

The Eclectic Report

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Face Book at: North Dakota Home School Association

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Greetings!

As I write this the election results are in and the crowing and cowing has begun. Some blame so-and-so for the state of the nation; many blame the other party; a few whine and grumble and declare that the sky is falling; end-timers stock their pantries; and optimists are jubilant and declare that the new Congress will finally get some work done.

Well, here's what I say, "The Lord God is Sovereign over all." "For kingship belongs to the Lord," Ps.22:28. And this section of Psalm 145 that I memorized back when my 'memorizer' was more dependable:

I will extol you my God and **King**, and bless your name forever.
Every day I will bless you and praise your name forever and ever.
Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable.
The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
The Lord is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made.
All your works shall give thanks to you, O Lord, and all your saints shall bless you!
They shall speak of the glory of your **kingdom** and tell of your power, to make known to the children of man your mighty deeds, and the glorious splendor of your **kingdom**.
Your **kingdom** is an everlasting **kingdom**, and your dominion endures throughout all generations.
The Lord is faithful in all his words and kind in all his works.
My mouth will speak the praise of the Lord, and let all flesh bless his holy name forever and ever.

And thus, I have no anxieties about kings and kingdoms because the REAL KING is *right now* on the throne of the REAL KINGDOM. I am thankful, thankful, thankful.

May we all remember God's incredible mercies to us.

Thanksgiving BLESSINGS!

Gail

P.S. Be sure to read Ken's article. And the "Troubling Report" is indeed troubling and worth reading. Also, some new prayer requests are posted.



The View from my Window

By Theresa Deckert will return next month.

IMPORTANT MESSAGE from NDHSA board director Ken Knight

Recently, I have fielded several questions that indicate many people don't understand the purpose, roll or scope of the NDHSA. So, I think it incumbent that I should clarify what the North Dakota Home School Association is and what it is not. I am not writing just to homeschoolers, this is also intended for prospective homeschoolers, and even for those detractors and dissidents with which faithful homeschoolers must deal. This is for anyone who has even a casual contact with homeschooling. For some of you, this may not be new information, for others it may be an eye-opener. I am choosing the venue of this newsletter as a way to make this information available to all, therefore, please feel free to distribute it.

First, the **NDHSA is not the enemy of the Department of Public Instruction (DPI)** or public education in general. We are not in competition with public or private education. I can understand how this misconception can seep into the minds of people passionate about homeschooling. I, myself, in fervent zeal to promote homeschooling have made the statement, "I won't be satisfied until every child in North Dakota is educated at home," but this is not the purpose of the NDHSA. Homeschooling is a choice and it should not be coerced, demanded or in any way mandatory. We live in a society where public education is perceived as what is best and right for everyone. In many families, public education serves a positive and useful purpose, but from our perspective the opportunity, the freedom, yea, the right to educate at home must be procured, protected, and promoted. The NDHSA was founded for this purpose.

Second, the **NDHSA is not a regulatory organization**. I cannot emphasize this enough. We do not register homeschoolers, enforce any laws, require any compliance, monitor any methods or check on any progress. We don't approve curriculum, or solicit information from our members. We don't even know nor wish to know how many families in North Dakota are homeschooling. Sure we have workshops and classes on how to keep records, teach various subjects, identify learning styles, and build homeschools, but they are offered as tools available to homeschoolers, not as requirements. We have neither power nor authority over anyone.

Third, **we are not experts in the area of homeschooling.** Yes, we have experience. If you were to add together all the years that the board of directors has been homeschooling they would equal almost two centuries; but we are not experts. We have had some successes, but we have had some failures as well. Even our keynote speakers and workshop leaders are not experts. They share what they have experienced along the homeschool journey. But homeschooling is not an exact science. It is a glorious adventure that becomes even more glorious when we share our experiences, our failures, and our triumphs.

Fourth, **the NDHSA is not a professional lobbying organization.** Do we deal with legislative issues? Without a doubt! Do we monitor and report on bills? Of course. Do we propose legislation that would grant greater freedom for homeschooling? Assuredly! Do we write bills? Absolutely! Do we support legislation which is consistent with our mission statement and statement of faith? You betcha! Do we speak with legislators throughout the state? Constantly! Do we attend legislative committee meetings? Most certainly! Do we actively promote homeschooling legislation through whatever media is available? Definitely! Do we give testimony before the Senate and House education committees concerning our bills? Every chance we get! Through these means we fulfill our mission statement which says, "To provide a comprehensive home education information system to support, train and protect every willing North Dakota individual, family and church in the methods of privately funded, parent-directed home education." All of these tasks are performed on a volunteer basis and even if we did pay someone to walk a bill through a legislative session it would not be our primary purpose for existence.

The **NDHSA was founded to support people who choose to educate their children based in their own homes.** *The NDHSA is without apology a Christian organization,* but we will work as hard to help a secular family as we would a Christian one. When a family first decides to homeschool, the NDHSA has done their homework to help guide them through the getting started process, including providing the Statement of Intent form. When discouragement rears its ugly head in a homeschool family, people who have been there and pushed their way through are there to talk to, to put the family on the prayer list, to take them to a support group meeting. When there's a question about the law, when an over-zealous superintendent attempts to intimidate, or when a fearful grandparent thinks their grandchildren will be put into foster care because they don't understand, the NDHSA has answers. Our office and website, and our monthly newsletter, by careful research of the issues, knowledge of the current law (we take "legalese" and boil it down to common sense understanding), and doing our part to effect legislation in a positive way can provide those answers. When a group of homeschoolers in an area wants to start a support group, we provide support group coordinators who can help them organize effectively and connect them with other support groups, and by providing tools and ideas for activities, field trips, and meetings. We provide existing support group leaders opportunities to connect with each other through Facebook and at a yearly luncheon during our annual convention.

When anybody for any reason at any time of the day needs information, guidance, or encouragement the NDHSA has developed an appealing, comprehensive, and user friendly website at www.ndhsa.org. Our site is dedicated to bringing you up-to-date homeschooling information for North Dakota. Our public pages offer information on the North Dakota homeschool law, contacts for area support groups, a free downloadable Home School Packet, convention information, the current statement of intent form and thoughtful articles on various aspects of private, parent-directed home education.

When someone needs a capable, comforting, compassionate voice to talk to, the NDHSA office has an office administrator who will take their calls, talk them down off the window ledge, encourage them not to quit, help lower their blood pressure and give them hope. She is available Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 9:00-1:00 and Tuesday and Thursday from 9:00-noon. Her email address is office@ndhsa.org.

When somebody wants to know what NDHSA is all about they can attend our annual convention where we have nationally recognized keynote speakers, pertinent workshops, panel discussions, a mentoring booth manned by veteran homeschoolers, a used book and home business sale, a diverse art and crafts display/contest, inspiring music and vendors who provide curriculum, supplies, literature, teaching aids, musical instruments, devotional material and a plethora of things that homeschoolers want and/or need. The convention also provides fellowship with like-minded people who are as different as can possibly be so that everyone can feel at home.

When someone lives in a remote area and cannot attend the convention we can hold mini-conventions to provide many of the benefits of the annual convention on a smaller scale. These mini-conventions provide workshops, Q and A sessions, and resources for those who attend.

The NDHSA is not just a board of directors; it is a mighty army of caring, loving, compassionate people who want to make as positive an experience for everyone involved as possible. Its purpose is to encourage, connect and facilitate as a group what individuals cannot do by themselves in order to insure that the generations to come will have the freedom, opportunity and wisdom to continue the essential work we are doing.



Troubling Report on Failure to Respect Parental Rights In Medical Decisions

From www.ParentalRights.org 10/28/14

One Family Strikes Back - How We Can Help

Are you tired of feeling like you're taking a gamble every time you take your child to the emergency room? Do you pray they don't hurt themselves lest someone you don't know should break up your family with false allegations?

From Justina Pelletier in Massachusetts to Isaiah Rider in Illinois to Kayla and Hannah Diegel in Arizona, children all over the country are being taken from parents accused of "medical neglect." And who is there to stand up for them?

That's the question faced by one family from Clarke County, Virginia, when this happened to them. And their answer? *It's time we put a stop to the fear and take back our parental rights!*

Clarke County, Virginia – Practicing Without a License

Lane Funkhouser, his wife Susan, and their two children were all very sick. Their family doctor could not diagnose the problem, and school attendance became an issue for the children. So the parents decided to home school them while they continued to seek a diagnosis and treatment.

That led to truancy charges, which were quickly dismissed. But in the process, social services investigator Michael Austin of Clarke

County's Department of Social Services (DSS) got involved. He decided that Susan was suffering from Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy, a psychological condition whereby a parent seeks attention for herself (or himself) by faking a serious illness in their child.

Austin is not a doctor, nor a psychologist. He is not any kind of medical professional at all. His opinion is no more qualified than yours or mine. (Much *less* if you are in a medical profession!) But his opinion caused a lot of trouble for the Funkhousers.

As it turns out, the family finally found a doctor able to diagnose their condition. The children had a combination of strep, a parasite, and a bacterial infection called *Clostridium difficile*, or *C. diff*. The doctor confirmed his diagnosis with lab results, and prescribed treatment for the children. That treatment included a visit to Rockingham Memorial Hospital in nearby Shenandoah County. And there, even in the face of valid lab results and a conflicting diagnosis from a licensed physician, the hospital workers seem to have acted on the unqualified diagnosis that Austin had made.

So on July 25, 2012, Shenandoah County social workers removed the children from their home. They took them back to the ER at Rockingham, only to find that – sure enough – they were diagnosed with *C. diff* and prescribed medication. **But the social workers did not let up from pursuing Austin's theory.** Instead, they placed the children in a group foster home. A week later, even in light of so much medical evidence that the children were actually sick, **the social workers doubled down in court to defend their decision to remove the children.** As a result, the judge agreed to let them continue their investigation and keep the children in foster care.

While in the home, the couple's son injured his ankle, and home staff, assuring him it was nothing serious, refused to take him to a doctor. Both children were exposed to foster children with violent criminal and drug histories.

Five weeks later, on August 29, the children were returned home. The parents immediately took their son to the doctor, where he was treated for a broken – yes, *broken* – ankle that had been left untreated for *three weeks*. On top of that, the children had also been exposed to tuberculosis while in the home, adding a year of anti-tuberculosis drugs to their already exhaustive medical regimen.

About a month later, Shenandoah County DSS dismissed the original allegation of Munchausen by Proxy and closed their investigation. The Funkhousers received a letter to that effect on October 16.

Then, in a parting shot, social workers again went to court on November 7 to insist the family still needed court supervision. Fortunately, the judge disagreed and ended the county's involvement. Unfortunately, so much damage had already been done, requiring months of counseling for the children after all that they had suffered at the hands of DSS.

And that's when the Funkhousers decided to strike back. Not for themselves, or even for their kids – but to send a signal that *parents in America should not have to live in fear of the courts every time their child gets sick or needs a trip to the ER.* And that's when they contacted: www.ParentalRights.org

Finding Legal Help, Taking the Battle to the State

Unfortunately, since ParentalRights.Org is a political lobbying organization we do not have lawyers on staff. What we do have, however, is a terrific working relationship with the Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA). So we forwarded the Funkhouser story to them, and their special legal team was able to join local lawyer Daniel Harvill in taking the case.

The Funkhousers are suing Michael Austin, the Shenandoah County caseworkers, and the employees of the children's home for negligence and misconduct. In HSLDA's own words, "in this case, the government needs a sharp reminder that families have rights."

And we heartily agree, which is one reason we have launched the new Parental Rights Foundation.

We receive hundreds of requests every year from families just like the Funkhousers who need someone to help them stand up for their rights. We can forward a few of these to allies like HSLDA, but we simply have to tell so many more to look elsewhere. But who else really specializes in this area of law?

With your help, *we can change the landscape of parental rights law for the better*, as the Funkhousers and HSLDA are doing now.

Please take a moment today to make your most generous possible donation (←click) to the Parental Rights Foundation. Your gift is tax deductible, and will move us toward our goal of educating, informing, and defending to preserve your parental rights.

Sincerely,

Michael Ramey
Director of Communications & Research



Right Brain Writing When Other Methods Haven't Worked

By Dianne Craft

"For many children and teens, writing comes naturally. For others, the writing process needs to be taught in detail, and after the instructional and practice time they learn to write well and their writing continues to improve. However, for some children and teens, writing never becomes easy, and they avoid it like the plague." Click icon to read article.



Homeschooling When It's Harder than You Bargained For

By Kendra Fletcher

"When we begin homeschooling, we can't always foresee that inevitably there will be months, perhaps even years, that threaten to sink us." Click icon to read article.



HOMESCHOOL GRADUATES PUBLISH BOOK

ENDORSED BY MIKE HUCKABEE

Homeschool graduates and sisters Carrie and Stacie Stoelting have written a new book called *Unite the USA: Discover the ABCs of Patriotism*. Released by a division of Thomas Nelson, *Unite the USA* will inspire and educate readers to defend faith and freedom.

The Stoelting's book has been endorsed by leaders like Mike Huckabee, Rick Santorum, Gary Bauer, Tim Wildmon, Mat Staver, and Tony Perkins.

Carrie Stoelting shared, "We wrote *Unite the USA* as a way to inspire and educate Americans to defend faith and freedom. It's a book that can be a resource in the classroom." Stoelting went on to say, "*Unite the USA* emphasizes the importance and urgency of homeschooling. Our country needs homeschoolers. America's future depends on it."

Unite the USA is a handbook that explains how every American can make a difference. It is a book that honors our military and veterans. And, it is a book that shows how to stand up for freedom and faith in Jesus Christ. *Unite the USA* includes little-known insights about our country's Christian history, facts about our Founding Fathers, and over 100 tips and resources to teach kids about patriotism.

Unite the USA is available at local bookstores, www.Amazon.com, Barnes and Noble, CBN Shop, Books-A-Million, etc. Learn more at www.unitethusa.org.

The Stoelting sisters are offering homeschool groups the wholesale price of *Unite the USA* with free shipping here:
<http://www.unitethusa.org/id112.html>

Special PRAYER Request and Update

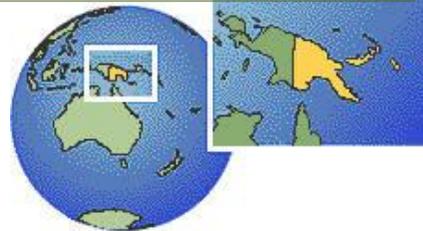
Many readers know Arlo and Cam Leedah. They are long-time homeschoolers having successfully graduated their three children. Cam has played a very important part in the incremental positive changes to our homeschool law. Leedah's son and wife prepared for and went to the mission field in Papua New Guinea where Jon is a pilot and mechanic. There are many challenges to living and ministering in a foreign land; Jon's and Adie's and their three boys' challenges have increased dramatically following a head collision while Jon was motorcycling home from work. Due to severe damage an amputation of one leg was necessary; the other leg is in a cast and will require many surgeries and months of physical therapy. It's not what they expected, is it? But it doesn't come as a surprise to our dear Lord Jesus whom we can trust to work this all for their good. Please pray for Jon and Adie and the boys; pray, too, for Cam as she serves Jon's family in Australia.

Here are some *Specific Prayer Requests from Jon and Adie*:

1. Pray for continued healing of the skin graft, the stump, and the foot.
2. Pray that Jon could get some longer stretches of sleep. He is exhausted, not only from all the surgeries, but also from his sleep being constantly interrupted, day and night.
3. Praise God that Jon is experiencing much less pain.
4. Praise for the wonderful support network that our great God has provided to Jon and family.
5. Praise for the continued opportunities in the hospital to give testimony to our Lord God's greatness and goodness.

Cards and notes may be sent to: *(WOW! This would be a great assignment for N.D. homeschoolers. I wonder how many cards we could send their way? Good opportunity to learn about Papua New Guinea, too.)*

Jonathan Leedah
Cairns Hospital
PO Box 902
Cairns, Queensland 4870
Australia



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.** **THANK God** for their gentle, wise, devoted, and godly leadership.
- **Pray** for single parent homeschoolers. Help them if you can.
- **NEW prayer request:** Alvin Reich, Jamestown, was recently diagnosed with acute leukemia; pray for Alvin and Becky during this challenging and disconcerting time.
- **Pray** for Christians in the Middle East. Beg God to strengthen them so that if they are called upon to die for their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ that their testimony will be one of victory to the very end. Pray for Iraqi and Syrian Christians. Check out Voice of the Martyrs.
- **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. **THANK God** for Dee Black and his many years of wise assistance to N.D. parent educators.
- **Pray for homeschooling mothers and fathers** in your support group, on your block, in your city.
- **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 because we love God and love one another. **THANK God** for placing us in families.
- **Pray** diligently for your Pastor that our Lord will keep him faithful, honorable in all areas of his life, and filled with godly wisdom. Pray for his family (living in a fish bowl isn't easy!). **THANK God** for your pastors, elders, and deacons.
- **Pray** for wisdom and that God will keep us from foolish leaders, prevaricating teachers, and silly pursuits. Help us, Lord!

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 billboby@msn.com

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NDHSA statement of faith

We believe in Almighty God, the Author of all creation, eternally existing in three persons, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit; the Bible as the inspired, infallible, written Word of God, complete in 66 books and our sole basis of faith and practice; the fallen state of man, guilty by nature and by act and therefore condemned before God; the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, fully God and fully man, except without sin, the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ on the cross for our sins, His visible bodily resurrection demonstrating His power over death and sin, His personal return; and regeneration by God, the Holy Spirit when we accept His free gift of salvation by His grace, through our personal faith, and not by any works we can do.

Mission statement

To provide a comprehensive home education information system to support, train and protect every willing North Dakota individual, family and church in the methods of privately funded, parent-directed home education.

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 billboby@msn.com.

Gail M. Biby is the publications editor for the NDHSA and has been joyfully working with parent educators for more than 24 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: billboby@msn.com

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