



Mom isn't just a mom anymore, now she's a teacher too

By CAROLYN PLOTTS

Mother, homemaker, chauffer, volunteer — are all words that could describe stay-at-home mom, Robin Somers. But, one more needs to be added — teacher.

Mrs. Somers home schools her three children, Laura, 14, Steven, 12, and David, 10.

"Selfishly," she said, "I just love being with my family. I am very appreciative of them."

Her family moved to Norton because they had heard it was a good place to raise children. Mrs. Somers' husband, Steven, had been the pastor of a church in Hutchinson. When he decided to take a break from full-time ministry, he applied for a position as a correctional officer at Norton Correctional Facility.

One reason the Somers decided to home school was because of his shift at the prison. It allows him to be home during the day. She said she may be the main teacher, but he is the "trouble-shooter".

"We take a lot of field trips," she said.

The advantage of home schooling, said Mrs. Somers, is to be able to deeply cultivate her children's interests. One of their past areas of study was the Greek culture. Not only had the children constructed a building (with a removable roof to allow a view of the inside) to illustrate Greek architecture, but Laura and Steven had memorized John 1:1 — in Greek.

During a recent class the children studied the Civil War. Their text was a book by Joy Hakim titled, "War, Terrible War". Their mother talked about two well-known women of that time, Harriet Beecher Stowe and Harriet Tubman. She challenged the children to discuss the things the two had in common, besides their name. Throughout the lesson Mrs. Somers made biblical references, kept the lesson interesting and taught morality along with the facts.

She said, "Jesus is the center of our lives. In our studies we speak principally all the time."

She said the mornings are dedicated to academic studies. "My style of teaching is delight directed and spirit led." She said when the children were younger they had more curriculum work, like reading, writing and math. Now, that

they have the basics, they are allowed to pursue their own interests.

Stephen wants to be a pilot or a stock broker, maybe both. His studies reflect his interests. He made an appointment with an investment consultant and decided to put his savings into mutual funds.

David has an interest and talent in art.

Laura is considering a career in daycare and is apprenticing with Rosalie McMullen at her daycare center.

Mrs. Somers believes in apprenticing and is looking for opportunities for the boys as they get older.

All three children are carriers for *The Norton Telegram*. Their parents have a formula for their children's earnings. One third is to be saved for long term plans like college, marriage or career. One third is for the short term like a bicycle or an immediate need. The final third is for fun and giving.

Mrs. Somers said, "Part of my job is to teach the process of learning. I love to do research. Thank God for the Norton Public Library. We use it a lot."

The only disadvantage of home schooling, she said, is the financial one. She estimated it costs her family over \$1,000 a year for books and curriculum. But she feels it is a good investment, "I feel my children are fulfilled and know who they are."

Married for 15 1/2 years, Mr. and Mrs. Somers are also foster parents. State law requires that those children be educated in the public school system.

She said, "I've grown up a lot since home schooling. So many people have helped me, now, it's my turn to help others.

"It's not that our children are perfect — but, we try to address any problems as they arise and pray for wisdom.

A woman of many interests, she enjoys bird watching, studying nutrition and herbs and has developed her own website: www.acitysetuponahill.com. and wants to try writing.

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