

## **Field Trip Note**

*by D. Krueger*

As you might know, the practice of Home-Schooling is increasing at a rapid rate in this country. The U.S. department of education estimates that there are over 4 million children in the US being educated at home, by their parents. Rose Rock Home school group was formed in 1996, so that home-schooling families can offer moral support, share tips and advice, hold-co-op classes and field trips.

Our needs and requirements are different than those of public (and private) schools in the following ways:

1. **Grade Levels.** Homeschoolers travel in family groups, meaning the "students" are often of varying grade levels and abilities. They each come with their own personal teacher, who can translate to their grade level if necessary. Please do not feel that you have to give a tour that is appropriate for every age group we represent! As long as the material is suitable for the parents, the knowledge can be passed on effectively!
2. **Parking-** we require more parking than a simple school bus! When you see the trail of minivans, you'll know we have arrived. We generally meet in the parking lot of the place we're touring- do a head count- remind the children of the rules- and then enter as a group. If there are parking restrictions or advice you can give us, or special rules we need to be aware of, please let me know so I can make arrangements.
3. **Small children-** we usually have a few! I have found that our group is generally well-behaved, infants are carried by their mothers (or in a stroller if there's access)and promptly removed or fed if they cry. We have a few 2-5 year olds who travel with our pack and one of the mothers generally removes them all to the outdoors or an appropriate area if their presence becomes distracting or inappropriate. We have found that keeping a tight rein on children of this age prevents inappropriate behavior and they generally benefit from the field trip as well.
4. **Time.** We have no time restraints. School field trips generally have an ending time- a time when they all pack up and leave- we could stay all day! if this is a problem, please let us know. We tend to linger when we have had a good trip, or when there are interesting things to look at.
5. **Prep Work.** We pre-study whatever topics we feel would maximize our educational experience, therefore we ask a lot of questions and are generally very interested in understanding the answers. If you have materials to recommend or that we can duplicate for our members- we would sincerely appreciate having that knowledge before we arrive. If you have a website, also, that often proves helpful!
6. **Thank You Cards.** Many of our children are required to send thank-you cards to tour guides, so if you can possibly have a few business cards on hand- with a mailing address, it would be greatly appreciated.
7. **Flash photography...**please let us know before we arrive if it is acceptable to take photographs during our visit.