

The Eclectic Report

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Greetings!

Oooh, I'm so thankful I could once again enjoy the annual convention. I saw and spoke with so many old and new friends. It was a two-day gab-a-thon! I had the joy of interviewing many about the early years of homeschooling in N.D. You don't like the current law? How would you like to homeschool in 1989—meet all the codes and requirements for a private school which meant only N.D. state-certified teachers! Option two: court dates and fines!

HISTORY

A look back at the history of homeschooling in N.D. sure helps one understand the battles that were fought and why, the primary mandatory state requirements that folks opposed, the here-a-little, there-a-little approach that proved successful, and the incredible endurance and tenacity of Clinton Birst and those who had the courage to disobey the law in order to force the state to make changes to the law. I am also amazed by the extraordinary actions of ordinary people who were both unyielding in their requests but gracious and winsome in their rhetoric. That sweet grace and mercy that can only come from one who belongs fully to God.

SPRING

Well, it looks like Spring is likely to remove the piles of now-dirty snow, dry up the ditches and fields, and nudge the grass to green. How do I know this? The meadowlarks, robins, European starlings and juncos have congregated at my feeders. It is a wonderful sound. And if that isn't enough, my seeds have arrived and we have started the tomatoes, peppers, etc. Soooooo...

...happy, happy SPRING!

Gail



The View from my Window

By Theresa Deckert, NDHSA Office Administrator

My column this month is just a bit of "this and that". First, I would like to congratulate **Josiah Kopp** on being the winner of the **NDHSA Logo Contest**. It was so exciting to watch the new banner featuring the logo as it was unfurled during the convention. We were sorry Josiah could not be with us. If you have not had a chance to see it just click on over to our website at www.ndhsa.org. (See above banner.)

I was so encouraged to have such a great turn out for the **support group leader's** luncheon at the convention. It was a wonderful time of connecting with other leaders throughout the state. I appreciate each one of these folks that volunteer their time to be a help and encouragement to the homeschool community in their area. I will be updating the support groups on the website in the upcoming days. Watch for some new groups!

You may have noted that there were many **new faces** at the convention this year. I made a quick count of new people added to our database following the convention. I counted 73 new families. Those of you who were first-timers will be receiving this *Eclectic* newsletter now on a monthly basis. Welcome!

Finally I want to mention the meetings in May concerning the **Common Core State Standards**. I have posted information on the website as far as dates, locations, and times (See box to right.). I know there are many who have called the office with concerns. These meetings are an opportunity for you to learn more. You might also want to go to HSLDA's website and watch the movie they have produced, *Building the Machine*.

It was such a highlight of my year to reconnect with **friends of years past** and meet many **new friends** who have called the office at some point. I am already looking forward to convention 2015. See you in Fargo!

COMMON CORE

JOIN US for a special presentation exposing the truth about the **Common Core State Standards** and the ongoing struggle to roll back its implementation. Dr. Duke Pesta will provide examples of how CCSS threatens to further undermine, weaken, and centralize public and private education in the U.S.

Bismarck, N.D.: Common Core: Dangers & Threats to American Liberty & Education
May 8 – Thursday – 7:00 p.m.
– Ramkota Hotel, 1400 E. Interchange Ave., Bismarck, ND 58301

Fargo, N.D.: Common Core: Dangers & Threats to American Liberty & Education
May 9 – Friday – 7:00 p.m. – Kelly Inn, 3800 Main Ave., Fargo, ND 58102

Eureka, S.D.: Common Core Dangers & Threats to American Liberty & Education
May 10 – Saturday – 2:00 p.m. – Eureka High School Gym, 706 9th St., Eureka, SD 57347

(Sponsored by *Stop Common Core in ND.*)

From the Beginning to Now

Interested in the history of homeschooling? Join other interested parties **April 12, at 2:30 p.m. at Oakes, N.D.**, in the Ottertail community room, 103 South 5th St. We will discuss the history of homeschooling in N.D. with NDHSA board members and past home educators. Guest speakers will share what it was like to homeschool before it was legal.

Open Q & A time; information on the Common Core State Standards movement.

Join us at 2:30 p.m., use the NORTH DOOR. For more information call 1.701.742.2838 or 1.701.742.2218.

Come visit our website. It's professional and beautiful, plus informational. www.ndhsa.org

Convention Coordinator's Remarks on Recent Convention

Well, another NDHSA convention has come and gone. It was wonderful to see so many new (and some old) faces! Several have asked me if I'm glad it's over, and I have to reply, "Not really." I really do enjoy *organizing* the convention and also *attending* the convention. It is always so exciting and encouraging to see friends I only get to see at convention time and, of course, to be inspired to finish the year strong and prepare for the new school year. I hope each who attended left feeling refreshed and excited about the choice you have made to home educate your children.

As far as convention details, I do apologize for some errors in the schedule, over-crowded rooms, etc. Hopefully, most mistakes went unnoticed, but I do appreciate your willingness to turn in your evaluation forms and let the board and me know what you found to be working well or maybe not so well. We know that we "can't please all of the people all of the time", but we sure try our best to make it a worthwhile event for attendees.

I hope you were able to see the **Hall of Fame** inductee presentation. What a treat to honor those (**Dr. Ray and Rita Larsen, Gerald and Sheryl Lund, Mark and Lynette Dagley and Clinton and Judi Birst**) who have laid the foundation for homeschooling in North Dakota. If you did not see it, look for it soon on the NDHSA website (www.ndhsa.org).

Almost all the evaluation forms received state that they like having the convention at the Jamestown Civic Center for a variety of reasons. Although this is great news, we do find ourselves out-growing this facility in some aspects. We had a really nice attendance this year (around 950 including children and teens) and look forward to even more attendees in Fargo in 2015. We will be trying out the First Assembly of God church in Fargo for the 2015 convention and ask for your patience and understanding as we adjust to a new venue and work out possible trouble issues. I hope you are excited about being back in Fargo, and I look forward to begin booking vendors, speakers and workshops! Hal and Melanie Young of "Raising Real Men" will be our keynote speakers. Look them up at www.raisingrealmen.com.

Please continue to send in your evaluation forms (found in your convention bag). I will choose two to receive a free registration for next year's convention.

Thank you so much for being with us in Jamestown. The NDHSA board of directors is pleased to offer an annual state convention and we look forward to serving you in any way we can. We appreciate your input and value your suggestions. Feel free to contact me (kapkian@gondtc.com) or any of the other directors with questions or concerns. Happy home schooling!

Karol Kapelle

Convention Coordinator and Board Director

Oak Meadow Research--The Survey Says!

Oak Meadow, the leader in progressive, experiential homeschooling curriculum, is looking for students in grades 7 to 12 to complete an early draft of the Oak Meadow **Scale of Student Autonomy**. It will take less than 15 minutes, and the results will help us to develop a free resource for independent learners around the world. We need at least 500 responses in order to create statistical norms so that we can provide useful feedback to those who take the survey.

The Oak Meadow Scale of Student Autonomy is designed to be **a self-reflective tool for students to evaluate their sense of independence and ability to take charge of their own learning**. It will help them recognize learning independence as a strength and, subsequently, a wide range of educational opportunities available to them.

Here is the link to the live survey:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1yyGedmphdubFy54c9hg9ZDQZYDxqXNqUqG58EZwEAtU/viewform>

All information provided in this questionnaire is completely confidential; individual student responses will not be used in any way beyond inclusion in the larger sample set. Please help us spread the word about this initiative by forwarding this survey to homeschool students and families in your community.

The goal of student autonomy—*independent, self-directed learning and personal empowerment*—is central to the mission of Oak Meadow and fully integrated into our rigorous education of critical thinking, creativity, and problem solving. Oak Meadow prides itself on graduating engaged citizens of the world who are compassionate freethinkers and active decision-makers.

Visit oakmeadow.com to learn more about our homeschooling curriculum, which can be used independently or by enrolling in our distance learning school. If you are a homeschool family, we encourage you to join Oak Meadow's [Facebook community](#), where you can share and collaborate with the 12,000 creative and invested homeschoolers who contribute to our page.

Contact: Ben Mitchell, Director of Admissions

Oak Meadow--Independent Learning Since 1975

74 Cotton Mill Hill (802) 251-7250

Brattleboro, Vermont www.oakmeadow.com info@oakmeadow.com

Barbara Jo Miller

Safe in the Arms of Jesus

After a lengthy struggle with cancer, Barbara Jo Miller went home to be with Jesus on March 14. She has supported the NDHSA in many ways over the years and has provided hours of enjoyment through their musical group. She contributed abundantly of her time and talents to the homeschool community.

On the Tuesday prior to her home going during a brief period of awareness she sang to those in attendance *I Am Jesus' Little Lamb*.

The third verse reads:

*Ever glad at heart I am,
Even now the Shepherd's lamb.
And when my short life is ended,
By His angel hosts attended,
He shall fold me to His breast,
There within His arms to rest.*

She is gloriously at rest. Barbara Jo requested that instead of flowers, donations be made to Church of the Lutheran Confession missions or Immanuel Lutheran College or any pro-life organization.

Gary wishes to thank all for your concern, prayers, calls and emails. You may send your memories or condolences to him at:

THE MILLERS
409 7TH AVE NW
MANDAN ND 58554-2522
(701) 663-1667



COMMON CORE

Here are a few more items on CCSS to prepare yourself for the future meetings in Bismarck, Fargo, and Eureka in May (see side bar beginning of *TER*).

From HSLDA

[Common Core: An International Failure](#)

New studies reveal that despite proponents' claims, the Common Core standards do not emulate the successful education practices of other countries. [Read more >>](#)

Field-Testing Set to Begin on Common-Core Exams

More than 4 million students in 36 states and the District of Columbia will take near-final versions of the math and English/language arts tests between March 24 and June 6 [Read...](#)

Common Core Curriculum www.NewsWithViews.com

Eventually, eugenics will progressively threaten all of us. Obamacare will weed out the over-65. But will you, as parents and grandparents, prevent implementation once more of the kind of methods Orlean Koehle describes in her book, *Common Core, A Trojan Horse for Education Reform?*

http://www.newswithviews.com/guest_opinion/guest245.htm

From HSLDA

[Watch new Common Core movie: help us reach 100K views!](#)

[Reviews](#) are rolling in for HSLDA's new Common Core documentary. [Watch](#) it now and [share!](#) Help us reach 100,000 views.

From the Heritage Foundation

[Crisis for Common Core: A Special Report](#)



Prairie Village Museum

Student tours are welcomed at the Prairie Village Museum, Rugby, N.D. The staff appreciates the importance of education and is happy to work with teachers and students to tailor an experience to meet specific educational goals.

Information on school tours and other interesting events is at:

www.prairievillagemuseum.com

You may contact:

Cathy Jelsing, executive director

102 Hwy 2 SE, Box 232

Rugby, ND 58368

prairievillagemuseum@gmail.com

1.701.776.6414 (summer)

1.701.776.7606 (off season)

Tours start May 1!

Potpourri

- From HSLDA

[The Local Bible Bee—It's A Social Thing!](#) Host a kickoff meeting in June, one or two summer parties, and a Local Contest/Celebration on Saturday, August 23! A written test on August 23 is all it takes for your child, age 7 to 18, to qualify to compete for the \$272,000 cash prizes at the national contest! Register your children now to assure delivery of your family's "Sword Study" on June 1! [Read more >>](#)

- From **National Home Education Research Institute**—Political Tolerance Research (www.nheri.org):

Dr. Brian Ray states this is a great piece of research and one of the best-designed and best-written homeschool studies.

http://archive.aweber.com/nheri_2010-1/4ybg/h/The_Home_schooled_More.htm

- From **Crosswalk.com** – Homeschool update

[How to Plan a Homeschool Photography Course](#)

By Naomi Musch

Nearly anyone can learn to take better pictures, have more fun doing it, and even develop a career, many teens have discovered.

[Read the full article here](#)

- [How to Prepare Your Kids for Meaningful and Worthy Lives](#)

Mark Hamby

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6).

[Read the full article here](#)

- From HSLDA:

[Home School Heartbeat: Military Families](#)

Military homeschooling families can face extra challenges in their educational journey, but homeschooling can also offer you the flexibility to thrive through moves, deployments, and the demands of military life. This week on *Home School Heartbeat*, three veteran homeschooling military parents offer insights into how they've made homeschooling work in their families. [Read more >>](#)

Groundbreaking Documentary Sheds Light on Common Core

Contact: Michael Farris, Jr., [Home School Legal Defense Association](http://HomeSchoolLegalDefenseAssociation.org), 540-338-8287, mfarrisjr@hslda.org

PURCELLVILLE, Va., March 25, 2014 /[Christian Newswire](#)/ -- As the national conversation over the Common Core State Standards continues to heat up, one non-profit and an indie filmmaker are hoping that their upcoming documentary will shed light on an issue that they believe is a largely unknown problem. The film *Building the Machine* is about how Common Core came to be and how it will affect education for years to come.

The Home School Legal Defense Association's department of Film and Visual Media has been working on the documentary for over a year and the film's director believes it will make waves in the public debate over Common Core. "When I first started working on the film, I had very limited knowledge about the Common Core and how it made its way into our public schools," Ian Reid, the film's director, said. "At first it seems like an ideal solution to the commonly cited woes of an education system that is failing our students: After all, who wouldn't want higher standards? But after more than a year of investigative research, and in-depth interviews with many on the inside of the education standards world, it was clear that there is much more to the implementation of the Common Core than merely 'raising standards.'"

The Common Core State Standards are the product of the National Governor's Association, the Council of Chief State School Officials, education experts, and many wealthy backers like the Gates Foundation. The standards are being implemented in schools across 45 states. While the Constitution gives the federal government no direct authority over education, the government has created incentives for states to adopt the Common Core as a tactic for national curriculum. But many experts have voiced skepticism as to whether the standards are actually good for American children.

"Our goal is to present a balanced investigative documentary, by interviewing experts on both sides of the issue -- including some members of the Common Core Validation Committee," said Reid, "and this led to a variety of fascinating discoveries about the culture war that is being waged in education right now. One of the most troubling was the clear difference between the two factions' willingness to dialogue over this revolutionary change. Particularly, my team and I found that while many opponents to the Common Core were willing to speak out, only a small fraction of the supporters would engage in the discourse."

One thing that Reid finds most fascinating about the Common Core is that it erases party lines. "Common Core is not a typical liberals-versus-conservatives issue," he said. "It's an issue that concerns parents and the future of their child's education, and I hope to get the message across that their ability to steer the education of their child is largely slipping away from their hands and into the hands of politicians, unelected bureaucrats, and large corporations."

HSLDA will be accepting pre-orders for the extended DVD set which will ship later this summer. Reid is the Director of Film and Visual Media at the Home School Legal Defense Association.

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. Visit us online at www.HSLDA.org.

PRAY without Ceasing . . .

- **Pray** for our board of directors: **Ken & Llorra Knight, Jeff & Theresa Deckert, Pas. Jeff & Karol Kapelle, Sue Huntington, Neil Toman, Pas. Brian & Bev Skaar and Troy & Kristin Durham.** **Praise** God for them and their cheerful service.
- **Pray** for Gary Miller and the children as they continue their journey without their dear wife and mother, Barbara Jo.
- **Praise** God for a wonderful, well-attended, and encouraging convention.
- **Praise** God for the ways Home School Legal Defense Association has advanced homeschooling in America. **Praise** God that HSLDA is a Capitol Hill watchdog particularly on issues about U.N. treaties and parental rights.
- **Praise** God for pioneers recently recognized as the first inductees into the ND Homeschool Hall of Fame. What courage and devotion; what determination and trust in our dear Lord. Oh, to be like them. **Rev. Clinton (already home with Jesus) and Judi Birst, Dr. Ray and Rita Larsen, Gerald and Sheryl Lund, and Mark and Lynette Dagley.**
- **Pray** for other homeschoolers in foreign nations under hardship from their governments. **Praise** God for HSLDA's service to them.
- **Pray for homeschooling mothers and fathers** in your support group. Be a source of encouragement.
- **Intercede** for those with physical ailments; ask God to give them the measure of health that will most glorify Him.
- **Pray** that we will be known as Christians by our love for one another.
- **Pray** diligently for your Pastor that our Lord will keep him faithful, honorable in all areas of his life, and filled with godly wisdom.

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Heb.4:15-16, ESV

Send your prayer requests to office@ndhsa.org or billbibi@msn.com

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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, promote any political campaign, or on the behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office. Legal issues are for instructive purposes only and do not constitute the giving of legal advice. If you need legal advice concerning homeschooling, contact Dewitt Black, HSLDA attorney of reference, if you are a member family, or contact an attorney familiar with homeschool law. Any comments or opinions are those of the editor and do not necessarily reflect the views of the NDHSA board or staff members. Bylined articles ditto! Advertisements likewise. If you have something that may be of interest to homeschoolers, or if you have comments or corrections, send them to the editor at billbibi@msn.com.

Gail M. Biby is the publications editor for the NDHSA and has been joyfully working with parent educators for more than 23 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. Contact her at: billbibi@msn.com

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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 N.D. and support their work on Capitol Hill. Go to: www.hslda.org Receive HSLDA discount if a member of NDHSA.