



# The Eclectic Report

Greetings!

Spring is here . . . so says the calendar. It is a little hard to believe with morning temperatures in the teens and lower 20s. Of course I'm anxious to get out in the garden and we have some nice tomato, pepper, cucumber, cantaloupe, and squash plants on the window ledges.

I am grateful to have completed my work on the *Legislative WATCH* during the session and I am thankful, too, that the NDHSA chose to forward this publication to their mailing list. I received dozens of kind remarks; I am very appreciative.

The Red River Valley flood turned out to be a dud! But I have a theory about this. I think the lack of another destructive flood is the direct result of N.D. passing this country's strictest laws regarding the practice of abortion. And I am praying that the abortuary in Fargo will scamper out of existence or at least out of this state!

As I finish work on this I can see the farmer fertilizing in the quarter just south of the Blessed Life Ranch. Ooooh, that certainly marks the beginning of summer. Isn't our Lord just the most gracious, kind, generous God? Without fail He sends the spring and summer to soften our memories of long winters.

Grace and peace and western zephyrs,  
Gail

## Family Fun Days

**June 21 - 23, 2013**

Sponsored by the Wendell and Beth Sip Family  
More information in future *TERs* as the time approaches, so mark your calendars.

## The View from my Window

By Theresa Deckert, NDHSA Office Administrator



By the time you read this, the legislative session will be over. I always approach the years that the legislature meets as a time of opportunity, but also a time of anxiety. One never knows what sort of bill will be introduced that has the potential to greatly affect home education in our state.

This year several bills passed that are positive in their nature. First, is the testing exemption bill which allows parents to **opt out of standardized testing** for their children if certain qualifications are met. I have posted a section on the website that deals with this under "testing information" on the left side. This was a huge step forward in homeschool freedom.

There was also a bill that cleaned up some language regarding the wording "**in the home**". Hopefully this will alleviate any confusion. Finally, a bill passed that opens up the **North Dakota Scholarship to homeschoolers**. I have posted a link to the Department of Public Instruction's website for information on the scholarship. Keep in mind if you are considering this for your child you will want to be planning as early as the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. There is a list of criteria that must be met to qualify.

Whenever there is new legislation there are adjustments to make. We will have the **new statement of intent** posted sometime after June 1. Remember if you are going to take the testing exemption you must report it on the statement of intent. That means the exemption is not available until next school year. A **school year** is defined as **July 1 – June 30** according to the N.D. Century Code.

New legislation also can mean misunderstandings until everyone understands the requirements. For this reason I strongly urge people to become members of Home School Legal Defense Association. We have seen a number of questions arising with both the new Superintendent of Public Instruction as well as the new legislation. HSLDA has been fielding many calls from the office and from individuals. They are a valuable resource to me as the office administrator.

So as we adjust to these changes there may be a few "bumps" in the road. If you have any questions please call or email the office. I will do my best to answer them or get counsel from Dee Black at HSLDA.

## Pas. Brian and Bev Skaar Join NDHSA Board

By Bev Skaar

Our homeschool journey began in 1984 when our oldest child was born. We had heard about a group of people in Oregon that had chosen to home educate and also later that same year Bev's brother, a public school teacher, in Edmonton, Alberta, began home educating their first- and third-grade children. Bev became interested in homeschooling at that point. Brian had hoped to reach the students at the public school with the gospel. Brian had been a pastor, youth pastor, daycare administrator, and Christian School administrator. Bev had been a music theory and substitute teacher at a Christian school in Williston. At that time we were introduced to a Christian curriculum.

In 1988 we moved to a wonderful small town in eastern North Dakota to pastor. Bev started homeschooling our oldest at age 4. When our oldest turned 6 we sent her to public school kindergarten and first grade. Bev prayed that if we were to continue sending her to public school that we would begin seeing fruit from young children responding to the gospel. Brian was resistant. During her first grade experience we realized that she was not learning how to read even though



she was considered one of the top students. When Brian visited with the superintendent, he said that he knew that this teacher was unable to teach reading, but that because she had tenure he could not remove her from the classroom. Brian was also on the steering committee for the evaluation of the school system. One of the studies from the school revealed that over 90% of the high school students were getting drunk at least once a month. Even Brian could see that there was growing evidence that we needed to find a better way to raise our children.

When we came to this small rural community, we were not sure if we would be home educating. Now that we were making this decision we made preparations to share with our church board this "new thing" we were going to do. We had our board over for a meal, presented the curriculum and our reasons for homeschooling. We even offered our resignation if this decision was not acceptable to them. The church reluctantly agreed. In the fall the local superintendent informed us that he would be our monitor and come to our house every week, which he did. Also that year our denominational leader informed us that this would adversely affect our church leadership and future ministry.

A big part of our reason for homeschooling had to do with the future of our children. It was important that they learn to love God and follow Him. What we were seeing in public education of church kids was the high dropout rate from church during their first year in college, especially, pastors' children. Another trend that we saw was the high rate of alcohol abuse in public school even when there was a Christian teacher in the classroom. At the time we started homeschooling that rate was over 90%. The church dropout rate was over 80%. Brian was a youth pastor in his early days of ministry and had always hoped to reach out to the non-Christian through his own kids. The trouble was, the non-Christian influence was winning the battle. Historically sending children into battle for the church has had disastrous results. As parents we believe we are responsible to try and lead our family in a way that accomplishes the best results.

Of course our journey has had its ups and downs (with minimal yellow bus threats ☺) but the Lord is faithful. We have 3 graduates and 1 nearing the finish line. Our oldest is married and we have entered the new season of grandparenthood. (All of our children have expressed their desire to homeschool our future grandchildren.) The benefits far out-weigh anything we could have hoped for through public school education.

We are now on the homeward stretch of our family's homeschool experience. We have never regretted our decision. God's assignment for our family has been Christ-centered education. His grace has proved to be sufficient to accomplish this labor of love.

Oh, by the way, at the end of our first year of homeschooling the superintendent said we made the right choice; every pastor that followed us at that church have homeschooled their children; and the denominational leader, well, some of his grandchildren are now homeschooled.

### Looking for safe (and educational) pen pals for your child?

enthraling children of all ages with their unique postcard correspondence. Your child will find a pal in Molly, Buttercup, Peter (or P-U, as Molly calls him) the cat and many other animals that live on the two farms.

For more than 18 years (and counting!), Molly and Buttercup have been featured in *Hopscotch* children's magazine. There they have been



Molly sends postcards, with images of roadside attractions, telling us about all the many fun goings-on at her farm. In addition, she shares fascinating facts about roadside attractions. Buttercup sends postcards, with images of horses, telling us all the exciting events happening in her shed. Too, your child will learn interesting facts about horses. These favorite children's characters will also respond personally to any child who writes to them. It is our pleasure to provide this complimentary service. Molly and Buttercup's postcard correspondence can also be sent via email. Either by mailbox or email, Molly and Buttercup will soon become your child's pen pals.

[Molly and Buttercup / P.O. Box 256 / N. Quincy, MA 02171 / 617.479.5774](mailto:Molly and Buttercup / P.O. Box 256 / N. Quincy, MA 02171 / 617.479.5774)

<http://mollyandbuttercup.com/homepage.html>

### Science Technology Engineering Math

Students in grades 3-5 and 6-8 are invited to join NDSA for a variety of summer kids' camps focused on topics in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). Ignite a passion or fuel your child's passion for **STEM** classes by registering him for these hands-on learning camps.

#### Session Dates:

Session 1: June 10 - June 13

Session 2: June 17 - June 20

Session 3: July 15 - July 18

Session 4: July 22 - July 25

Be sure to **register early** to ensure your choice of camps and dates are still available.

**Click here for more information about the Summer STEM Kids Camps.**

#### Camps Include:

Astronomy, Stars, Planets, and Extra-solar Planets  
Construction Materials  
Computing and Games  
Prehistoric Creatures, Glowing Minerals, and  
Rocks that Tell Stories  
Robot Rumble  
The Great Health Care Adventure  
Gear Heads  
Engineering Adventures  
STEM Explorers  
Crime Scene Science

#### Featured Camp: Crime Scene Science

Has your child wondered how crimes are solved? Well, it's time to be the detective. Join us for a week full of activities that span the different scientific fields while we do experiments in fingerprint and bite mark identification, study splatter patterns, powder analysis, chromatography, and even DNA extraction. Grab your detective gear and your magnifying glasses and join in the fun! **Find out more about Crime Scene Science Camp.**

**Cost just \$89** per camp with discounts for multiple camps and multiple children from same family. (Scholarships may be available.)

Need a copy of the law? Interested in the basics? Looking for a support group? GO TO: [www.ndhsa.org](http://www.ndhsa.org)

## Obama Proposes Universal Preschool for 4-Year-Olds

Mike Farris, Esq. April 18, 2013

In an apparent effort to continually expand federal involvement in public education, President Obama announced last Wednesday in his budget plan a proposal to create universal preschool for low-income families. The plan, which is called Preschool for All, is aimed at 4-year-olds to help them be “better prepared for the demands of the global economy.” The plan will be funded by raising taxes on cigarette sales.

HSLDA founder Michael Farris voiced his opposition to this plan. “[There are] several observations,” he wrote in a recent Facebook post, “There is no evidence that such programs provide ANY lasting educational benefit. There is no evidence that such programs actually prepare workers for the global economy.”

In the past, HSLDA has opposed federal attempts to regulate early education, such as the Head Start and Race to the Top programs. In 2010, HSLDA Federal Relations Director William Estrada echoed the concerns that such programs have shown little to no improvement for children that take part in universal preschools. Citing several studies that show universal preschool programs in Georgia, Oklahoma, and New Jersey produce negative results, Estrada concluded, “Research shows again and again that there are no long-lasting positive impacts to public preschool. Even in 1969, the Westinghouse Learning Corporation evaluated Head Start and found that ‘Full year programs resulted in cognitive and language gains at the first grade but appeared to “fade out” by second or third grade.’”

Not only does HSLDA view such programs as wasteful and unconstitutional, but we also see these programs as a threat to parental rights over what their children learn. When speaking about the Race to the Top initiative in 2011, Estrada noted, “For one thing, will this mean early learning programs eventually will have to teach what the federal government thinks that young children should learn? Will religious early learning programs eventually have to limit what they teach? There are many unanswered questions about where this state licensing, approval, and supervision could lead.”

Farris also noted the threat of federal involvement in preschool. “Now we know what this MSNBC promo was all about. The village wants our kids. We need more ‘investments’ for the village’s kids. Balderdash. They want our kids lest any of us raise our children to think differently than their worldview. “I don’t want my children being prepared as workers in the global economy; I want them to be prepared to lead America.” What do you think? [Join the conversation on our Facebook page.](#)

Courtesy [HSLDA](#). Used with permission. **Home School Legal Defense Association** is a nonprofit advocacy organization established to defend and advance the constitutional right of parents to direct the education of their children and to protect family freedoms. Through annual memberships, HSLDA is tens of thousands of families united in service together, providing a strong voice when and where needed. [www.hslda.org](http://www.hslda.org)



### Autism Resources

#### Publishers and vendors that carry curricula and materials related to autism:

- [Woodbine House](#)—Lots of resources, curricula, and good materials. They have a great book titled *Activity Schedules for Children with Autism*.
  - [Mayer-Johnson](#), and [Don Johnston](#), both carry materials and curricula, as well as adaptive equipment and assistive technology specific for children on the spectrum.
  - [Super Duper Publications](#)—They carry teaching materials, speech and language games, activities and resources.
  - [Attainment Company](#)—They carry adaptive equipment, teaching DVDs, curriculum, and teaching materials such as alternative curricula and life skills.
  - [Lingui Systems](#)—This company offers speech and language materials and programs to address social skills, expressive language, and receptive language, as well as auditory processing difficulties, and more.
- Some Helpful Websites
- [Different Roads to Learning](#)
  - [Autism Inspiration](#)
  - [Autism Speaks](#)
  - [Autism Society of America](#)
  - [Center for the Study of Autism](#)

For more information and resources, visit our [Struggling Learner website](#).

### Luke Bowman is State Geography Bee Winner!

Homeschooler Luke Bowman will participate in the national Bee in Washington, D.C., this month after winning the state bee April 5. The eighth-grader won a tie-breaker to make it to the championship round. The *Bismarck Tribune* (4-05-13) stated, “Corey Bohlig, a middle school teacher in Minot who has been reading the questions at the state bee for more than 20 years, said it was the first time a student who advanced to the championship through a tie-breaker went on to win.”

How does he prepare? During the ‘off season’ he reads his set of encyclopedias! Congratulations to Luke and his parents! And thanks to the Jamestown Area Homeschool group for forwarding this information.

Read Bismarck Tribune article at:

[http://bismarcktribune.com/news/state-and-regional/luke-bowman-wins-state-geographic-bee/article\\_17cc3d94-9e3b-11e2-ae16-001a4bcf887a.html#.UWMeAu3Wsic.email](http://bismarcktribune.com/news/state-and-regional/luke-bowman-wins-state-geographic-bee/article_17cc3d94-9e3b-11e2-ae16-001a4bcf887a.html#.UWMeAu3Wsic.email)



## Brother and Sister Qualify for State Spelling Bee and are Homeschooled, too!

Ty Korsmo and his sister, Siri, qualified for the state Spelling Bee. Ty came in 3<sup>rd</sup>, Siri 17<sup>th</sup>. Ty wrote his fifth perfect test and Siri only missed one. I wonder if anyone reading this could do the same. And what word did Ty miss? "Affreight" (my spellchecker doesn't even recognize this word!) pronounced u-freight, but pronounced a-freight by the proctor (both are acceptable although I doubt any of us will be using it anytime soon). Ty's Mom, Debbie, states, "It is disappointing because Ty knew all the words the top two went back and forth on because they couldn't spell their words correctly, but that's the nature of the spelling bee. [I'm] still very proud of my kids." So are we and congratulations to both.



## Patrick Henry Leadership Camps

Registration is now open for the 2013 summer camp season. The camp schedule is at: [www.phc.edu/teencamps](http://www.phc.edu/teencamps). When you visit the site, check out the extensive descriptions of each camp and bios of the senior leadership team. And check out their Facebook page for updates and camp-related announcements.

Camp dates:

- June 9–15: Strategic Intelligence Camp with SI Graduate Evan Johnson
- June 16–22: History Camp, "The Founding Fathers and the Classical Tradition" with PHC History Professor Dr. Douglas Favelo
- June 16–29: Mock Trial Camp with PHC Academic Dean, Government Professor, and Mock Trial Coach Dr. Frank Guliuzza
- July 7–13: Speech Camp, led by Ethos Publications
- July 14–27: Debate Camp, led by Ethos Publications
- July 14–20: Presidency Camp with PHC Government Professor Dr. Michael Haynes
- July 21–27: Leadership and Vocation Camp with PHC Provost Dr. Gene Edward Veith

Feel free to contact them as they welcome any questions. Contact: Stephen Williams, Teen Leadership Camps Director, 10 Patrick Henry Circle, Purcellville, VA 20132 540.441.8105 [www.phc.edu/teencamps](http://www.phc.edu/teencamps) [teencamps@phc.edu](mailto:teencamps@phc.edu)



## Prayer Items

~Pray for a homeschool family as they travel a difficult road following the death of their husband and father. You can imagine what they must be going through. Yes, Daddy is in glory, but Mom and six children must go on without him.

~Praise God for the ways Home School Legal Defense Association has advanced homeschooling in America. Praise God also that HSLDA is a Capitol Hill watchdog particularly on the issues of U.N. Treaties.

~Pray for our board of directors: Pas. Ken & Llorra Knight, Jeff & Theresa Deckert, Pas. Jeff and Karol Kapelle, Sue Huntington, Neil Toman, and Pas. Brian and Bev Skaar. **Newest board couple: Troy and Kristie Durham.** Praise God for these men and women who are servant-hearted, wise, generous in their encouragement, gracious and devout believers. We are more blessed than we know because of their leadership!

~A new pro-life clinic is starting in Minot. Pray for Tim K., homeschool dad, involved with this venture. Visit: [www.dakotahope.org](http://www.dakotahope.org)

~Pray for the homeschoolers in foreign nations, many doing so under hardships from their governments. Praise God for HSLDA's service to them.

~Pray for and thank God for your family, your church family, your pastor.

If you have a prayer request to share through this newsletter, send it along to [billbivy@msn.com](mailto:billbivy@msn.com) or if you prefer only the board pray about it, send it to [office@ndhsa.org](mailto:office@ndhsa.org)

### NDHSA Board of Directors

**Pas. Ken Knight**, president and **Llorra Knight**, west region support group coordinator, 701.880.6126 or [knight\\_publishing@hotmail.com](mailto:knight_publishing@hotmail.com)

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**Susan Huntington**, director, 701.663.7858 or [essh2nd@hotmail.com](mailto:essh2nd@hotmail.com)

**Jeff Deckert**, director and **Theresa Deckert**, executive secretary & east region support group coordinator, 701.662.4790 or [jntdeck@gondtc.com](mailto:jntdeck@gondtc.com) for specific

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Gail M. Biby is the publications editor for the NDHSA and has been joyfully working with parent educators for more than 20 years. She writes a regular column for *Eternal Encouragement* magazine (a magazine by and for Christian women), serves on the advisory board for Mark Hamby's Lamplighter Publishing, writes a women's newsletter for her church gals, and volunteers with Caring Hearts Jail Ministry. She lives a modestly agrarian lifestyle in the Red River Valley of the North with a prince of a man, her husband Bill, and right next door to their daughter Aimee, son-in-love, Ray, and their six children. Mrs. Biby has been homeschooling her grandchildren for more than 7 years. Oh, the stories she could tell! Contact her at: [billbivy@msn.com](mailto:billbivy@msn.com)

**NDHSA, P.O. Box 1066, Devils Lake, N.D. 58301 701.662.NDHS(6347)**

### NDHSA statement of faith

Trusting in Jesus Christ as our Saviour, we believe in Almighty God, the author of all creation; the Bible as the inspired Word of God, complete in 66 books and the basis of faith and practice; the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, God's Son, the death of Jesus Christ for our sins, His bodily resurrection and His personal return; and regeneration by God, the Holy Spirit.

### NDHSA Statement of purpose

1. Encouraging and assisting Christian families in the education of their children according to Biblical principles;
2. Providing to home educators and the general public information pertaining to the Biblical, academic and legal aspects of home education;
3. Entering into activities, in filling out contracts necessary, incidental or beneficial to the accomplishment of the nonprofit purposes of this corporation.

### The Eclectic Report

Gail Biby, Editor

*The Eclectic Report* is published monthly by the NDHSA and is provided free to anyone who asks. The NDHSA is a Christian 501(c)(3) organization funded by the gifts of interested parties. No substantial part of the activities of the NDHSA is used for the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation,

[www.ndhsa.org](http://www.ndhsa.org)

[office@ndhsa.org](mailto:office@ndhsa.org)

**Not a member yet of NDHSA?** Family membership fee only \$35. Once you have given your tithes and offerings to your local church, why not consider a donation to the NDHSA. All funds are used to continue the work of the Association and will be used with great frugality and wisdom. But even if God doesn't lead you to donate, we hope that you will pray for the work of the NDHSA, the board of directors, and staff. **CHECK OUT NEW features at our website.**

### Join Home School Legal Defense Association

to protect your right to homeschool in North Dakota and to support their work for us on Capitol Hill. Go to: [www.hsllda.org](http://www.hsllda.org) Receive an HSLDA discount if a member family of the NDHSA.

**Membership MATTERS!**