



Publication: Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette; Date: Feb 16, 2011; Section: Family; Page: 25

Mom

Continued from Page 1E thoughts with relatives who live far away, and helping to make memories for relatives, parents and children.

TAKE A NOTE

Blogging helps mothers mark milestones and vent about parenting and relationship problems. The result is like a virtual snapshot of their lives at a certain point in time.

And once bloggers master the technical details of building a website, they can upload digital photos, videos or text with a few keystrokes — taking significantly less time out of their busy schedules than, say, printing out and pasting photos in baby books.

"I created my blog, *Adventures in Abbyland* (adventuresnabbyland.blogspot.com), in May 2009," says military wife Robyn Huffman of Jacksonville. "My blog is where I share stories, updates and pictures of my daughter.

"It's also where I share humorous moments my husband and I experience as first-time parents learning as we go."

Fawn Rechkemmer of Little Rock began working on her first blog in June 2008. The Rechkemmer Family Blog (4rechs.wordpress.com) is a typical mom blog, according to Rechkemmer, where she posts photos and stories to keep family informed.

"My kids are 13 months apart, and it just seemed like they were growing up and things were happening so quickly that I was having a hard time keeping up," she says.

Rechkemmer is now hosting or writing for five separate blogs including her flagship site, *Instead of the Dishes* (insteadofthedishes.com).

JOINING THE CLUB

In Arkansas, as they have nationwide, many women who have taken up this form of journalizing have found a sense of community with other bloggers and readers



Arkansas Democrat-Gazette/BENJAMIN KRAJIN
Robyn Huffman of Jacksonville is shown here with 1-year-old daughter Abigail the inspiration for her blog, *Adventures in Abbyland* (adventuresnabbyland.blogspot.com).

who are usually invited to post online public comments after each blog entry.

"There are many bloggers that I have never met IRL (that's, in real life) that I consider friends. When things happen in my life, I find myself anxious to post them online for my readers," says Searcy resident Tisha Black, who writes at *Crazy Working Mom* (www.crazyworkingmom.com).

Huffman, who shares via *Adventures in Abbyland*, agrees. "I've made several fantastic friends from blogging. ... I love being able to meet so many other mommy bloggers to share experiences with, to ask for advice, to laugh with when our little ones do something really cute (and when the little ones are driving us crazy, it's nice to have someone to share the

craziness with)," she says.

EXPRESS ROUTE

Blogging also allows family and friends to receive real-time updates and not have to wait for a holiday visit to see how the kids have grown.

"I think moms have just fallen in love with the ability to express themselves and share with friends and family who live across the country," says Gwen Rockwood of Rogers, a newspaper columnist and co-founder of *nwamotherlode.com*, a blogging collective where you can read more than 20 blogs by other Northwest Arkansas mothers. "It's hard to share a baby book with your grandmother who lives across the country, but it's not hard to send her a link so that she can see what's new with you and your family."

Some moms simply find

blogging more interactive than scrapbooks or baby books. Bloggers can post online and get immediate feedback from their followers, family and friends.

"With scrapbooks, the only people who see it are the ones who come to your house and have the desire to sit and look at 50 pictures of your kids," Rechkemmer says.

Blurb.com, blog2print.com and other sites will, for a fee, convert blogs into book form for those who want a paper record of their blog. Some companies offer PDF-formatted books that can be downloaded and printed at home. Blurb.com can produce bookstore-quality volumes with glossy pages and color photos.

DOUBLE DUTY

Some mothers do traditional baby books or scrapbooks and blogs, and have found they can use their blogs as memory-joggers when they finally get around to recording important events in the scrapbooks.

"I did an album of my son's first year by going back after he was a year old and copying and pasting entries from my blog," says Sarah Hood of Fayetteville, blogger for *Musings of Mother Hood* (sarahmcow.com). "I don't know that I would have had that detail and those stories if I hadn't captured it on my blog."

Crazy Working Mom blogger Black recently realized that she hadn't added much to the baby book of her third child.

"I didn't want her to feel like she was loved less because her older sister, our firstborn, has a book full of pictures, dates and special occasions."

Black's husband suggested that she go back to her blog to fill in the details. "He told me to just get online and look back at my blog and use that as a guideline," she says.

For moms like Linda Richards of Bella Vista, blogger for *The Boys & Me* (lindaandtheboys.blogspot.com), blogging is an extension of scrapbooking and other memory-enhancing hobbies.

"I use my blog to supplement my scrapbooking hobby," she says. "I will refer back to



Arkansas Democrat-Gazette/WILLIAM MOORE
Sarah Hood of Fayetteville writes about family life on her blog, *Musings of Mother Hood* (sarahmcow.com).



Arkansas Democrat-Gazette/RYAN MCGEENEY
Shannon Magsam of Fayetteville is co-founder of *nwamotherlode.com*, a website that links to a number of blogs and other Internet sites about motherhood, child-rearing and related topics.

posts on the blog and copy it straight into my scrapbook."

Since blogs are usually written about day-to-day matters soon after they occur, they often capture events and memories as they happen.

"You think I'm never going to forget this moment" when your child crawls for the first time or whatever," Rockwood says. "If you blog about it, at least you've got it typed in — either the way your child looked or the way you felt."

"Those really are priceless."

Hood and Shannon Magsam of Fayetteville, who is co-founder with Rockwood of *nwamotherlode.com*, both say they find themselves going back and reading previous blog entries.

Hood says she finds herself reminiscing about her son's

baby years through her blog. "I will often go back to a year ago and read what we were doing," Hood says. "It's kind of a time capsule for us. It's always there, and you don't have to dig out a book or a photo album."

Magsam says she often can't remember the details of an event unless she reads her blog entries.

"I think I have a pretty bad memory," she says. "If I have a picture or I've written about it, I can remember it in detail."

"I think as moms our brains just get so full," Rockwood says.



More blogs about motherhood, along with forums, news articles and information can be found at litterockmamas.com.