

The Eclectic Report

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Face Book at: North Dakota Home School Association

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Logo design by Josiah Kopp

Greetings!

I wrote this commentary quite some time ago, but never published it. I volunteer for Caring Hearts Jail Ministry and am learning anew the harm of secular psychology by what inmates write to me regarding their pursuit of value. So I thought I would include this for your rumination.

Self-Love or Cross Toting?

In the late 60s and throughout the 70s all types of faulty theories were floated as healing panaceas and all dealt with the attempt to make oneself healthy in order to be well, 'healthy'! There was self-realization and group therapy. Treatment centers for the 'addicted' and drunks abounded. Many such pursuits caused great harm to families. Public airing of bad, sinful behavior became a method for 'healing'. Then followed membership in a group promising anonymity and allowing you to have consort with a god of your own choosing in which meetings mostly consisted of rehashing the bad, sinful behavior. It was almost worthless to many and in some cases it was downright harmful. The goal was to work on one's self-worth in the hopes of preventing future sinful behavior. For the Christian such a method is contrary to the teaching of Scripture.

Self worth goals are always self-defeating for Christians. Seeking to love self more (in order to be 'healthy') will always lead to loving God less. Only One can sit on the throne. Only One is worthy to sit on the throne. Self love always leads to self coronation and such always leads to despair. Are you lonely? Seek the Lover of Souls, the Companion of the called. Are you depressed? Seek diligently the Lifter-up of the heart. Are you afraid? Seek the security of the Everlasting Arms. Are you abandoned? Seek the One who will never leave or forsake you, the Keeper of His promises. Are you caught in repetitive ungodly behavior? Resist the evil ones . . . resist till your last inspiration remembering that the Lord Most High has already defeated Satan.

Why did most of the silliness of the 60s and 70s decades pass away (at least as it was practiced at the time)? Because the godless world and its gurus of self-love have nothing to offer the Christian when it comes to godly counsel and it didn't have much to offer the unbeliever either. If perchance it stumbles upon some truth, it is likely to be ignored. After all, how can one 'become whole' if one concentrates on the Shepherd and other sheep?

Do you want to be a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ? Our gentle Shepherd said there is only one way for that to be true: you must deny self, take up your cross, and follow Jesus . . . every moment of every day for as long as He gives you breath.

Isn't it a supreme comfort to rest completely in the Lord, to follow His steps, to leave all to Him, to walk in complete obedience?

I have lived through the years when I loved self more than anything or anyone. They were despairingly painful and lonely and left me with weighty baggage. Love of self never made me 'healthy'. It only made me selfish . . . very, very selfish! It is in service to the King and to His children and to those still outside the Kingdom that we find peace, contentment . . . and 'health'.

I lived through the era of self-aggrandization by God's grace and because His hand was upon me with a calling before the foundation of the world. I now see clearly the danger of self-pursuit, self-love (though it certainly still rears its ugly, sneering head at me), and self-worth. They are cheap, transitory, unfulfilling substitutes for the real thing: a life of self-denial, cross toting, and following hard on the heels of the Savior. It is hard work. Very hard work.

By God's grace may we seek to love the Lord with all our hearts, souls, and minds. May we learn to deny self, to love the cross we are given, and to follow with joy the Chief Shepherd.

Don't forget to continue to PRAY . . . for Pas. Jeff Hoverson as he serves on the testing task force convened by the Department of Public Instruction Superintendent Baesler. Pray for the gift of wisdom, gentleness of spirit, and firmness of conviction.

Praying for you as you follow our Lord,
Gail, from the Blessed Life Ranch

The View from my Window

By Theresa Deckert, NDHSA Office Administrator



The newsletter is a little late this month as Gail wanted me to tell you a bit about our first ever **Western North Dakota Homeschool Round-up**. The event was held in Watford City October 3 with about 85 in attendance. Chuck Black was the keynote speaker with workshops also being presented by Chuck, Andrea Black, Pastor Jeff Hoverson, Llora Knight, Amy Puetz and Theresa Deckert.

Some of the workshop titles were "Teaching Multiples", "Confessions of a Homeschool Graduate", "Leaving the Classroom Mentality", "Preparing Transcripts", "Lessons Learned", "Courageous Fatherhood", "Getting Started", "Encouraging Hard Workers" and "Is it Worth It?" Keynote titles were "Spiritual Warfare: the Fight for Your Family" and "Dealing with Doubt."

The purpose of this event was to connect newer homeschoolers with others in their area as well as to give folks a "taste" of what a homeschool convention is like. There were even five vendor booths to give a little sampling of convention fare.

Prior to the Round-up, the board met at the childhood home place of Brain Skaar north of Watford City for our annual board retreat. It was at our retreat last year that the idea for this year's Round-up was born. At this year's retreat we had a great brainstorming session (dare I admit until almost midnight). After our business meeting on Friday we headed into Watford City to set up the Event Center for the Round-up.

A few words of thanks are needed here. Thank you to each of our speakers and vendors - you were all an encouragement! Thank you to the Watford City gals who brought cookies for dessert. A big **THANK YOU** to everyone who stayed after the retreat and helped with the tear down and clean-up. We appreciate each one who came to spend the day with us. I want to especially thank Karol for all her hard work in planning this event and the servant hearts of the board members even as they worked at setting up the building. Of course there are those board children still at home that get roped into helping - Kalli, Jonathan and Joseph. Lastly, thanks to Bev and Brian Skaar for being such gracious hosts for the board retreat.

You can go to our Face Book page (North Dakota Home School Association) to see some pictures from the retreat and the Round-up

From the Wendell & Beth Sip Family:

Winter Camp Dates
Jan. 15-17, 2016

NOTE: Currently taking reservations for full weekends (Fri.-Sun.) only. We will fill up! Dorm space only.

Respond using this email:
wbsip@loretel.net

What a blessing the Sip family is to the home schooling community.

UPDATE: Last month Mrs. Deckert wrote concerning the **ND Scholarship/Grant program** and the 'new' requirements. HSLDA is writing a letter to the Higher Education board on behalf of one N.D. homeschooling family that has been denied this grant after receiving it last year. We'll keep you posted. Thanks, Theresa, for all your diligent work on this.

"My Grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness." 2 Corinthians 12:9

A Whole BUNCH of Stuff

How to Give Your Kids the Gift of Learning

By Jessica Hulcy

By the time students reach high school, most parents are frazzled; but remember that fun and immersion are keys of learning!

Read the article at:

http://www.crosswalkmail.com/bqlclbpqcdcypzqtyjkmsyvspbyzfkzkdgpslltjzgzdzb_tcpbjjwzjp.html

Give Thanks, Win a Prize

From HSLDA

HSLDA's 2015 Essay Contest is underway, and we know you can think of at least one person you are grateful for, homeschoolers! The Essay Contest runs Sept. 1 through Nov. 1—so there's plenty of time to submit an essay, or two essays if you're feeling especially thankful! [View the guidelines here >>](#)

Homeschoolers Have Freedom From . . . !

From EdWeek Update: 'Super Lice' Have Schools Examining 'No-Nit' Policies

Districts have shifted away from screening students for lice, and experts favor policies that keep those infected in class, even as some strains of the insect prove resistant to traditional treatments. [Read more.](#)

"Hungry Pests" Curriculum

From *Practical Homeschooling* magazine - Sept./Oct. 2015

The U.S. Dept. of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has created a new curriculum for middle schoolers about 18 invasive pests that wreak havoc on ecosystems and displace native species. The curriculum teaches how the pests got here, the damage they cause and ways to keep them from spreading. You can download the curriculum for FREE (Yah! I thought that would get your attention.) at:

www.hungrypests.com/resources/educators.php

(Subscribe to *Practical Homeschooling* (think Mary Pride) for \$17.95/yr. at Home Life, Inc., POB 1190, Fenton, MO 63026-1190 or at:

www.home-school.com)

Home School Enrichment Magazine Nuggets

Issue 75 May/June 2015

- "Blaise Pascal, French mathematician, writer, and Christian philosopher once said, 'Cold words freeze people, and hot words scorch them, and bitter words make them bitter, and wrathful words make them wrathful. Kind words also produce their own image on men's souls; and a beautiful image it is. They smooth, and quiet, and comfort the hearer.' 'Death and life are in the power of the tongue' (Proverbs 18:21)."
- From the article "Blessed Mothers": May all homeschool moms remember to keep our eyes focused on the Lord, to remember and enjoy those little moments, the smiles, the laughter, the messes, and the giggles. Those little hands grow bigger than ours, and one day they will leave our homes. May we be remembered as blessed because we pointed our children to the One who desires a relationship with them now and throughout eternity."
- Chuck Black (Yes, our Chuck Black!) has two new books for our enjoyment from the *Wars of the Realm Trilogy*: *Cloak of the Light* and *Rise of the Fallen*. Fully dramatized audiobooks also available. Go to: www.WarsoftheRealm.com or www.KingdomSeries.com.
- From the article "The Blessing of Homeschooling": When we gather for breakfast we often pray, 'Lord, You know our schedule today. But we give You permission to interrupt our day.' It's a blessing to live out these Spirit-led days.



We are excited to have a *Guest Editorialist* and *Freshman at Sonshine Christian School, Devils Lake, ND, Mr. Joseph Deckert*, age 15. Joseph is the last of the Jeff and Theresa Deckert children and following completion of his homeschool years, Mrs. Deckert will have been homeschooling for longer than many current homeschoolers have been alive! Think about that! Now that is finishing well--praise be to God! Make plans now for your teen to participate in this exciting program during the **NDHSA Christian Home Educators Convention in Bismarck, Feb. 25-27, 2016.**

I Command or I Demand

By Joseph Deckert, age 15

On September 24-27, 2014, forty students from all over the United States attended the iCommand program at the Home School Legal Defense Association's 2014 National Leader's Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio. It is a program developed by Generation Joshua, the teen leadership training arm of Home School Legal Defense Association.

The iCommand program helps form a teen's worldview and enhances decision making skills. The program centers on crises happening in the world and students try to solve them. The program description states, "iCommand is designed as an intense foreign policy crisis simulation, with students acting as members of the government's executive branch."

For example, a terrorist group attacks and takes hostages at a very important meeting in Florida and Florida's senator is kidnapped. Another scenario was a North Korean plane being shot down by a South Korean fighter plane. If our group was on our game, we could have found out that China paid the terrorist group. If we checked the pilot of the South Korean fighter, we would have found out that he was a North Korean infiltrator and China encouraged North Korea to do that.

Our director, who is employed by Generation Joshua, acted as the President and the Generation Joshua employees were the guides of every department. Students were assigned to one of these three different departments of government: the Intelligence Agency, the State Department or the Department of Defense.

Generation Joshua offers four different programs: iCommand, iElect, iObject and iAdvocate. They are designed for fifteen to eighty students.

At the **NDHSA convention in February of 2016, Generation Joshua will come and do the teen program.** I would highly recommend participating. Altogether the iCommand program was fun, challenging, and helpful. It helped me be a better decision maker.

**NDHSA Convention
Feb. 25-27, 2016
Bismarck Civic Center
Keynote speaker:
Israel Wayne**



Why is Homeschooling So Hard?

By Brooke Cooney

I'll be the first to admit it; I have contemplated (and threatened) to send my children to school. I think I will refrain from telling just how many times I have contemplated that scenario this year alone.

I've come to the realization that homeschooling is a job rewarded mostly, or should I say, hopefully, in the long term. I worked in a brick and mortar school for six years. I was employed by the local public school system as a speech-language pathologist and therefore paid for my patience in teaching *other people's children* reading strategies, language instruction, and how to correctly articulate r, l, and s.

Today, my diligence and patience in teaching my own children are frequently rewarded with whines of "do I have to?" and "this is too hard, I hate school." Yes, I have read countless numbers of homeschool books, and yes, we have great days where learning is like a Disney movie complete with singing birds and hopping bunnies. However, most days, if I am gut-level honest, home education is a job that doesn't birth accolades and paystubs for my dedication, tenacity, skill, or lack thereof. Most days, I am faithful because I feel God has absolutely called me to such a task and to not submit in willful obedience would be to disobey God's calling on my life. Further, a lack of obedience here would for me, at this time in our journey, be akin to my oldest saying, "this is too hard; I hate school." Effectually, I would be giving up simply because I didn't want to do the hard thing.

With little social interaction with other adults, no monetary return for my work, no checklist that ever stays checked off for more than a day, and very little quiet space for my mind to concentrate, I have to ask myself, why am I and other parents joining the homeschool movement and what motivates parents to continue home education year after year?

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) [reports](#) that as of 2012 there were 1.7 million homeschooled students in the US. That is roughly 3.4% of the student population. The three top reasons surveyed parents indicated their choice to homeschool were: (1) concern about the environment of other schools; (2) a desire to provide moral instruction; and (3) dissatisfaction with academic instruction with other schools. Religious reasons followed as a close fourth.

I love to learn. I love knowing what my kids are learning, and I desire to teach them a Christian worldview in every facet of academics. I want to be there to see them grow and to celebrate their accomplishments. Honestly, I am redeeming my education while educating them. However, I keep discovering that my Type A personality really desires tangible return for my labors. I so easily forget the daily blessings of affection, shared interests, books, and character development.

I've seen plenty of bumper stickers which boast, *My child is an honor roll student*, not to mention the occasional social media posts praising little Johnny and Suzy for reading Plato at age four. Kids in traditional schools whether public or private receive grades for their work, report cards every 6-12 weeks, and parent-teacher meetings where strengths and weaknesses are addressed and progress praised.

What does that leave for the home educating moms and dads? I would be hard pressed to buy a bumper sticker for my homeschooled students. Personally, I am not the bumper sticker or stick figure [family](#) decal type. Additionally, I am not doling out grades and report cards. Yes, we celebrate successes with rewards and encouragement, but that still leaves me with these questions:

How do I measure and celebrate success in home education? What daily, tangible rewards can I cling to?

Then again, I am not really sure these are the ultimate questions.

I am reminded of something my grandfather shared with me after the passing of his 93 year old mother, "We can never really pay back our parents except for raising our children in the right way and being good parents to them."

I think he is right. I don't remember rising to call my mother blessed until college. All those times she and my dad supported me, taught me how to do new things like tie my shoes, drive a car, or balance a check book weren't instantaneously rewarded for them. Rather, it was my walking in obedience to what they taught me--sometimes after walking in disobedience--that was the reward for their diligent work as parents.

I believe it is the same for home educating parents. I have the incredible privilege of watching my children grow and learn on a daily basis. It's simply that sometimes I watch the progress so intently that I miss the bigger picture of growth right under my nose. For example, when my four year old learns about the Table of Contents and assures me there is one in his Bible. He diligently looks for it until he finds it. Or the day he woke up and *magically* could write his name. Or when my six year old bemoans reading for weeks only to return from a trip to grandma's where she is now reading that box of Bob Books like it was the easiest thing on earth. It took us weeks of diligence and tenacity to see this fruit, but the fruit came even amidst my despair and thoughts of yellow school buses dancing in my head.

The ultimate lesson I am slowly learning is one that has been passed down in Christendom for thousands of years: *And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.* ([Galatians 6:9](#), ESV)

Here are five tangible ways to help you see the bigger picture:

1. Take advantage of interruptions to your day. There may be a gold nugget to discover with your children.
2. Say a [prayer](#) of thankfulness to God when those breakthroughs occur. Don't pray silently; pray aloud with your children and ask them to pray as well.
3. There are plenty of scripture references that address home education. Find them, write them on note cards, and place them in key areas for constant reminders that God has called you to this.
4. Take breaks as needed. Times of refreshing for you and your students allow opportunities for important concepts to seep in during playtime and real-life experiences.
5. Talk with other homeschool parents. Sharing our struggles and joys maintains a healthy perspective and adds to our authenticity as friends and co-laborers with Christ.

Have a Struggling Learner?

HSLDA's special needs/struggling learner consultants offer a variety of resources for parents. Members may contact Faith Berens, Joyce Blankenship, Carol Brown, and Krisa Winn for counsel and suggestions. Call 540.338.5600 or visit hsllda.org/contactstaff.

For helpful resources 24/7 or to sign up for our e-newsletter, visit hsllda.org/strugglinglearner.





PRAY WITHOUT CEASING . . .

~Pray for our board: **Ken & Llorra Knight, Jeff & Theresa Deckert, Pas. Jeff & Karol Kapelle, Sue Huntington, Neil Toman, Pas. Brian & Bev Skaar and Troy & Kristin Durham.** Pray for them regarding all issues of board governance. Pray for our testing task force member, Pas. Jeff Hoverson, Minot.

~Pray for single parent homeschoolers. Maybe God would use you to come alongside and help them with childcare, finances, and curriculum. Pray they will persevere.

~Continue to Pray for those with health challenges: Nathaniel Breuer, 12th grader (and family), Minot; Evan Vanderbeek, 9, (and family); for the Aberle family during this time of medical challenge. Pray for the Solhjem family as they grieve the loss of their 9 year old son. Remember the Kelly & Shannon Olson family in the loss of their first grandchild. (Know of someone we could be praying for regarding these challenges? Send to billbiby@msn.com and we will gladly add them to our prayer list.)

~Pray for Christians in Iraq, Syria, and Libya. Pray for Christians in Kenya, and Niger. *Open Doors USA* reports that 100 million Christians are persecuted globally. Many are dying with the name of our dear Lord Jesus on their lips. Pray for those fearful mommies and daddies and their little ones as they run, hide or die because they are Christians. Then express your gratitude to the Lord for being born in America!

~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 the Lord they are carefully watching the latest trend i.e. "medical kidnapping". **THANK God for Dee Black and his many years of service to NDHSA staff. Dee will retire in December after more than 25 years of assisting ND parent educators. What a blessing! How we will miss him.**

~Pray for homeschooling mothers and fathers in your support group, on your block, in your city, in North Dakota.

~Pray diligently for your Pastor; there are many temptations and challenges in our culture . . . pastors are not exempt! Ask God to make them students of the WORD and courageous speakers of the truth.

~Pray for homeschooling mommies struggling with discouragement, feelings of being overwhelmed, resistance to this hard call, and for those who feel alone in their endeavor (especially in rural areas of N.D.). Pray the enemy will not diminish the zeal of beginning homeschoolers.

Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. Ephesians 3:20-21 KJV



Send your prayer requests to office@ndhisa.org or billbiby@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 billbiby@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 has written a regular column for *Eternal Encouragement* magazine (a magazine by and for Christian women), serves on the advisory board for Mark Hamby's *Lampighter 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: billbiby@msn.com

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The entire set of 15 **Legislative WATCHes** for the 2015 legislative session are at: <https://goo.gl/gfHCXQ> This link is also at our website: www.ndhisa.org

From Elisabeth Elliot's book, *Twelve Baskets of Crumbs*:

When I come to God I want words. Even though 'there is not a word in my tongue but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether,' I want to say something to him. He knows what I look like, he knows my frame, remembers that I am dust. Does this flesh need words to speak to him? It does. There is, of course, a silence that waits on God. There is a lifting up of hands that takes the place of words. But there are times when we want desperately to speak. 'Each in his own words' is all very well if you can find them, but often I find them only in the words of others.

DON'T FORGET our NEW office hours:

M-W-Th-F: 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Office **closed on Tuesday.**

