

Parents fighting back, home-schooling kids

TACOMA, Wash. — Home-schooling, once considered the province of conservative Christians or back-to-nature hippies, is gaining in popularity, and concern over school safety is a prime reason.

Home-schooling drew nearly 20,000 Washington students during the 1998-99 school year, according to state figures. And that number probably is conservative, advocates say, because parents who home-school children under 8 years of age need not register the child with the local school district.

"Once, if you home-schooled, you didn't know anybody else who did," said Janice Hedin, a Maple Valley parent who works with the Washington Homeschool Organization and helps teach classes for home-school parents.

"Now, everyone knows someone who's home-schooling."

More and more parents are turning to home-schooling because they are "unhappy with gangs, drugs and peer pressure," Hedin said.

Home-schooling became a legal option for Washington parents in 1985, following passage of a state law authorizing home-based instruction.

Under state law, parents who home-school must have 45 quarter units of college credit, attend an official parent-qualifying course or work with a certified teacher.

The law also requires home-school parents to keep records, have their children tested and cover reading, writing, math, science and other required subjects.

— The Associated Press

Shooting stars shine over city

The Perseid Meteor Shower can be seen this week by the naked eye

By Sara Jarrett
Oregon Daily Emerald

Wish upon a star — or two, or three.

Every year the Perseid Meteor Shower is seen from this planet as the Earth passes through debris left over from a comet that gets swept up in our atmosphere. The friction caused by tiny fragments of rock and metal hurtling through the sky at speeds of up to 35 miles per second causes the debris to burn up. We identify the phenomenon as shooting stars.

This year the Perseid Meteor Shower "is predicted to peak during the daytime of Thursday, August 12, and Friday, August 13," said Rick Kang, who is conducting a special Perseid Meteor Shower presentation at

Lane Education Service District Planetarium on Wednesday at 8 p.m., on a voice-messaging system.

The best night-time viewing of the shower, according to Kang, will occur Thursday and Friday nights. Pre-dawn shows can also be seen Wednesday through Friday, he added.

"To predict how spectacular it will be is very difficult," Professor Robert Zimmerman of the University physics department said. "Sometimes it's a rainfall of fireballs, but usually it's one streak every minute."

"You can see it anywhere in the sky with no special equipment," Kang said. "It's a naked eye event."

The Lane Education Service District Planetarium is located at 2300 Leo Harris Parkway behind Autzen Stadium. The show will highlight what mete-

ors are, where they come from and why the Perseid Shower is the year's most spectacular, as well as lead a general tour of summer constellations and visible planets.

Admission to the presentation is \$3.50 for adults, \$3 for seniors and students, \$2.50 for children younger than 12 and free to friends of the planetarium.

"They know what they're doing there," Zimmerman said, "but I usually go out toward Goshen Road or around Spencer's Butte."

"The best place to see the shower is away from all the city lights."

This year, the Perseid Meteor Shower falls on a new moon.

"This means there will be no moonlight," Zimmerman said.

He predicts the sky will be cloudy, but if it's not, the show should be pretty bright.

OPEU

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ing recent bienniums has resulted in the creation of the Public Employees Benefit Board. This new umbrella has built additional options for employees while some old ones are going away, Bransford explained.

There would be different health-insurance packages to pick from including what is called the "opting out plan." In that plan, all state employees would have the choice of receiving what would be the state's contribution to their health care in cash.

"There is also the option of receiving full coverage for dependents and spouses in an HMO with no out-of-pocket expenses," Bransford said.

The chancellor has also proposed a \$38-salary increase across the board in the current contract negotiations. It would be a one-time adjustment to salary rates, in lieu of the former flex-benefit, effective May

1, 2001. The OPEU and the Oregon University System are currently in contract negotiations.

"The three broad areas still being discussed are the term of contract, salary and health-care contributions," Bransford said.

OPEU members arrived Sunday in Salem to show their support for OPEU negotiators. Representatives for the union were unavailable for comment. Bargaining is scheduled through today.

The union declared impasse on August 4. Both sides have until August 11 to come up with their final offers, after which there will be a 30-day cooling-off period if an agreement is not reached. September 11 marks the end of the cooling-off period and when the OUS is allowed to unilaterally implement its last offer.

If that happens, the 3,600 University classified workers — out of a total of 11,000 OUS employees including faculty — can strike.

Biology

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fessor Christopher Doe.

Postlethwait said those are some examples of research that involves both developmental bi-

ology and evolution. He explained that Eisen's research is related to humans. Genes that were found in the central nervous system of the zebra fish are similar to those that are found in human nervous system.

With the help of the grant, Postlethwait expects more students will be able to work in research that involves multiple dis-

ciplines.

Students researchers receive credits during the academic year and get paid during summers. Since funding is limited during summer, a selection committee will choose students. Interested students should complete the foundation sequence and consult a professor before engaging in research.

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