



When HOW's President first asked me to write an article introducing myself to HOW News readers, I wasn't sure where to begin. I guess the best place to start would be when God moved in my parent's hearts to homeschool me. During the seven years I attended Christian schools I had some of the best teachers who ever graced the halls of a school, but I still had a negative learning experience. Our reasons for leaving the traditional education system was that the teacher I was going to have in my eighth grade thought I was ignorant and my older sister, Sarah, was already being homeschooled and it made me want to go home also. Several years before we discovered that I had dyslexia and this teacher said there was no such thing. Being a very shy girl, I found teasing from other children hard to handle and with a name like Puetz (pronounced Pitts), I was the brunt of many jokes. The only subject I really excelled in was recess! When my parents, Mike and Phyllis, began

homeschooling me, a wonderful transformation took place in my heart. For the first time in my life I felt O.K. with who I was and didn't have to compare myself with my peers. It was easier to cope with my dyslexia at home because I was in an emotionally safe environment where the curriculum could be adjusted to meet my needs. Perhaps the best blessing from homeschooling has been a close bond that developed in our family. Soon my younger sister, Marissa, also joined us at home and we all learned that school could be fun. I would like to say a heartfelt thank you to my mom for taking the time and effort to teach my sisters and myself and to my dad for being such a great support to home education.

Homeschooling proved to be a great blessing after I contracted a chronic illness. When I was fifteen I had my tonsils removed and for some reason I never recovered from the surgery. Although my throat healed, I felt such an overwhelming fatigue

creep over me and hold on with the tenacity of a bulldog that I was unable to do 'normal' activities. During the next few years my health continued to decline. Along with the intense fatigue I began suffering from severe constipation, unbearable muscle pain, and a constant headache and sore throat. Nothing the doctors suggested helped and most of them just thought I was a hypochondriac. Home-schooling became a life saver. There is no way I could have studied in a traditional school setting with my illness. Some days I could only focus on my subjects for a few hours and simple concepts that I had always breezed through became difficult. Eventually I was diagnosed with Fibromyalgia, severe allergies (just about every food and smell there is), and a redundant colon which caused the constipation. In 2000 I graduated from high school. I had worked so hard to get there and despite the fact that my illness caused my high school experience to be five years instead of the traditional four, I was so happy that I finished school.

Although my health improved a little, I knew college was out of the question, but I was able to complete a correspondence course and received a degree as a computer graphic designer. My health still dictated only a few hours of study a day. After I earned my career degree I began creating unique designs using Biblical passages and Christian principles. Probably the design I'm most proud of is one the Lord brought to my mind and I just knew I had to create a shirt sharing it. It says, "Americans Born to be Free" on the front and "If Only They Were Free to be Born" on the back. I was

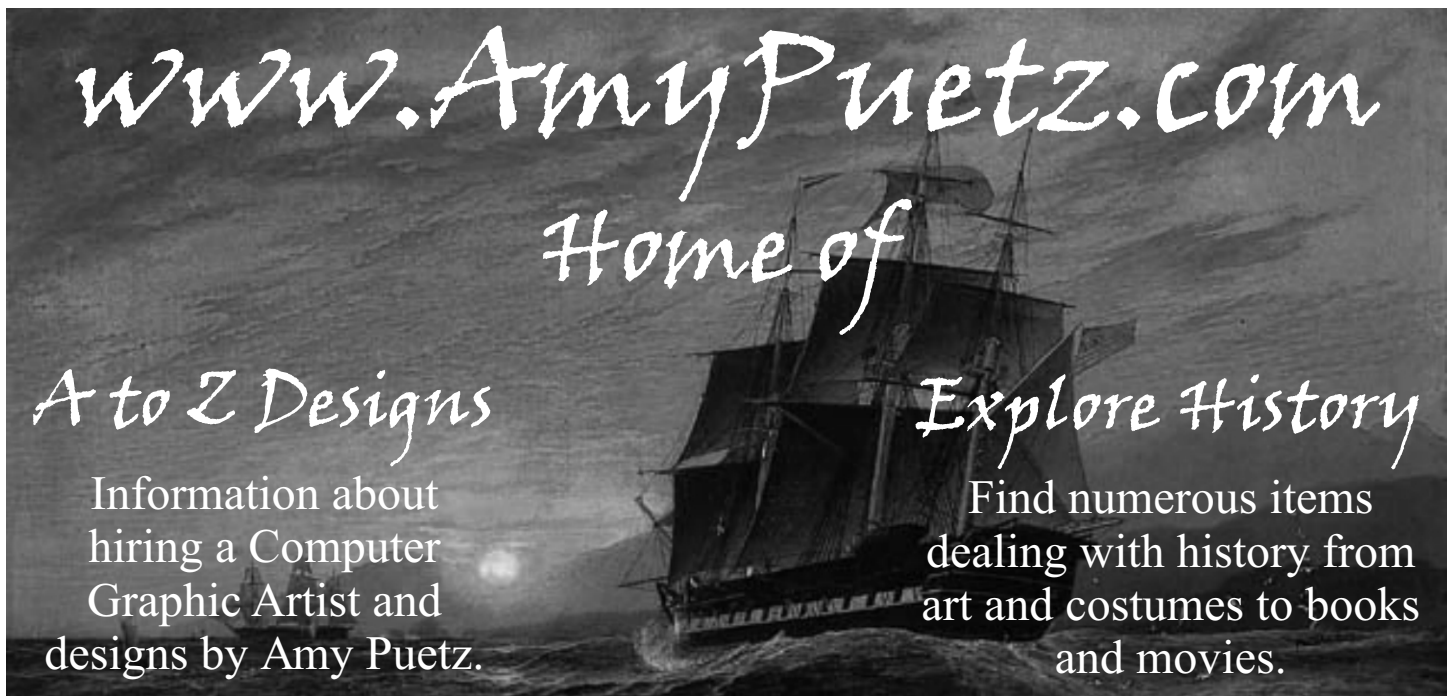
pleasantly surprised when a national pro-life company requested permission to use this slogan. Although I had lots of ideas I found that selling them was rather difficult and eventually started my own company A to Z Designs ([www.AmyPuetz.com](http://www.AmyPuetz.com)). Along with selling my own creations on cards and t-shirts I also work for people designing newsletters, posters, fliers, logo, etc. Several years ago Debby Becker, HOW president, contacted me about creating the layout for the HOW Newsletter. The Lord is always faithful about bringing things to us when we need them. Despite my efforts, my company still had not provided for my financial needs and my health was still in a feeble condition. The call from HOW was an answer to prayer because it gave me the opportunity to work with a great group of Christians and it also provided a modest, steady income. It is an honor to head up the

newsletter and use my skills to encourage Wyoming homeschoolers.

The Lord has also moved me to write, which is something I would never have imagined myself doing. Because of my love for history and historical costumes I created a costume book, *Costumes with Character*. History has always been one of my greatest passions and in 2004 God opened the door for me to become a columnist in Homeschool Enrichment Magazine [www.homeschoolenrichment.com](http://www.homeschoolenrichment.com). I have also created my own e-newsletter called *Heroines of the Past*:

[www.AmyPuetz.com/hotp.html](http://www.AmyPuetz.com/hotp.html), a bi-monthly publication for young ladies that shares interesting stories about Christian women who impacted history. Soon I plan to release my first e-book. My website also has numerous products dealing with history from art and costumes to books and movies.

My health continues to be a daily struggle and sometimes I don't handle the monotony of a chronic illness very well, but God is faithful and has allowed me to work with wonderful people like the HOW board and has given me peace. Living with a debilitating illness for over ten years has made me very dependent on God. Thank you for allowing me to introduce myself to you. May God bless you as you continue to educate your children in the way of truth just as my parents did.



[www.AmyPuetz.com](http://www.AmyPuetz.com)  
Home of

*A to Z Designs*  
Information about hiring a Computer Graphic Artist and designs by Amy Puetz.

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