



STC 2007 BIO

SCC Team
February 7-10, 2007

SHARI RIES

My name is Shari Ries from Georgetown, Ontario, Canada (just west of Toronto). I've always lived in Southern Ontario, born 2 hours west of here in London, moved 1 hour closer to go to University of Waterloo, back home to have kids, then here 8 years ago for my husband's job.

I have been married to my husband Steve for 16 years (we've known each other since high school, been together since freshman week in Uni), and we have 2 sons, Evan (14), and Alex (almost 13), who have been homeschooled since birth. I used to work as a graphic artist when the kids were little, until I realized that my nanny was taking home more money after taxes than I was! I've been home since Alex was 2 and Evan 3, which worked well for us, as I've never been a "baby" person.

We had considered homeschooling since Evan was a baby, but really decided that school was not an option when Evan turned four and was reading easy novels like the Boxcar Children. Having attended a gifted program myself, I knew that that environment was not something I wanted for my children. We decided to try homeschooling for the Junior Kindergarten year, and have never stopped.

After researching homeschooling on-line, I found and ordered Five in a Row. I picked up the books at a spring convention, along with a Sonlight catalog which I devoured...Then I had to tell my husband, that even though we'd just spent \$500 on books, I had changed my mind and now I wanted Sonlight, even though no one in the homeschool group I had joined had ever heard of it...they all used Abeka or Bob Jones. Luckily, I have a great husband, we ordered SL1, and never looked back. This is what led me to being a rep for Sonlight at conventions, so people could actually see the material, and learn about Sonlight.

Over the years, my oldest has studied from SL1 up to SL530, skipping SL200 (I'm planning to incorporate the history into the last 2 years of high school, they've already read most of the literature), and SL400. Alex is currently doing SL100 this year. For science, we're up to Apologia Physics, and we're using Thinkwell Calculus this year.

The boys are currently involved in Air Cadets (similar to Civil Air Patrol), through which they have their weekly parade, and also participate in archery, drill team, marching band, and range team. They also take fencing lessons, and are hoping to compete in modern pentathlon. I almost forgot basketball. We're still never home! This summer, one of Evan's choices for Air Cadet Camp is Survival Training Camp in Whitehorse, Yukon Territory (ack!!!). Alex's preferred choice is (a much less scary for mom) Basic Training/Music Camp an hour from home.

Steve is a computer systems engineer providing support to printing companies and recently got a promotion with Kodak, so that his territory changed from east of the Mississippi to North America. The good thing about the promotion is that he used to be scheduled to spend two weeks at a company doing installation and training, now he just does troubleshooting, so although he still travels every week, it is usually only for a few days instead of Monday morning to Friday evening. However, now we never know where he will be that day, and he flies everywhere, so we cannot accompany him anymore.

The best thing about him traveling so much is all the air miles/hotel points he builds up. The two of us took a vacation two years ago to Hawaii and Australia for free. The kids stayed with their grandparents, and we promised them that we would take them on a cruise soon. So instead of being at the STC this year, we are going to be on the Carnival Spirit from San Diego to Acapulco, Zihuatanejo/Ixtapa, and Manzanillo, Mexico. Next we are flying to Kona on the Big Island in Hawaii, and then to Honolulu. (We do have to pay for the cruise, but the air/hotel/car rentals are all covered by points!)

My family is very thankful for the blessing that Sonlight has been for our homeschooling endeavour, and I'm looking forward to sharing about Sonlight with more homeschoolers at my conventions this spring.

