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*Photo: Deatsville home schooled student Rachel Camp participated in an Academy Days co-op Apologia general science class in which she learned about atoms and density.*

*December 10, 2009* - With homeschooling on the rise in both Elmore and Autauga counties, there are new programs popping up that are designed to enhance the experience and education of home schooled students like the Millbrook-based Academy Days co-op.

Academy Days, which meets at Grace Community Church in Millbrook, is a supplemental program to home education, not a school in and of itself nor a drop-off program.

According to Academy Days co-founder and co-leader Carren Joye, "It's a group of homeschooling families that meet to share their skills and talents with their kids."

Joye's children have all been involved with the homeschool co-op that she helped to start in 2006.

"My children are in grades 4, 8, and 11. My oldest daughter graduated last year and is a freshman at the University of Montevallo," Joye said. "All four have attended the co-op, and the younger three children are attending now."

Academy Days, which meets once a week for 14 weeks in the fall and 14 weeks in the spring each year, currently has 30 to 35 families involved, and it's the parents that are the teachers.

"The parents teach. They either have a degree in a field or have a passion to teach it," said Joye.

Joye said that if a parent loves to act, they may teach a drama course, while someone who is

from France may teach a French class, or a scientist might teach a science course. She said that the homeschool community is incredibly talented and that talent can be harnessed through the co-op program.

"They're usually classes that are hard to teach at home," Joye said.

Some of the classes charge a small fee for supplies, but none of the parent-teachers get paid for their work with the students.

"The co-op was designed for high-schoolers. We had to have classes for younger kids, too, because parents have to stay and teach," Joye said.

Joye, who is also an administrator for Outlook Academy, said that parents whose children are in the co-op don't necessarily have to teach. They do, however, have to remain on-site while the children are being instructed.

The Academy Days co-founder also encourages those who are interested in the program to go to the group's Web site and read, "13 Reasons You Should Not Join Our Co-op," because Academy Days is not for everyone.

She said that those who have decided to pull their children out of public school should get used to home schooling before they join a co-op.

"This is not a substitute for home schooling -- it's just an additional tool," she said.

Joye encourages people to read everything they can about the program on the Academy Days Web site and then contact her if they wish to join or have questions.

Read the entire article at:

<http://www.prattvilleprogress.com/article/20091209/PROGRESS01/912090332/1041/progress01>