. Being open with my children has taught them a greater lesson than trying to hide or pretend that I had it all figured out.

Who inspires you to continue homeschooling?

My family! There are many days I get buried: there are too many dishes, bread needs to get made, laundry is piling up, and

meanwhile the toddler has filled the toilet with toys. And I have only homeschooled three out of five kids. Part of me wants to act like a martyr and think how tough I have it in a day, but really, when I stop and look at it, I realize what an honor it is to be in this moment of life. It's my family that I wake up for and do it all over, again and again, every single day. The monotony, the stress, but also the reward that I get to be with them. To serve my family is the deepest passion of my heart and to get to be with them for this short moment in their lives called childhood. What an honor!



Interview by Shelby Gwinn.
Photo courtesy of Missy Lemacks

Looking for a homeschool prom?

Keep a lookout for an article
in next month's issue!



Here is a photo of our co-
editor's sophomore prom!

SPIVY HALL CHILDREN'S CHOIR OPEN HOUSE!



 **SPIVY HALL
CHILDREN'S CHOIR**
Clayton State University
Where Opportunity Meets Excellence



Open House
March 23 - 7:15 PM

Auditions
April 25

Auditions are open to students
who will be ages 10-15 by 9/1/26.

 **SPIVY HALL
CHILDREN'S CHOIR**
Clayton State University
**MUSIC
MAKERS**

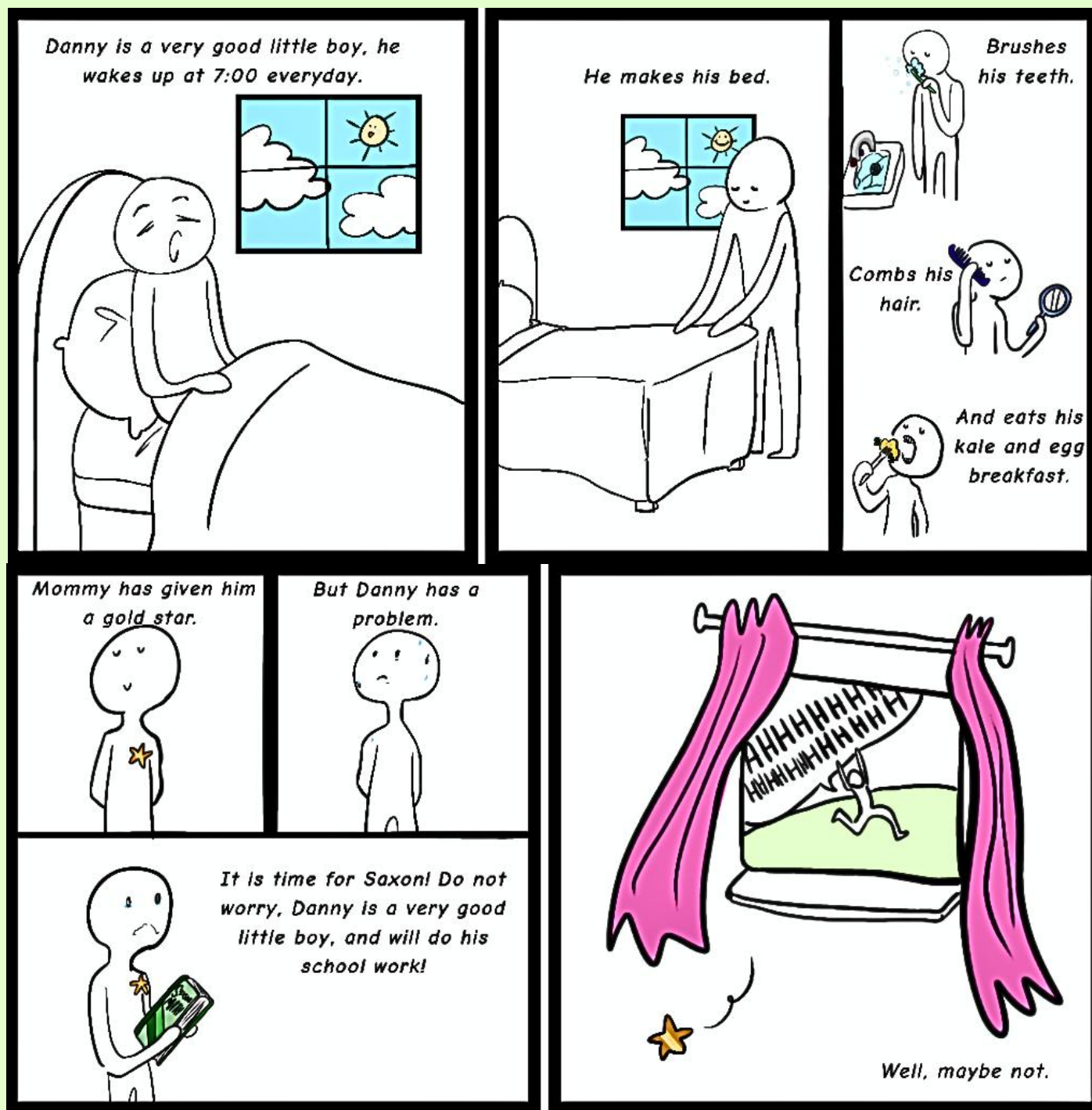


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