



HOMESCHOOL Update

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A MINISTRY PUBLICATION OF CHRISTIAN HOME EDUCATORS OF COLORADO



**Rocky Mountain
Homeschool
Conference**
JUNE 15-17, 2023

PARENTING in Weakness

by Ruth Chou Simons

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KEYNOTE
SPEAKER
at the
RMHCI



Tour the **Semisaurus
Mobile Creation Museum!**

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Teach Your Unique Learner to Read



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BY STEVE CRAIG

Why You Should **NOT** HOMESCHOOL

My wife, Tara, and I were both blessed to be homeschooled by our parents all the way through high school. Now, as a second generation homeschooler and leader within the homeschool community, I love to talk about the benefits of homeschooling, help parents get started, defend homeschooling at their state Capitol, and promote and facilitate homeschooling wherever I can.

When you watch a sporting event, many of the fans will show their support by wearing their team's colors or their favorite player's jersey. But then there is that guy who really gets into it. The cameras always find him. Well, I am THAT guy for homeschooling!

All that said, it might then strike you as odd that I am writing about why you should NOT homeschool! Well, before you get any more confused, let's jump into it.

The first reason you should NOT homeschool is "home." Many parents who are beginning their homeschool journey think largely in terms of location. They desire to give their child a "good education" (as defined by the culture) and believe that changing the location of "where" education is done will lead to success by eliminating the peripheral factors that were negatively affecting their child at public or private school. However, if you view "home" schooling primarily as a change in the location of education, then you are missing out on the greatest opportunities and blessings that homeschooling can provide. I believe that the "where" will ultimately be determined by the "what" and the "why" — which are of much greater significance.

This brings me to the second reason you should NOT homeschool. That reason is ... (did you guess it?) ... "school." That is because for most of us, when we think "school," we think "academics." We think math, science, grammar ... and we think grades. Grades, which lead to universities which lead to professions which lead to financial wealth. There are plenty of studies which prove

homeschoolers perform very, very well academically, and statistically better than public or private schoolers. Academics are certainly an attractive and compelling reason to choose homeschooling.

But if academics are your primary consideration when it comes to school choices, it's time to rethink the "what" of the education you are aiming for. As I said earlier, the "what" and the "why" will ultimately determine the "where." But what "what" could be more on point for homeschooling than the "what" of academics?

In the Great Commission, Jesus tells us that our main job as believers, and as Christian parents, is to make disciples. Therefore, our mission is clear, simple, and carries profound implications for how we look at education. As Christian parents we MUST think in terms of making disciples rather than academics of our children. Academics are an important context for Christian discipleship, but they are not the goal. That is why CHEC's Vision Statement says that "we (CHEC) envision families honoring Jesus Christ by embracing **home discipleship** that is Christ centered, parent directed, and free from government control." Notice the absence of the words "school," "academics," or "education."

Scripture makes it clear that parents are to take a primary role in the training and instruction of their

children (Ephesians 6:4). Scripture also instructs parents to integrate the word of God into all activities of their children's day (Deuteronomy 6:7). For these reasons, both "home" and "school" are ideal contexts for the Christian discipleship of children. Remember, neither "school" or doing it at "home" is the end goal!

If you are new to homeschooling, perhaps you have never thought in terms of "academics" vs. "discipleship." I encourage you to attend the upcoming Rocky Mountain Homeschool Conference, June 15-17, 2023, where you will join thousands of other homeschoolers in a deep dive into all things homeschooling and home discipleship. I will be helping teach Wednesday's FREE *Homeschool Introductory Seminar*. I hope to see you there!

Whatever season of homeschooling you find yourself in, perhaps it's time to take a closer look at the "what" that is driving your homeschooling? Here are some practical questions to ask yourself that might help you determine if you have the right priorities.

- 1 Was having family worship today more important than getting the math lessons complete?
- 2 Did I verbally praise God when my child learned something new about His creation?
- 3 Did I take time to shepherd my child's heart throughout the day, or was I more concerned with staying on schedule?
- 4 Do I integrate God's Word into all aspects of my child's day, and am I careful to select a curriculum that helps me do this?
- 5 Do my child's history lessons emphasize God's hand of providence over the affairs of men, His redemptive plan in history, and the growth of His church. Or the rise, accomplishments, and fall of men and their empires?
- 6 Am I more concerned with how I model Christ to my child or my teaching abilities?
- 7 Do I consider my children's need for nurture, training, or discipline a valuable opportunity for discipleship, or do I view those needs as a distraction from "school"?

“ SCRIPTURE INSTRUCTS PARENTS TO INTEGRATE God's Word INTO ALL ACTIVITIES OF THEIR CHILDREN'S DAY. ”

- 8 Does our family routinely serve the body of Christ or help those in need, or does service get pushed aside for academics and extra-curricular activities?
- 9 Am I more concerned with character than I am with grades?
- 10 Do I plan and invest more into my child's eternal future than in their financial future?

This is by no means an exhaustive list. But I hope it will help to get you thinking about the "what" and "why" of your homeschooling.

I want to leave you with a reminder of the "why" for home discipleship, which is the glory of God, obedience to His clear commands, and the salvation of the souls of our children. If we remember these "whys," then the "what" and the "where" will fall into place. ■



Steve Craig is CHEC's Executive Director. He and his wife Tara are second generation homeschoolers and have a passion to inspire others toward biblical discipleship in the home. Steve and Tara live in Franktown with their seven children: Carson, Christiana, Angelina, Jewel, Ariel, Michelle, and Jackson. He can be reached at Steve@CHEC.org.

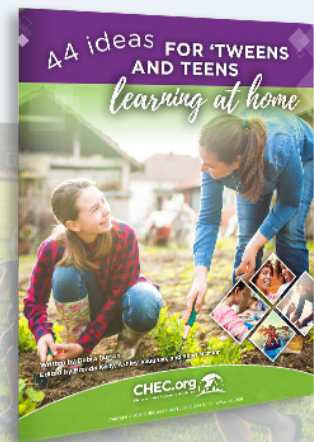


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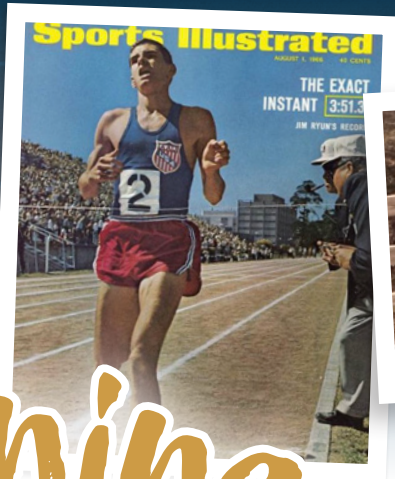


102 Ideas to Keep Kids Busy At Home



44 Ideas for 'Tweens & Teens Learning at Home

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PHOTOS FROM RYUN



Running for the Everlasting PRIZE

BY JIM RYUN

In His graciousness, the Lord has outlined how we are to run the race of life on a daily basis. Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith (Hebrews 12:1-2a ESV).

Little did I know that as a young junior high school boy, praying to God for direction in life, that He would lead me ultimately to the “race of life.” I simply wanted to be on a sports team and make some friends. As a high school sophomore, I signed up for cross country. I loved running! After years of hard work and training, it eventually brought me wonderful honors and success. I achieved world records, seven front covers on the *Sports Illustrated* magazine, an Olympic Silver Medal, ESPN's High School Athlete of the 20th Century — even a letter jacket!

However, after all those wonderful successes, I was empty. Life was all about me. There was always a thirsting for more. On May 18, 1972, when my wife, Anne, and I truly became Christians, I realized for the first time that all those marvelous earthly rewards could not earn God's love. Struggling and striving for acceptance had only left me empty. On that night of accepting Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, giving Him control of my life, I learned He freely gives His love. I did not have to earn it. World records and medals hanging on my letter jacket could not earn something that was free.

At that moment, I began the race of life. I changed coaches from my wonderful high school and college coach, Bob Timmons (who had put up with a lot of my complaining), to Jesus Christ who became the author and perfecter of my faith. That faith would give me the courage to do simple things for Christ, like offer a homeless person a free meal. That faith would give me the conviction to humble myself to ask forgiveness from my wife and others. This newfound relationship with Jesus Christ would get me off the pedestal of serving self and begin teaching me to love and serve others.

This spiritual race of faith has some similarities to running physically. Both the spiritual and physical races require daily training and perseverance. Perseverance is sticking with a task or individual despite difficulty or delay in achieving success.

There are also differences between the physical and spiritual races. One race is for self glory, the other is for eternal glory. The physical race develops your body, is timed, is a certain distance you run against others, is for medals, letter jackets, and awards.



During the spiritual race, you are not racing against someone, this race is just for you. It is not a timed event nor is the length of the race revealed prior to the start. This race lasts your lifetime. This spiritual race develops in you humility and interest in helping others and is run *with* Someone, not *against* others. That Someone is Jesus Christ, who is one step ahead of you, showing you the way. This race will be challenging, as well as rewarding. This race will develop Christ-like character, including spiritual faithfulness, self-control, patience, goodness, gentleness, joy, kindness, peace, and love. In this race you will stumble and falter, but you have Jesus alongside you, who will pick you up, not condemn you. He will encourage you and give you wisdom for your individual life journey.

Which race will you choose?

As my running achievements decreased later in my track career, my life obligations increased. Married with children, God had different kinds of races for me and my family to run as we served Him. Anne and I had been convicted as young Christians that we were to parent our children intentionally in Christ, which included teaching not only Bible stories, but God's principles. Like us, each of our children established his or her own daily time with the Lord, and became involved with a Bible memorization program.

In the summer of 1983, I happened to be in Omaha, Nebraska doing a radio interview when I providentially met Dr. Raymond Moore, author of *Better Late Than Early*. Considered the "father" of the modern home education movement, he introduced me to the concept of homeschooling. Anne and I had been praying about the path we were to take concerning

our four children's education. At that time, they were enrolled in the government school system.

Simultaneously, one of Anne's brothers wrote to tell us that he and his wife had started homeschooling their first born child in Portland, Oregon. With Dr. Moore's assistance, we contacted a Kansas lawyer who had worked with other homeschooling families. He helped us through the legalities of beginning our homeschool journey. And what a journey it was!

When we began homeschooling, our youngest daughter, Catharine, was in third grade, our twin sons, Ned and Drew, in fifth grade, and our eldest daughter, Heather, was in seventh grade. In alignment with education laws at that time, we became a satellite school to Cair Paravel in Topeka, Kansas.

Our morning routine became something like this: a jog outdoors of a few miles, tidying up bedrooms and dressing for school (we never wore pajamas during school hours), individual devotional quiet times, then everyone pitching in to prepare breakfast. Morning family devotions began with reading the Word of God together and praying.

We then commenced our "school" routine, which included listening on the radio to Elisabeth Elliot and Derek Prince who each had 15-minute teachings. We learned how to take lecture notes as we listened.

Afternoons were spent exploring individual interests (including music, raising sheep, cooking and baking, and horticulture) as well as being employed nannying, cleaning homes, and helping with yard work.

Homeschooling also afforded us the opportunity to evangelize and participate in various mission trips to such places as Jamaica and Mexico. Anne and I are so grateful for our homeschool marathon which

brought us together as a family and trained our children to become godly men and women of character.

This race of life requires perseverance, endurance, trials, tribulations, and challenges, much of which I learned about in physical running for self-glory. The race I now run has a finish line as well, but I'm not there yet. That comes at my death when I will be greeted by Jesus Christ with His words from Matthew 25:21, *Well done, My good and faithful servant; enter into your rest.*

As I reflect on my life, I am in awe of God's goodness and am reminded of this Psalm of David: *I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart; I will recount all of Your wonderful deeds. I will be glad and exult in You; I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High* (Psalm 9:1–2 ESV). The Lord has performed many wonderful deeds in our lives and He will do so again. We should all be expectant, waiting and depending on Him as He leads us to finish our race strong for His glory and honor. ■



Jim Ryun is a former multiple world-record holder in the mile run and other distances, an Olympian, All-American, United States Congressman (retired), 2020 Presidential Medal of

Freedom recipient, and author. His life journey has led him from being cut from the church baseball team to being rated by ESPN as the number one high school athlete of the century, beating out Tiger Woods and LeBron James! A RMHC speaker and exhibitor, stop by his booth for books, and speak with him about faith, homeschooling, or running. Until then, contact him at RyunRunning.com.



SPEAKER

LOVE GOD AND LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR.

“Rescue those who are being taken away to death; hold back those who are stumbling to the slaughter.”

Proverbs 24:11



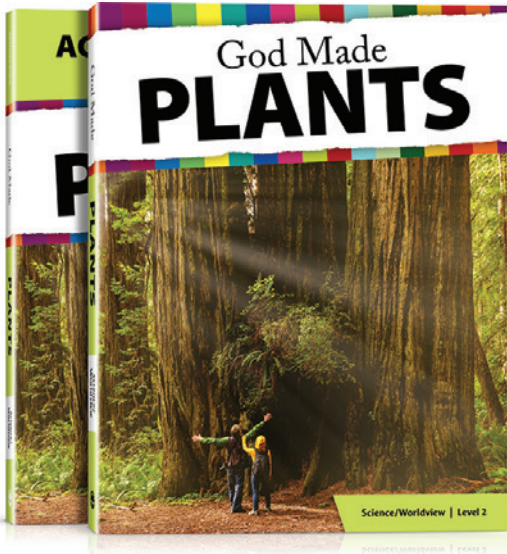
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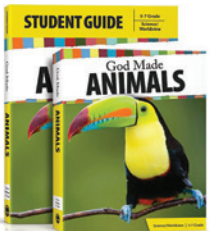
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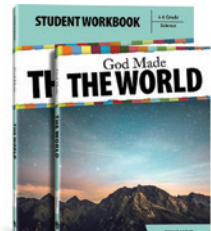
Other Books in This Series



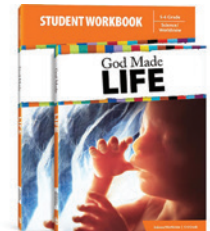
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PHOTOS FROM SIMONS

Parenting

IN WEAKNESS

BY RUTH CHOU SIMONS

I am so grateful that God makes two-year-olds absolutely adorable because it is right around that age that you can feel like you have had it with this parenting gig. You look in the mirror to find that the sweet, gentle mama that rocked her baby to sleep has disappeared, and a fire-breathing mama with anger issues and is in her place. At the very least, it can feel that way.

Navigating the tantrums and defiance your two-year-old throws your way, while cleaning up the messes they're capable of creating can leave you feeling like you're dealing with an enemy rather than the child you love. And, instead of feeling like an in-control adult, you find yourself tempted to succumb to similar childlike foolishness; tantrums, defiance, and manipulation. *(Yes, adults can play the same games their children do!)*

Friend, you're not the only one.

Maybe you've started to question whether you're the right woman for the job? Or wondered if God just missed the part that you tend toward impatience, anger, selfishness, and being unwise? How does He expect us to not ruin our kids when He knows how messed up we are?

Maybe you reached a breaking point and mapped out a plan to speak and act nicely, starting the next morning. You confidently proclaimed, "I will never do that again." Whatever "that" is, we promise ourselves and

the Lord that we'll be on our best behavior from this point forward.

Unfortunately, making promises and playing nice still leaves us disappointed and full of despair when we come up short and incapable of doing the very thing we promised ourselves we'd do. The ugly tone of voice still spills out. The condescending look takes over our face even when we try to hide it. Our best efforts are simply not good enough.

Every mama — those who have forever aspired to the calling of motherhood and those who have been thrust into it reluctantly alike — finds themselves



inadequate for the task of motherhood at some point. No matter how many parenting books you've read, how many friends and relatives you've watched parent, or how many babysitting hours you've banked, nothing blunts the overwhelming fact that our weakness as moms, plus the foolishness of children, equals potential for great despair.

But, friend, motherhood is *not* some cruel joke through which God seeks to highlight your failures, or leave you feeling helpless because of your own upbringing, unhealthy examples, or lack of personal growth and self-control.

It's just that our best was never *meant* to be good enough.

Jesus didn't save us so that we could do motherhood on our own, apart from Him. He saved us so that we would be forever connected to Him, forever dependent on Him and on the sustenance that flows through the cord of His unending love. Can I remind you that Jesus was cut off from the Father that we might not be cut off from Him?

Motherhood is the loving vessel through which God seeks to highlight His sufficiency and ability, and grow your awareness of His faithfulness. His pure and sinless life led to His provision for your righteousness on the cross. *He substitutes your dead end with His new beginning.*

When we remember that we were never designed to do motherhood apart from His enabling, we can learn to embrace our deficiencies as mothers as opportunities to see God's grace.

- If we parent consistently and show patience, it is God's grace — His sanctifying work in us.
- If our children obey, it is God's grace in us — that enables and instructs us in faithfulness as mothers.
- If our children defy us in disobedience, it is God's grace — that we might have the opportunity to show the Gospel to our children once again.

- If we struggle to be the mamas we desire to be, it is God's grace — that we would be reminded once again of the price paid on our behalf, the worthiness of Christ bestowed on us.

You see? Motherhood is all grace. From beginning to end.

God *did* see you. He saw all your impatience, anger, selfishness, and foolishness. And in Christ, He counts you as righteous. He knows your weaknesses, and He's transforming you through them.

So if, today, you are crying out feeling helpless to be the mother you hoped you'd be, remember: His arms are open and you're exactly where you need to be. Here, God says, "Now, child, you are ready for what I have for you. You are ready to become the mama I will make you to be."

Motherhood isn't only for the qualified — none of us are qualified! Motherhood is for those God qualifies through Christ. Lean in, friend. He's got you. ■

[First published June 16, 2013, on Ruth Chou Simons' GraceLaced.com blog; reprinted with author's permission.]



Ruth Chou Simons is a Wall Street Journal bestselling and award-winning author of several books and Bible studies, including GraceLaced, Beholding and Becoming, and

When Strivings Cease. She is an artist, entrepreneur, podcaster, and speaker, using each of these platforms to spiritually sow the Word of God into people's hearts (GraceLaced.com). Ruth and her husband, Troy, are grateful parents to six boys — their greatest adventure. Ruth will be a keynote speaker at RMHC 2023. Be sure to attend her workshops and visit the GraceLaced booth in the Exhibit Hall for her beautiful and gospel-centered lifestyle products for families.



“ EVERY MAMA FINDS THEMSELVES *inadequate* FOR THE TASK OF MOTHERHOOD AT SOME POINT...

MOTHERHOOD IS THE LOVING VESSEL THROUGH WHICH GOD SEEKS TO HIGHLIGHT *His sufficiency* AND ABILITY. ”



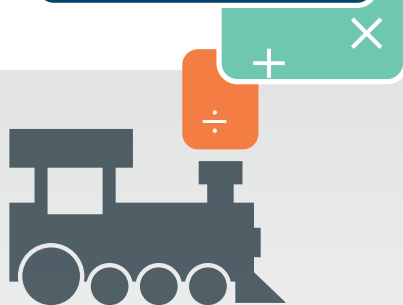
STUDENT FRIENDLY MATH

Learning math takes a lot of mental muscle regardless of curriculum. Christian Light Math uses a spiral learning method to make learning easier for students in Grades 1-9:

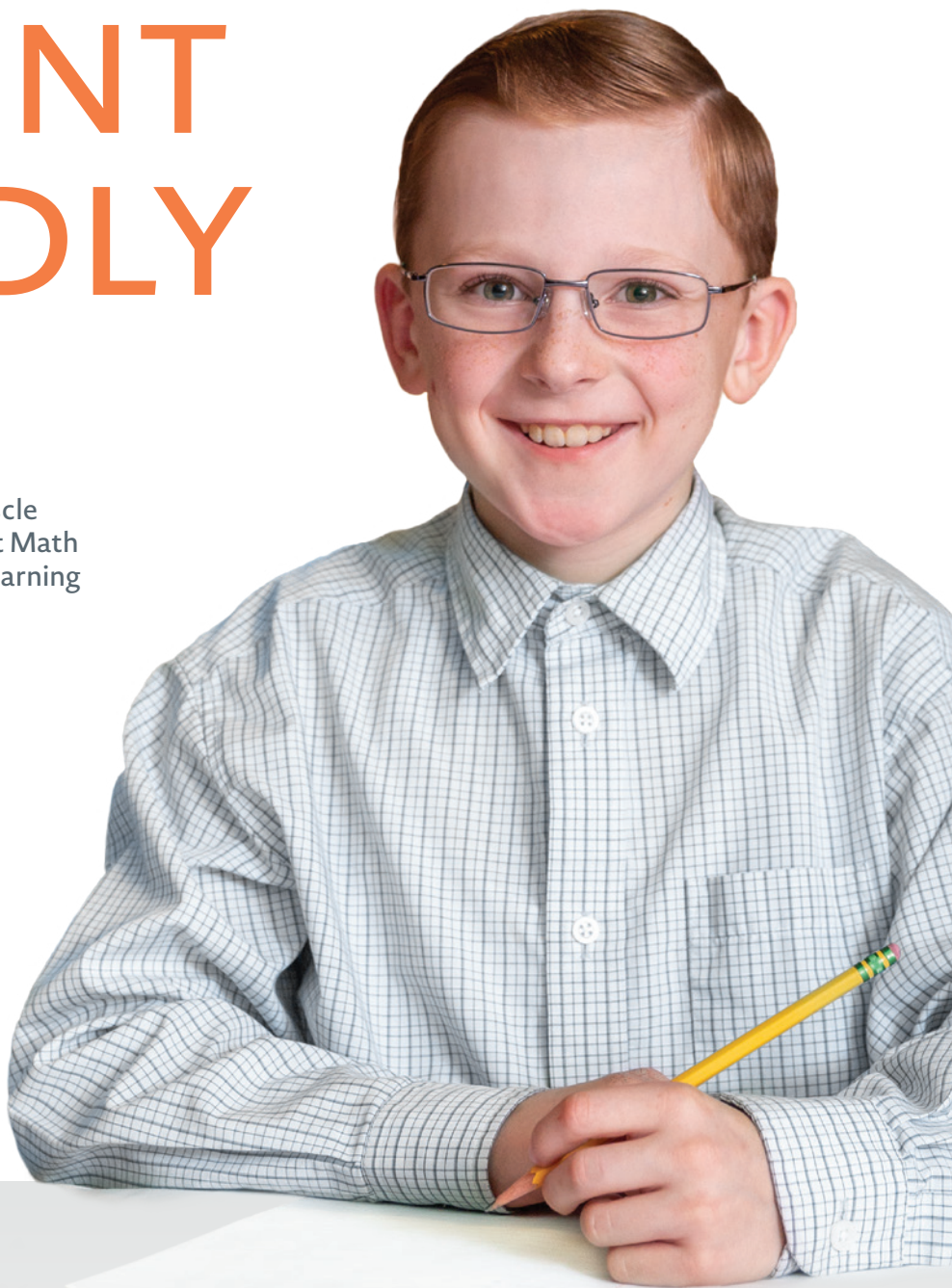
The learning thread on a particular concept is simple at first and then expanded in later lessons so that learning is cumulative.

New material is introduced in small steps, making the learning process less overwhelming.

Students review a new concept multiple times through exercises in following lessons.



Picture a train winding up a mountain. For example, the fraction train starts in first grade with cars carrying a light load of simple fractions. As the train chugs up the track, it pauses at stations to add more difficult concepts to the cars that were partially filled. It also picks up new cars carrying small loads of new concepts.



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BY KELSEY REED

YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT

CURRENT

WORLDWIDE EVENTS

If you're thinking: "Really? Another task for my list? The news, of all things? I'm trying to diminish things that trigger anxiety!" Well, I am right there with you!

Most of my life, I have seen the news as something to avoid. During my teens, if my mom turned on the television between 7:00 and 9:00 pm, I promptly escaped into a book. When my dad recommended I apply to WORLD Journalism Institute as a next step to developing my love of writing, in a reversal from Jonah's story, I pursued missions instead! "One ticket to not news-reporting, please!" At age 20, I knew I would *never* want *anything* to do with the news.

Now here I am, working for WORLD News Group, a now 40-year-old news organization. The process that drew me here unfolded circuitously. Ultimately, my love of learning required me to move out of my one-dimensional perspective. It finally hit me that the news serves as a snapshot into all the subjects I love: art, food, science, music, film, philosophy — the who, what, when, where, why, and how of our current age. It provides in "short" form all that I had learned to love in "long" form — a short story as opposed to a Russian novel (I still haven't made it through *The Brothers Karamazov*).

My appreciation grew beyond self-serving. As with Jonah's story, I now have a better view of missions. Consider these words from my seminary professor, Dr. Jimmy Agan: "All Scripture reveals something of the person or work of Christ, or man's need of it." This concise hermeneutic (or interpretive framework) for God's special revelation may also be applied to His general revelation (Creation). By God's grace, and for His own glory, everything in this world reveals something of the person or work of Christ, or our need of it.

And man, do we feel that need! In this Age of Information, a year's dose of content bombards us on a daily basis. If we are not careful, the barrage we can receive at every waking moment could oversaturate us — like one of those cartoon characters drinking out of a hose, ballooning ten times his usual size. With the news in particular, this often leaves us anxious, discouraged, and afraid. Where can we find hope amidst all the despair? Why even put ourselves in that place? Why not cut off the media stream completely? Insulate. Isolate. Protect.

But is that a godly response?

The psalmist wrote, *The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein* (Psalm 24:1 ESV), and *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork* (Psalm 19:1 ESV). If we take God at His

word, we believe He controls it all. We recognize His world reflects something of Himself for all to see. *His eternal power and divine nature have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made* (Romans 1:20 ESV), and *For from him and through him and to him are all things* (Romans 11:36 ESV). Chapters 38–41 of Job remind the reader — through the lens of human suffering permitted in Job's life by God's own hand — that the Lord has charge of all things.

The Creator-God also displayed His authority as Lawgiver, revealing to man the right way of living. Through the law, we not only learn something of His character and nature but also of sin and our inability to live righteous lives. Most radically, God reveals Himself within human history in His Incarnate Son, "God with us," to seek, save, and send us out in His name (see Luke 19:10 and Matthew 28:19–20).

What does this have to do with the news and current events? Allow me to trace the thread with a story from last year, when I started at WORLD. My youngest daughter (then 6 years old) and I began listening to "The World and Everything In It" — WORLD's daily news podcast that borrows its title from Scripture. One day, she looked up and said "Mommy, we need to know what is going on in the world, so that we can know what to do in it."



**GOD'S WORLD
REFLECTS
SOMETHING OF
HIMSELF FOR ALL TO
SEE. HE USES US AS
MAJOR PLAYERS
IN HIS RESTORATIVE
WORK IN THE WORLD.**

This statement hit me equally as profoundly as my professor's. God commanded Adam and Eve: *Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth* (Genesis 1:28). In this creation mandate, God defined how human expression in His world ought to look. He gave us both procreative work and "subcreative" work (to borrow from J.R.R. Tolkien) — "creating" with the materials provided by and under the authority of the One who made all things from nothing.

My daughter's precocious statement brought another command to mind, another way for us to multiply, fill the earth, subdue it: the discipleship mandate. Jesus instructed His followers to *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations* (Matthew 28:19 ESV), making them agents of His, extending His kingdom to the ends of the earth ... and everything in it.

So now, I incorporate my daughter's observation into a stance for all of life: Everything in His Word, everything in His world, also reveals the Lord's design for human work and agency within it.

He has called us to make His glory known through all of our work, play, study, relationships ... any human endeavor, *as for the Lord and not for men* (Colossians 3:23 ESV). Perhaps this convicts you, as it does me, for, He uses us as major players in His restorative work in the world. Maybe it affirms you, and you sigh with relief — it is not all up to me! His Spirit equips us to do His will, engage His world, learn, grow, intercede, and go.

I have the privilege of working for an organization that believes and applies these things. We report

on the world through the understanding that it is His. What we know and experience of God, His provision and intentions for us and His world, gives us what we need to observe and engage it with discernment, prayerfully, and for His glory. At God's WORLD News, we say "biblical literacy fuels news literacy" and work towards "building news literacy to better live out the Gospel." We offer a look at the world through the lens of Truth, telling the "good news of the Gospel" even as we report on human brokenness.

Not every organization works like WORLD. Yet no organization operates outside of God's authority. We can have confidence and hope — until the day Christ returns — His hand is in it all. When we learn

about current events, we do so with the knowledge that everything in His world shows something of who He is, what He has done, or man's need for Him and shows us what we can do to partner with Him. So, believer: How will you respond? ■



Kelsey Reed serves as News Coach with God's WORLD News. She and her husband have three daughters with whom they enjoy exploring creation and culture. Kelsey revels in the teaching and learning

process: encouraging parents, teachers, and mentors of kids and teens in engaging the world the Lord has made. World News Group is a sponsor and exhibitor at RMHC; learn more about broadcast media at the WNG interactive booth in the exhibit hall or go to WNG.org, WorldWatch.news, or GWNews.com.

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Music in your HOMESCHOOL

BY MARCIA WASHBURN

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the LORD with gladness: come before His presence with singing. (Psalm 100:1–2 KJV)

Maybe you memorized this rich psalm as a child, as I did. But perhaps you were pretty convinced that your “joyful noise” was more noise than singing. Many adults are convinced they can’t sing.

Often this is based on the thoughtless words of an adult who told them at a young age that they couldn’t carry a tune, so they have spent a lifetime thinking they can’t sing. The fact is, most children can’t sing on pitch by themselves until they are *at least* 8–10 years old. Younger children can sometimes sing in tune if someone else sings or plays along with them. It is the exceptional child who sings well without support during the early grades.

Regardless of their own perceived lack of talent, most Christian parents are eager for

their children to experience the joys of music. Making music opens the way for artistic expression, develops physical coordination, provides social benefits, and teaches self-discipline. And, most importantly, music is a gift from God — one that we can take with us into eternity. Martin Luther wrote, “I truly desire that all Christians would love and regard as worthy the lovely gift of music, which is a precious, worthy, and costly treasure given mankind by God ...

next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in this world This precious gift has been given to man alone that he might thereby remind himself of the fact that God has created man for the express purpose of praising and extolling God.”

But many homeschoolers have trouble fitting music into their school days. Time constraints, expense, and lack of confidence all contribute to the problem. Some choose private lessons or enroll their children

in a choir. Both are wonderful experiences. But there are many ways you can bring music into your homeschool, even if you really can not carry a tune or read music.

Our Musical Heritage

Do not let your children grow up without knowing the patriotic and folk songs of our country. Explore WeeSing.com to find recordings of well-trained children singing such old favorites as *Billy Boy*, *Little Red Caboose*, and *O Susanna*. Be sure they know the words to *America the Beautiful*, *The Star-Spangled Banner*, and *God Bless America*. Sing them in the car or when taking a break. Talk about the lyrics; help them see the humor in “the sun so hot I froze to death” in *Polly Wolly Doodle*. Research the stories behind the songs. Learn a common song in several languages.¹

Musical Vocabulary

Dynamic markings are the means composers use to communicate how loud the music should be played. We use Italian terms because the concept

PHOTOGRAPHY BY UNSPLASH

of writing music as we know it today was developed in Italy. Choose a song you know well, such as *Are You Sleeping, Brother John?* to teach the concept of dynamics in music. Make signs with cartoon figures demonstrating words such as *pianissimo* or *mezzo-forte*. As one child holds up a sign, everyone in the family must sing the song at that dynamic level.

To develop volume control, hide a small object while one child is out of the room. The family helps him find it by singing louder when he is close to it and softer when he is farther away. Carry the learning over into daily life as you remind your children that their inside voices should be *mezzo-piano* (medium-soft) and to reserve their *forte* (loud) voices for outdoors.

Tempo means time in music — how fast the music is played. Teach tempo markings while taking a break from your schoolwork. Sing *Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes* very slowly, touching each body part as you sing; this tempo is called *largo*. Gradually work your way up to *presto* when you will be moving so fast everyone will fall to the floor in a pile of giggles.

Musical Instruments

Consider learning to play the recorder. This historic instrument is not difficult to learn. I once taught a dozen homeschool moms, many of whom had never read music or played an instrument, to play the recorder in one hour. Immediately afterward, I gave a follow-up lesson to the children, with moms present. The moms continued learning and teaching at home and the children played a few pieces at their year-end event a few weeks later.² Perhaps your support group will want to do this as a group activity, but any homeschool parent with fingers and a mouth can teach her own children the rudiments.

If your child shows an interest in music after you've taught him what you can, offer him the opportunity to take private music lessons. Students who learn to play alone and sometimes in groups can often bless others with their music. Piano is a wonderful foundation for learning other instruments or for voice. Research shows that music training, specifically piano instruction, leads to scores an average of 34% higher on tests measuring the spatial-temporal

ability used in math, chess, science, and engineering. If finances are tight, perhaps the teacher would be willing to barter for baked goods or services such as window-washing or lawn care.

Odds and Ends

To teach attentiveness, clap a short rhythm pattern and have your child echo it back. Gradually clap longer patterns. Have him color or paint to music sometimes. Toss a ball or bean bag (easier to catch than a ball) back and forth in time with the music. Have your child clap, sing, and march with music you have in your home. Talk about how the music makes him feel and what kind of moving he wants to do when he hears that music. Saint-Saëns' *Carnival of the Animals* (I prefer the orchestra version) is a wonderful selection of short pieces for movement and interpretation.

Do simple dances that do not require partners or large groups. Consider *Here We Go Looby-Loo*, *Hokey-Pokey*, or *London Bridge Is Falling Down*. Find a square dance caller and invite him to your support group meeting for a fun family night. Most callers are used to teaching novices how to do the various steps. There is something special about seeing a little girl swinging arms with her daddy.

Attend local concerts. Watch for mention of recitals offered by local piano and voice studios. Take advantage of youth concerts offered by local symphonies. Some communities have concert associations that bring in professional musicians several times a year. Ask your Chamber of Commerce about other options.

Play quiet hymns and Bible choruses to greet the new day — they set the tone for worship so much better than the blaring of the TV. I like to collect recordings of Christian music played on different instruments — hammered dulcimers, mandolins, fife and drum, and even the bagpipes. Hearing these reminds me of the worldwide Church and the fellowship we enjoy with believers near and far.



**THERE ARE
MANY WAYS
YOU CAN BRING MUSIC
INTO YOUR HOMESCHOOL,
EVEN IF YOU CAN NOT
CARRY A *tune*.**



Ask God, the Father of music, to show you how to bring music into your home. Soon you and your family will be “making a joyful noise.” ■

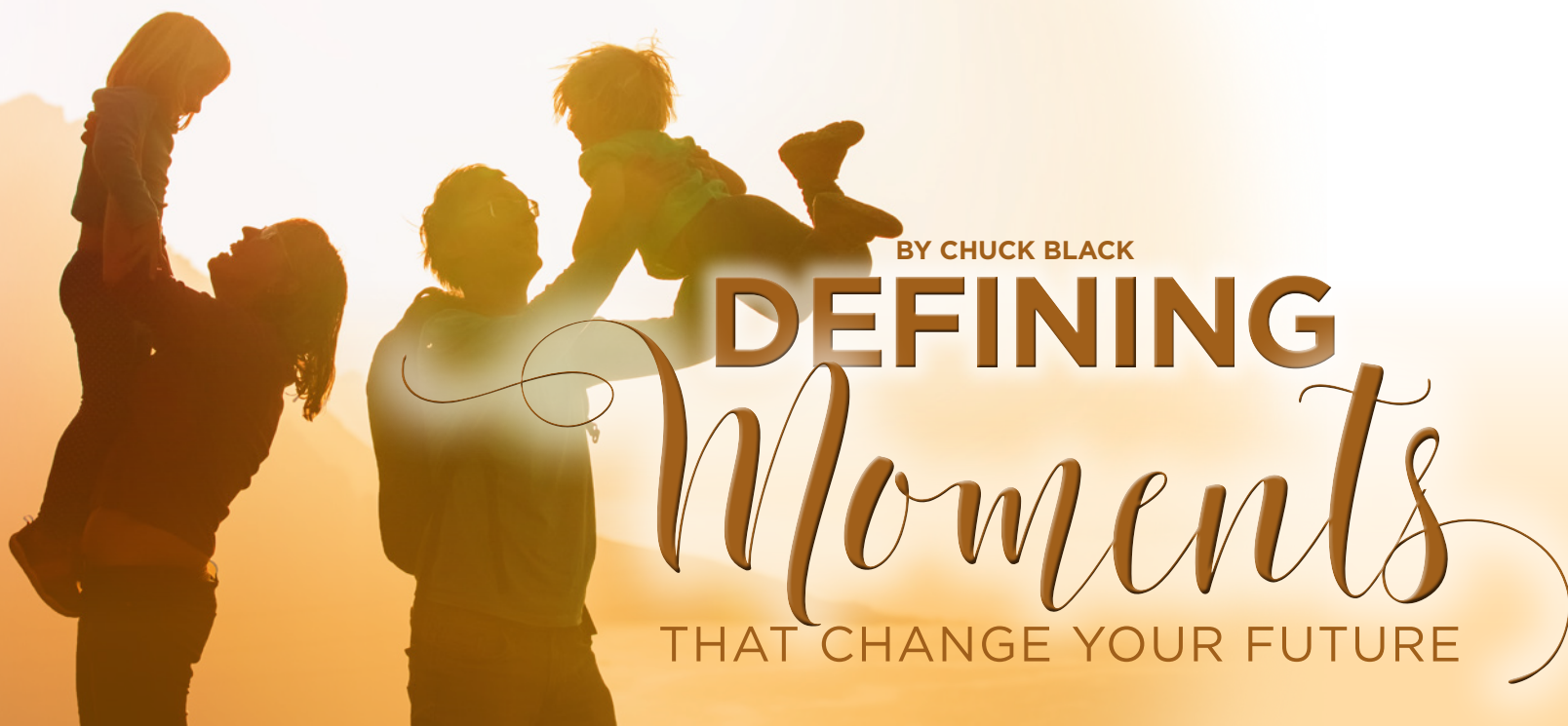
ENDNOTES = ¹The words to *Are You Sleeping, Brother John* in several languages are available at marciawashburn.com/TEACHING-MUSICAL-DYNAMICS. ²A recorder and Recorder Time beginner's book set can be found at RhythmBand.com for about \$10.



©2008-2023 by Marcia K. Washburn, who holds a master's degree in music education and homeschooled five sons for nineteen years. Meet her at the 2023 Rocky Mountain Homeschool Conference in June where she will present several workshops including *Beethoven Who? Family Fun With Music*, based on her economical award-winning course for all ages. Find more music, parenting, and homeschooling resources at MarciaWashburn.com.



SPEAKER



BY CHUCK BLACK

DEFINING Moments

THAT CHANGE YOUR FUTURE

Every once in a while, a moment comes along in life that I call a “defining moment” or “a moment of epiphany.” These moments are powerful, for they have the ability to change your future. I have had a dozen or so. I’ve come to believe that many people do not recognize them — or at the very least — do not allow them to significantly impact their lives like God has intended them to.

My first defining moment happened when I was in the 4th grade. Being the last of seven children, I was a very average student, putting forth average effort to receive average grades,

and I was happy with that. A week or so into the school year, the science teacher assigned ten words for us to study. I remember my mother asking if I had any schoolwork to do. I replied, “The science teacher gave us some words to study, but I’ll do it later.” My mother encouraged me to reconsider, but I was okay with my average effort of doing it later. The next day, the teacher called four students to the chalkboard, one of them being me. He gave each of us a different word to write on the board along with its definition. My word was “algae.”

Fifty years later, I can still remember the feeling of total humiliation as I stood alone in the front of the class with the chalk in my hand, having no idea how to even spell the word let alone write its definition. After the teacher allowed me to wallow in my embarrassment, he looked at me and said, “Well, that isn’t the Blacks that I know. Go sit down.” That was a defining moment for me, for I had an epiphany. I vowed that I would never be humiliated or embarrassed like that again because of my lack of effort. I went from a “C” student to an “A+” student in sixty seconds. To this day, that moment of epiphany affects how I work. Colossians 3:23 ESV states, *Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.*

My mother was quite upset with the teacher because she said it could have backfired and caused me to not care at all. Although I didn’t have the maturity to understand it at the time, recognizing the moment and allowing it to alter my trajectory for good or bad was my decision. These moments are given by the hands of the Potter as He forms the clay of our lives.

Defining moments can come in times of triumph, tragedy, or in quiet moments of reflection, when the whisper of God falls on your heart. Such was the case with another defining moment in my life. After spending nine years developing a promising career in the United States Air Force, first as a tactical combat communications officer and then as an F-16 fighter pilot, I chose to exit the military and work for my father and my brothers at a small plastics company as a design and automation engineer. At the time, Andrea and I had four children and God was calling my heart to my family. After two years back in my small hometown with two more children, I remember driving home after a boring day at work thinking, “What have I done? I used to fly fighters for the Air Force, defending our nation’s freedom. Now I cut grooves in a piece of steel, and no one cares or knows what I did for the last eight hours. Surely, I’ve

messed up and taken a wrong turn. Lord . . . I want to do something great for you and this sure doesn't feel great."

I can tell you the exact spot on the road where God's quiet whisper came to my heart. He said to me, "Chuck, you are going home to my great work for you. I have given you six children to raise, disciple, train, equip, and launch for my kingdom. Go and do that well." That moment of epiphany was significant in defining my motivation as a father for the next sixteen years. With renewed joy, I poured my energy into being the dad God wanted me to be. It was just a few weeks after that moment that God gave me a story to write, *Kingdom's Edge*. Because of that moment, I now share stories of encouragement to young people throughout the world through the 20 books I've written.

Defining moments are what authors call "plot points," moments in a character's life where pressure forces him or her to change course. We are each the main character in our story of life. Don't miss your plot points. Identify them and use them to move you closer to Jesus and align with His call on your life.

In Mark chapter 10, the Bible tells us about Bartimaeus and one of his defining moments. Bartimaeus was blind and sitting beside the road when he heard that Jesus was passing by. He began to shout for the Son of David to have mercy on him. Although the crowd told him to be quiet, he shouted all the louder. This was his moment of epiphany, and he wasn't about to let it pass him by. Finally, Jesus called for him and asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?" Bartimaeus asked Jesus to heal his blindness, and He did.

Dads, the next time you experience a defining moment, or a moment of epiphany, realize that Jesus is walking by. Are you ready to cry out for mercy? Are you ready to answer God's question, "What do you want me to do for you?" When Jesus healed Bartimaeus, it says

**“ WE ARE EACH
THE MAIN CHARACTER
IN OUR STORY OF LIFE.
DON'T MISS
YOUR PLOT POINTS.
IDENTIFY THEM
& USE THEM TO
MOVE YOU
closer to Jesus.”**

that he immediately turned and followed Jesus. Can you imagine his testimony to others?

Jesus is eager to answer prayers that bring hope and encouragement to others . . . that advance the kingdom of God in this lost world. Don't miss your next defining moment. He loves using average people to do amazing things because then all the glory goes to Him. Cry out for Jesus and get ready for amazing!

And Jesus said to him, "What do you want me to do for you?" And the blind man said to him, "Rabbi, let me recover my sight." And Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well." And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him on the way. (Mark 10:51–52) ■



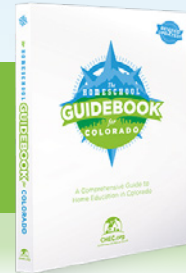
Chuck Black, a former F-16 fighter pilot, is the author of twenty novels. Chuck's passion is to inspire young and old alike to follow

Christ. Chuck will be speaking at the RMHC, so plan to attend one of his workshops. Also, stop by his booth in the Exhibit Hall to consider purchasing his novels along with The Guts and Glory of Courageous Fatherhood. Chuck can be reached at ChuckBlack.com.

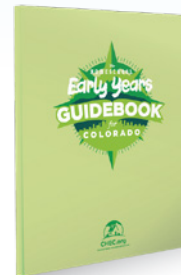


SPEAKER

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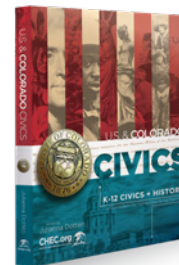
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Doing Homeschool Life TOGETHER

BY PATTI DOTTEN

Remember as a young mom being so excited to start homeschooling! I envisioned a small row of desks in a meticulously organized and colorfully decorated school room in our basement, posters of presidents and the cursive alphabet on the wall, an American flag and manual pencil sharpener strategically placed next to the oversized chalkboard at the front of the room. I expected large uninterrupted time blocks of teaching my attentive and eager “students” and on my big desk up front, a detailed planner laying open next to my “World’s Best Teacher” coffee mug!

Well, it didn't take long for me to realize that my little “school” wasn't going to be so neat and tidy! In fact, after a couple of years, we ditched the school room altogether because it was never used. The desks? We donated them to Goodwill. My favorite picture now is of my son hanging upside down off the couch reading his physics textbook. I can count on one hand the times he actually sat in a chair to do school work.

Over time, my idea of “school” was morphing and my view of true education expanding. The big “Aha moment” came during one particularly difficult season. I had four little ones under 8 and was eagerly anticipating my fifth when sadly, I miscarried. In the days and weeks after losing this little one I was so distraught I didn't think I could handle “doing school.” And that's when my sister, a seasoned homeschool mom, reminded me that school is really just living life together with my children: talking with them, grieving




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love learning because I knew this would help them in whatever sphere God placed them.

life. So hop on the couch with a good book and give your desks to Goodwill! ■

with them, going on walks, doing chores, cooking, cleaning, and reading together.

My sister suggested that I take this opportunity to read aloud for long stretches everyday to my children. And so that's what I did. In fact, I would read for hours and hours each day — up to 6 hours a day. We would snuggle together on the couch, some of my girls would color and my son would play quietly with his legos or K'nex while listening to the stories. We read biographies, missionary stories, and classics. The time reading together became a healing balm to my soul and a binding glue between my children and I. We laughed together and cried together. And every time I stopped reading, I heard a chorus of eager voices crying out, "read, Mommy, read!" I found that my children were learning. My youngest was 2 years old, but we read real books, good literature. My children, unbeknownst to them, were growing in their vocabulary and grammar. They were learning geography and history, about foreign lands and cultures, about God and His kingdom, about character and morality all through the books I was reading aloud to them. We would stop and discuss ideas or concepts they didn't understand as we were drawn closer by experiencing these wonderful stories together.

I wouldn't trade those days for anything! What a rich time it was! And when we did return to doing some more traditional math, English, and history, my view of education had been forever changed. My "school" would be forever different: more relationships, less rigid routine; more conversation, less teaching; more real life, less textbooks; more hands-on, less sitting still; more adventure, less boredom; more whole books, less workbooks; more laid back, less stress. And we kept reading aloud, at least one hour a day, which I continued to do until my children graduated from high school. My goals had changed as well. Instead of tests and grades, I wanted to see my children

Whether you're experiencing a season of loss and grief, are in the throes of trying to homeschool with toddlers under foot, or are struggling to keep your children's attention for school, just remember that homeschooling is a lifestyle, not a classroom. As you pass on your own love of learning to your children and introduce them to great books through reading aloud, you are equipping them for



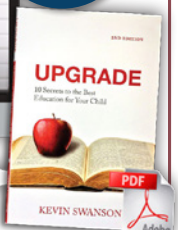
Patricia Dotten graduated from being a homeschool mom in 2022 after 25 years of teaching her four children. She enjoyed every moment of doing life full-time with her children. Her son and oldest daughter graduated from college and are now each married. She was excited to meet her first grandbaby in February 2023! She resides with her husband and two youngest daughters in the southeast US where her daughters attend a small Bible college. Patricia's favorite thing to do is to encourage homeschool moms. If you have any questions or comments, she would love to hear from you at Homeschool-LifeTogether@gmail.com.

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1 PETER 3:15B NKJV



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He set my feet upon a rock (Psalm 40:1 ESV).

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A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher (Luke 6:40 ESV).

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Bonus Day

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Speakers & Topics

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Resources

His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness (1 Peter 1:3 ESV).

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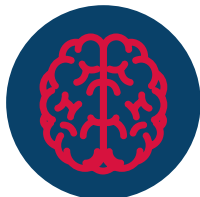
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HOMESCHOOL MOM'S NIGHT OUT WITH RUTH CHOU SIMONS

**Friday, June 16th,
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On this special night for moms, Ruth Chou Simons will show what it looks like to steward the hard tasks God has given you as an opportunity to see His faithfulness on display.

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FATHER & SON LUNCH WITH CHUCK BLACK

Saturday, June 17th, 12:45pm

(\$15/with lunch or \$5/no lunch as add-on to family conference pass)

Join other fathers and sons with Chuck Black for lunch, as he shares four fundamental truths to help guide men through the chaos of our culture.



CORRIE TEN BOOM: A LIGHT IN DARK PLACES

Saturday, June 17th, 5:20pm

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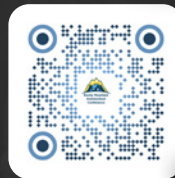
Hear the testimony of Corrie ten Boom, portrayed by Vickie Gaynier in Corrie's own words, and witness the faithfulness of God in a difficult time of history.



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- ▶ **Why Am I Here? Answering Your Kids' Craving for Life Purpose**
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Ruth Chou Simons

GraceLaced | RuthChouSimons.com

Ruth Chou Simons is a *Wall Street Journal* bestselling and award-winning author of several books and Bible studies, including *GraceLaced*, *Beholding and Becoming*, and *When Strivings Cease*. She is an artist, entrepreneur, podcaster, and speaker, using each of these platforms to spiritually sow the Word of God into people's hearts. Through her online shoppe at GraceLaced.com and her social media community, Simons shares her journey of God's grace intersecting daily life with word and art. Ruth and her husband, Troy, are grateful parents to six homeschooled boys — their greatest adventure.

- ▶ **Preaching the Truth to Yourself and Your Child**
- ▶ **Homeschool Mom's Night Out — Motherhood is Sanctifying with Ruth Chou Simons**



Paul Washer

HeartCry Missionary Society | HeartCryMissionary.com

Paul Washer was converted to Christ while a student at the University of Texas. After graduation from Southwestern Theological Seminary in 1988 he moved to Peru, South America where he labored for ten years. While in Peru, he founded the HeartCry Missionary Society and continues in this ministry until the present. HeartCry currently supports 330 missionaries on five continents. Paul is married to Charo and has four children: Ian, Evan, Rowan, and Bronwyn, all of whom have been homeschooled.

- ▶ **School or Discipleship? Making the Gospel of Jesus Christ the Focus of Your Homeschool**
- ▶ **Regeneration and the Believer's Assurance: A Part of Parenting**



Workshop **SPEAKERS**

Connie Albers

Equipped to Be | ConnieAlbers.com

- ▶ Help for the Modern Day Mom-preneurs
- ▶ How to Develop and Build Sibling Relationships
- ▶ How to Choose the Perfect Curriculum for YOUR Child
- ▶ Correct, Not Criticize: Getting Children to Respond to Your Instruction
- ▶ Technology: How to Create Positive Social Footprints



Shellie Doub

Cedarville University | Cedarville.edu

- ▶ Dual Enrollment: When, Where, Why, and How



Paul Bacio Jr.

Brick Explorers | BrickExplorers.com

- ▶ Learning With LEGO's® — Kid's Activity



Zack Edwards

Historical Conquest | HistoricalConquest.com

- ▶ Technology Made This Mess, Now it Needs to Solve It: Strategies of Using Tech in Learning



Chuck Black

Perfect Praise Publishing | Perfect-Praise.com

- ▶ Father/Son Lunch: Thriving in a World of Compromise
- ▶ Spiritual Warfare: Fighting for Your Family
- ▶ Fundamentals of Writing
- ▶ Call to Arms: The Guts and Glory of Courageous Fatherhood



Teresa Foltin

Right Start Math | RightStartMath.com

- ▶ Math — Does it Matter How You Teach?



Michelle Christensen

Granny's Guidance | GrannysGuidance.wixsite.com/website

- ▶ Feeding Your Family on a Budget
- ▶ How to Retire From Homeschooling
- ▶ Nurturing Mother Daughter Relationships



Aimee Furman

Christian Mindset & Identity Coaching | [Smudged Pages](http://SmudgedPages.net) | SmudgedPages.net

- ▶ Homeschooling 101



Daniel Craig

Generations | Generations.org

- ▶ The Power of Mentorship: Secrets to a Truly Higher Education
- ▶ The Seven Habits of Joy-Filled Families



Pamela Gates

Dianne Craft Right Brain Learning System
DianneCraft.org

- ▶ Identifying and Correcting Blocked Learning Gates
- ▶ Teaching the Right Brained Child
- ▶ Smart Kids Who Hate to Write
- ▶ Biology of Behavior



Steve Craig

Christian Home Educators of Colorado | CHEC.org

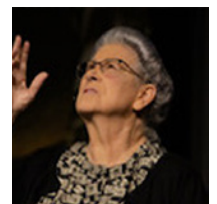
- ▶ New to Homeschool Seminar — Foundational Principles and Vision for Homeschooling
- ▶ New to Homeschool Seminar — How to Homeschool Legally in Colorado



Vickie Gaynier

Women of Great Faith | WomenofGreatFaith.weebly.com

- ▶ Corrie Ten Boom: A Light in Dark Places — Saturday Evening General Session





TRAINING



ENCOURAGEMENT

Brandee Gillham

BrandeeGillham.com

- ▶ Raising Warriors
- ▶ Tips for Organizing Your Home/School
- ▶ Science of the Human Body: All About the Heart — Teen Activity
- ▶ Science of the Human Body: All About the Eye — Teen Activity



Kolby King

Three Thirty Ministries | ThreeThirtyMinistries.com

- ▶ Night of Fun & Faith — Friday Family Evening
- ▶ Big Bible Stories with Kolby King — Kid's Activity



Kathryn Gomes

Apologia Ministries | Apologia.com

- ▶ Toddlers in Tow, What to Do With the Little Ones While You Homeschool
- ▶ What My Mom Did Right, What My Mom Did Wrong (Thoughts From a 2nd Generation Homeschooler)
- ▶ 5 Ways God Used Homeschooling to Strengthen My Faith and Prepare Me to Engage the World



Jason Lisle

Biblical Science Institute | BiblicalScienceInstitute.com

- ▶ Logic and the Christian Faith
- ▶ Dinosaurs and the Bible
- ▶ Ultimate Proof of Creation — Apologetics Bootcamp
- ▶ Science Confirms the Bible



Brandi Huerta

RickThomas.Net | lifeovercoffee.com/author/brandi-huerta/

- ▶ Respect to Whom Respect is Due



Davy Liu

Kendu Kids | KenduKids.org

- ▶ Unveil the Bible With Creativity
- ▶ Turn a Family Member Into an Animated Pet — Kid's Activity
- ▶ Making Your Ideas Come to Life — Teen Activity



Bill Jack

Worldview Academy | Worldview.org

- ▶ What Were They Thinking? What Are You Thinking? — Apologetics Bootcamp
- ▶ Creation vs. Evolution — Apologetics Bootcamp
- ▶ Biblical Basis for True Authority — Part 1
- ▶ Biblical Basis for True Authority — Part 2
- ▶ WWJD!?!?



Dawn Madsen

The Minimal Mom | TheMinimalMom.com

- ▶ The Amazing Result of Decluttering Your Home in 15 Minutes a Day
- ▶ All About Inventory: Creating a Manageable Homeschool Environment
- ▶ Free to Live, Free to Give: Overcoming the Burden of Debt and Consumerism
- ▶ The Organization Myth (And What Actually Brings PEACE at Home)



LaNissir James

Homeschool Legal Defense Association (HSLDA) | HSLDA.org

- ▶ Homeschool Through High School — You Got This!
- ▶ Extra Curriculars & Electives — Resumes & Recommendations
- ▶ Building on a Sure Foundation: Mission & Methods
- ▶ Homeschooling the College Bound Teen: Navigating the Road to Admission



Carolyn Martin

Christian Home Educators of Colorado (CHEC) | CHEC.org/freedom

- ▶ When the Left Rules



Workshop **SPEAKERS**

Shari McMinn

Shari Communicates | ShariMcMinn.com

- ▶ Homeschooling Your Unique Child: Adopted, Gifted, Special Needs, and Struggling Learner
- ▶ Homeschooling Your Child With Special Needs
- ▶ Homeschooling Diverse Families in a Toxic World



Renton Rathbun

Bob Jones University | BJU.edu

- ▶ Introduction to Apologetics — Apologetics Bootcamp
- ▶ Worldview and Apologetics — Apologetics Bootcamp
- ▶ BIG Apologetics — Apologetics Bootcamp
- ▶ The Problem of the Unbeliever in Apologetics — Apologetics Bootcamp
- ▶ Apologetics Applied: How Do We Respond to LGBTQ+ Ideology — Apologetics Bootcamp



Susie Overmyer

Pikes Peak Homeopathy Association
PikesPeakHomeopathy.com

- ▶ Homeoprophylaxis
- ▶ Homeschool Days Do Not Have to Be Sick Days



Jim Ryun

Jim Ryun Running Camp | RyunRunning.com

- ▶ Dreaming Big: Have You Reached Your Potential?
- ▶ Forgiveness: A Journey to Healing



Bradley Pierce

Heritage Defense | HeritageDefense.org

- ▶ Preteens, Teens, and Medical Consent
- ▶ So You Want to Be a Lawyer?



Kenny Sargent

Sargent Family Productions
SargentFamilyProductions.com

- ▶ The Craft of Story Interactive Workshop — Teen Activity



Krystle Porter

Help Club for Moms | HelpClubforMoms.com

- ▶ Discipleship: Passing on the Faith
- ▶ What to Do When You Keep Losing It



Lisa Schmidt

Association of Certified Biblical Counselors
BiblicalCounseling.com

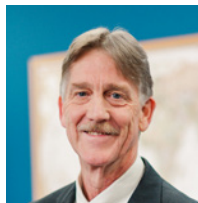
- ▶ Responding Biblically to Temptation
- ▶ Responding Biblically to Conflict
- ▶ Responding Biblically to Guilt and Shame
- ▶ The Titus 2 Woman — Is She Relevant for Today?



Andrew Pudewa

Institute for Excellence in Writing (IEW) | IEW.com

- ▶ Paper and Pen: What the Research Says
- ▶ Reading Strategies for Struggling Readers or Nonreaders
- ▶ Freedomship and Entrepreneurial Education
- ▶ Conquering Corrupt Culture by Raising Christian Communicators
- ▶ Nurturing Competent Communicators — The Power of Linguistic Patterns



Solomon Schmidt

History Bites | HistoryBites.com

- ▶ 10 Most Fascinating People From World History
- ▶ Five of the World's Greatest Adventures



Cindy Puhk

Homeschool Science Colorado | HomeschoolScienceColorado.com

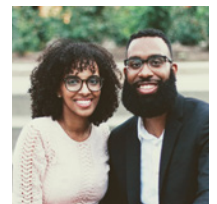
- ▶ New to Homeschool Seminar — How to Actually Homeschool, Nuts & Bolts Part 1 and 2



Helen Scott

Wonder | LetsWonder.org

- ▶ Music Makers — Kid's Activity





TRAINING



ENCOURAGEMENT

Andrea Waitley

Cross My Heart Ministries

- ▶ Come to the Table
- ▶ Grace to Grieve



Durenda Wilson

Durenda Wilson | DurendaWilson.com

- ▶ Chores: Why They Are Essential in Homeschooling
- ▶ Building Resilience in Your Kids
- ▶ Homeschooling Boys, What Do They Really Need?
- ▶ The Four Hour School Day



Norm Wakefield

Spirit of Elijah Ministries | SpiritofElijah.com

- ▶ Rising to the Call: Can You Recognize God's Call in Your Life?
- ▶ Anchored in Christ in the Storms of Life
- ▶ Dads, God's Forerunners for the Lord
- ▶ The Calling Out of Sons: Recognizing God's Work Between Fathers and Sons



Brian Young

Creation Instruction Association | CreationInstruction.org

- ▶ Dinosaurs, Ice-Age, and the Pre-Flood World
- ▶ Rethinking Adam
- ▶ Supernatural Selection



Marcia Washburn

Building Tomorrow's Generation | MarciaWashburn.com

- ▶ Building Tomorrow's Generation (While Cleaning Up Spilled Milk)
- ▶ How to Be a People Teacher
- ▶ The Ideal Homeschooling Mother
- ▶ Beethoven Who, Family Fun With Music



Deb Weakly

Help Club for Moms | HelpClubforMoms.com

- ▶ Homeschooling By Faith
- ▶ Discipleship: Passing on the Faith
- ▶ What to Do When You Keep Losing It



Ana Willis

The Call Me Blessed | TheyCallMeBlessed.org

- ▶ Riches of a Charlotte Mason-Inspired Education
- ▶ A Charlotte Mason Education in an Orwellian and Brave New World
- ▶ Scheduling a Feast of Subjects: What, Why, and How
- ▶ How To Effectively Teach the Bible Daily



ONLINE MEMBERSHIP FOR KIDS WHO LOVE TO CREATE!

CHELSEA-TEACHER

SCAN FOR MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

- Knitting
- Machine sewing
- Hand sewing
- Clay creations
- New projects each month
- Live Q & A with teacher
- Show and tell
- Badges to earn

LEARN SKILLS THAT LAST A LIFETIME

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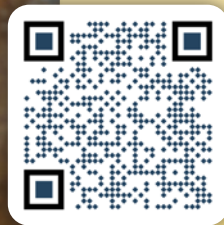
DON'T MISS ANY SESSIONS!

Go to the Resounding Voice booth #421 for recordings of any session.



JOIN OUR TEAM

Use **YOUR TALENTS** to *help* other families in their homeschooling journey! You'll **HAVE FUN** and be **BLESSED** as you join our incredible RMHC *volunteer team!*



Watch this video, get trained to help, and have fun!

Positions for adults and students age 12+

1

**BONUS DAY
Used
Curriculum Sale**

Held on Wednesday, before the conference; position is for adults and students age 12 and over.

2

**Semisaurus
Support**

Positions are for adults and students age 13 and over. Help out with getting people into and out of the museum

3

**Workshop
Moderators**

Position is for adults over 18; choose the sessions you're interested in to greet the speaker, introduce them at the beginning of the session, distribute handouts and surveys, and maintain order.

4

**Kids & Teens
Activities**

Positions are for adults and students ages 13 and older; programs are run by professionals, but volunteers are needed to help activities run smoothly.

5

**Registration
& Facilities
Support**

Positions are for adults and students ages 13+; help out with greeting new people, assisting with check-in, distributing programs, and other on-call needs.

6

**Exhibit
Hall Support**

Positions are for adults and students ages 15+; help out in various ways such as assisting with parking, directing foot traffic, serving in the Exhibit Hall, and other on-call needs.



Go to RockyMountainHomeschoolConference.com/volunteer to learn about all benefits for volunteers!

GENERAL SESSIONS & workshops



GET TRAINING & ENCOURAGEMENT FROM WORKSHOP SESSIONS

Our workshops will not only inspire you but also give you the confidence and tools you need to make successful homeschooling happen!

▶ WORKSHOP CATEGORIES

Workshop categories are assigned to each session to give you a quick preview of the content and help you narrow down your interests.

- 🌐 **Biblical Worldview**
- 👨 **Family Discipleship**
- 🔧 **Homeschool How-To's**

▶ WORKSHOP TYPES

Workshop types are varied to bring you fresh ways to learn and leave with valuable training:

- **Traditional** 50 minutes with a featured speaker.
- **Homeschool Hacks** Participants will receive specific strategies that address common challenges homeschool parents/families face in managing life.
- **Interactive** A workshop designed to get your questions answered. Each Interactive workshop will have a minimum of 20 minutes for you to ask the speaker specific questions after a their talk.

▶ WORKSHOP TRACKS

Workshop tracks are dedicated sessions that focus on a specific topic.

- **Unique Learner** Learn skills to help you help your children be the best they can be and reach their full potential!
- **High School & Beyond** For current or soon-to-be high school students and parents, this track will help you plan and execute a high-quality high school career that launches students into next steps. SPONSORED BY CEDARVILLE UNIVERSITY.
- **New to Homeschool** Teachings designed to help you lay a solid foundation to build upon for years to come as you homeschool.
- **Kids/Teen Activity** Bring your kids & teens for these incredibly fun activities filled with learning opportunities! See website for full list of activities.
- **Apologetics Bootcamp** Sessions designed to equip you to defend your faith.
- **Family Activity** Exciting activities for families to enjoy together, including Night of Fun & Faith for dads and kids, Homeschool Mom's Night Out, and the Semisaurus Mobile Creation Museum.

Thursday SCHEDULE

8:30–10:00am

10:20–11:10am

11:30am–12:20pm

1:10–2:00pm

Registration
Opens at 7:30am

General Session

School or
Discipleship?
Making the
Gospel of
Jesus Christ
the Focus
of Your
Homeschool



Paul Washer



Biblical Basis for True Authority
— Part 1
Bill Jack



Biblical Basis for True Authority
— Part 2
Bill Jack



Spiritual Warfare: Fighting for Your
Family
Chuck Black



Discipleship: Passing on the Faith
Deb Weakly & Krystle Porter



Homeschooling by Faith
Deb Weakly



Math — Does it Matter How You
Teach?
Teresa Foltin



Feeding Your Family on a Budget
Michelle Christensen



Paper and Pen: What the
Research Says
Andrew Pudewa



Nurturing Mother–Daughter
Relationships
Michelle Christensen



Correct, Not Criticize: Getting
Children to Respond to Your
Instruction
Connie Albers



Logic and the Christian Faith
Jason Lisle



Introduction to Apologetics
Renton Rathbun



Identifying and Correcting Blocked
Learning Gates
Pamela Gates



Teaching the Right-Brained
Child
Pamela Gates



Reading Strategies for the
Struggling Reader or Nonreader
Andrew Pudewa



Dinosaurs, Ice-Age, and the Pre-
Flood World
Brian Young



Building Tomorrow's Generation
(While Cleaning Up Spilled Milk)
Marcia Washburn



Come to the Table
Andrea Waitley



The Four Hour School Day
Durenda Wilson



How To Retire From
Homeschooling
Michelle Christensen



How to Choose the Perfect
Curriculum for YOUR Child
Connie Albers



What My Mom Did Right, What My
Mom Did Wrong (Thoughts From a
2nd Generation Homeschooler)
Kathryn Gomes



The Amazing Result of
Decluttering Your Home in 15
Minutes a Day
Dawn Madsen



Rising to the Call: Can You
Recognize God's Call in Your Life?
Norm Wakefield



Turn a Family Member Into an Animated Pet
10:20am–12:20pm (advance registration required, ages 5–12)

Music Makers
1:10pm–2:00pm (advance
registration & fee required, ages
4-7)

Science of the Human Body: All About the Heart
10:20am–12:30pm (advance registration required, ages 13+)

SPONSORED BY Advent Health
UNIVERSITY

Single Parent
Used Book
Gleaning!
12:30–3:00pm



Semisaurus Creation Museum 10:00am–3:30pm & 4:30pm–8:30pm
(family fee and advance registration required, all ages)

- General Session
- Workshop
- Shopping
- Apologetics Bootcamp
- Family Activity
- New to Homeschool
- Kids/Teen Activity
- Homeschool Hacks
- High School & Beyond
- Interactive Q&A
- Unique Learners
- Biblical Worldview
- Family Discipleship
- Homeschool How-To's

2:20–3:10pm

Conquering Corrupt Culture by Raising Christian Communicators
Andrew Pudewa



Grace to Grieve
Andrea Waitley



Help for Modern Day Mom-preneurs
Connie Albers



Worldview and Apologetics
Renton Rathbun



Smart Kids Who Hate to Write
Pamela Gates



Beethoven Who? Family Fun With Music
Marcia Washburn



All About Inventory: Creating a Manageable Homeschool Environment
Dawn Madsen



Preteens, Teens, and Medical Consent
Bradley Pierce



Big Bible Stories with Kolby King
2:20–3:10pm (advance registration & fee required, ages 4–12)

The Craft of the Story Interactive Workshop
1:10pm–3:10pm (advance registration required, ages 13+)

Semisaurus Creation Museum
10:00am–3:30pm & 4:30pm–8:30pm
(family fee required, all ages)

3:30–4:30pm

General Session

Why Kids Walk Away From Their Faith and What to Do About It



Jeff Myers



4:30–8:00pm

Exhibit Hall Grand Opening PARTY!

Shopping Time



Homeschool Leaders Forum Dinner
(by invitation only)
6–8pm with Jeff Myers, Summit Ministries

Friday SCHEDULE

8:30–10:00am

Registration
Opens at 7:30am

General Session

Regeneration
and the
Believer's
Assurance:
A Part of
Parenting



Paul Washer



10:20–11:10am

Dinosaurs and the Bible
Jason Lisle



Respect to Whom Respect is Due
Brandi Huerta



How to Be a People Teacher
Marcia Washburn



What Were They Thinking? —
What are You Thinking?
Bill Jack



Homeschooling Through High
School — You Got This!
LaNissir James



10 Most Fascinating People
From World History
Solomon Schmidt



Chores: Why They Are Essential
in Homeschooling
Durenda Wilson



Raising Warriors
Brandee Gillham



11:30–12:20pm

Anchored in Christ in the Storms
of Life
Norm Wakefield



Nurturing Competent
Communicators — The Power of
Linguistic Patterns
Andrew Pudewa



Riches of a Charlotte Mason-
Inspired Education
Ana Willis



BIG Apologetics
Renton Rathbun



Building on a Sure Foundation:
Mission & Methods
LaNissir James



When the Left Rules
Carolyn Martin



Responding Biblically to Guilt
and Shame
Lisa Schmidt



What to Do When You Keep
Losing It
Deb Weakly & Krystle Porter



12:20–2:30pm

Lunch Break
and
Shopping Time



Drawing Basics: Pencils & Pastels
10:20am–12:20pm (advance registration & fee required, ages 6-11)

Single Parent
Used Book
Gleaning!
12:30-3:00pm

Making Your Ideas Come to Life
10:20am–4:30pm (advance registration & fee required, ages 13+)



Exhibit Hall Shopping & Silent Auction 10:00am–6:30pm



Semisaurus Creation Museum 10:00am–6:30pm (family fee required, all ages)

- General Session
- Workshop
- Shopping
- Apologetics Bootcamp
- Family Activity
- New to Homeschool
- Kids/Teen Activity
- Homeschool Hacks
- High School & Beyond
- Interactive Q&A
- Unique Learners
- Biblical Worldview
- Family Discipleship
- Homeschool How-To's

2:30–3:20pm

The Titus 2 Woman — Is She Relevant for Today?
Lisa Schmidt



Free to Live, Free to Give: Overcoming the Burden of Debt and Consumerism
Dawn Madsen



The Ideal Homeschooling Mother
Marcia Washburn



The Problem of the Unbeliever in Apologetics
Renton Rathbun



Extra Curriculars & Electives — Resumes and Recommendations
LaNissir James



Toddlers in Tow: What to Do With the Little Ones While You Homeschool
Kathryn Gomes



Dreaming Big: Have You Reached Your Potential?
Jim Ryun



Building Resilience in Your Kids
Durenda Wilson



CHEC Out the Bugs: The Bug Safari
2:30pm–3:20pm (ages 3–12)

3:40–4:30pm

Why Am I Here? Answering Your Kids' Craving for Life Purpose
Jeff Myers



A Charlotte Mason Education in an Orwellian and Brave New World
Ana Willis



Responding Biblically to Temptation
Lisa Schmidt



Apologetics Applied: How Do We Respond to LGBTQ+ Ideology
Renton Rathbun



Freedomship and Entrepreneurial Education
Andrew Pudewa



Tips for Organizing Your Home/School
Brandee Gillham



Homeschooling Your Child With Special Needs
Shari McMinn



Fundamentals of Writing
Chuck Black



Story Hour with Team Brave and The Candy Calamity
3:40pm–4:30pm (ages 3–7)



4:30–6:30pm

Exhibit Hall Shopping Time



6:30–8:00pm

Family Activities

Night of Fun & Faith
with *Kolby King*



Music by the *Crandall Family*



SPONSORED BY



Homeschool Mom's Night Out

Motherhood is Sanctifying
with *Ruth Chou Simons*



SPONSORED BY



BID

Exhibit Hall Shopping & Silent Auction 10:00am–6:30pm



Semisaurus Creation Museum 10:00am–6:30pm (family fee required, all ages)

Saturday SCHEDULE

8:30–10:00am

10:20–11:10am

11:30–12:20pm

12:20–2:00pm

Registration
Opens at 7:30am

General Session

Preaching
Truth to
Yourself and
Your Child



Ruth Chou
Simons



Helping Your Kids Conquer Fear and Communicate With Passion
Jeff Myers



Unveil the Bible With Creativity
Davy Liu



Technology: How to Create Positive Social Footprints
Connie Albers



How to Develop and Build Sibling Relationships
Connie Albers



Responding Biblically to Conflict
Lisa Schmidt



Call to Arms: The Guts and Glory of Courageous Fatherhood
Chuck Black



Creation vs. Evolution
Bill Jack



Ultimate Proof of Creation
Jason Lisle



Homeschooling the College-Bound Teen: Navigating the Road to Admission
LaNissir James



Dual Enrollment: When, Where, Why, and How
Shellie Doub



Dads, God's Forerunners for the Lord
Norm Wakefield



The Biology of Behavior
Pamela Gates



Homeschooling 101
Aimee Furman



Homeschooling Diverse Families in a Toxic World
Shari McMinn



5 Ways God Used Homeschooling to Strengthen My Faith and Prepare Me to Engage the World
Kathryn Gomes



Five of the World's Greatest Adventures
Solomon Schmidt



Story Hour with *Sky Tree* and *As You Grow* by Kirk Cameron 10:20am–11:10am
(advance fee required, ages 3–7)

SPONSORED BY **Brave** PUBLISHING CO.

CHEC Out the Wildlife — *Birds of Prey* 11:30am–12:20pm (advance fee required, ages 5+)

Artistic Adventures — *Lessons in Scratch Art* 10:20am–12:20pm (advance registration & fee required, ages 11+)

SPONSORED BY **CREATING A MASTERPIECE**

Father/Son Lunch
Thriving in a World of Compromise
Chuck Black

Lunch Break
and
Shopping
Time



Single Mom Used
Book Gleaning!
11:00am–2:00pm
Gleaning Open to All
2:00–4:00pm



Exhibit Hall Shopping 10:00am–4:20pm



Semisaurus Creation Museum 10:00am–6:30pm (family fee required, all ages)

- General Session
- Workshop
- Shopping
- Apologetics Bootcamp
- Family Activity
- New to Homeschool
- Kids/Teen Activity
- Homeschool Hacks
- High School & Beyond
- Interactive Q&A
- Unique Learners
- Biblical Worldview
- Family Discipleship
- Homeschool How-To's

2:00–2:50pm

Homeoprophylaxis
Susie Overmyer



WWJD!?!?
Bill Jack



Science Confirms the Bible
Jason Lisle



Scheduling a Feast of Subjects:
What, Why, and How
Ana Willis



The Power of Mentorship: Secrets to a
Truly Higher Education
Daniel Craig



The Organization Myth (and What
Actually Brings PEACE at Home)
Dawn Madsen



So You Want to Be a Lawyer?
Bradley Pierce



Rethinking Adam
Brian Young



3:10–4:00pm

The 7 Habits of Joy-Filled Families
Daniel Craig



Supernatural Selection
Brian Young



The Calling Out of Sons: Recognizing
God's Work Between Fathers and Sons
Norm Wakefield



Homeschool Days Do Not Have to Be
Sick Days
Susie Overmyer



Strategies of Using Tech in Learning
Zack Edwards



Forgiveness: A Journey to Healing
Jim Ryun



Homeschooling Boys, What Do They
Really Need?
Durenda Wilson



How to Effectively Teach the Bible
Daily
Ana Willis



4:20–5:20pm

General Session

Raising Kids
Who Stand for
Truth When it
Counts

Jeff Myers



5:20–6:10pm

**Special
Session**

Corrie Ten
Boom:
A Light in
Dark Places

*Vickie
Gaynier*



Learning with LEGOs® — Animal Kingdom & Motor Madness
2:00pm–4:00pm (advance registration, ages 5–12)

Science of the Human Body: All About the Eye
2:00pm–4:00pm (advance registration & fee required, ages 13+)

SPONSORED BY **Advent Health
UNIVERSITY**

BID

Exhibit Hall Shopping 10:00am–4:20pm



Semisaurus Creation Museum
10:00am–6:30pm (family fee required, all ages)



Shopping OPPORTUNITIES



EXHIBIT HALL

grand opening party

Thursday, June 15th, 4:30–8:00pm

Come to the exhibit hall's big kick-off party for exclusive discounts and specials from conference exhibitors. Stop by the concession area for free popcorn, and then grab a family photo at the CHEC Photo Booth! You will enjoy some live music by Wonder's student symphony at 6-7pm.



*Hey Kids!
Come Get
Free Balloon
Animals in the
Exhibit Hall!*

▶ EXHIBIT HALL

Research and shop with 125 exhibitors (whom we've intentionally sought & invited) who are ready to equip you with the resources and the training you need to find the right curriculum and materials.

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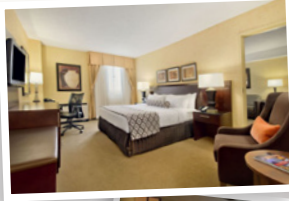
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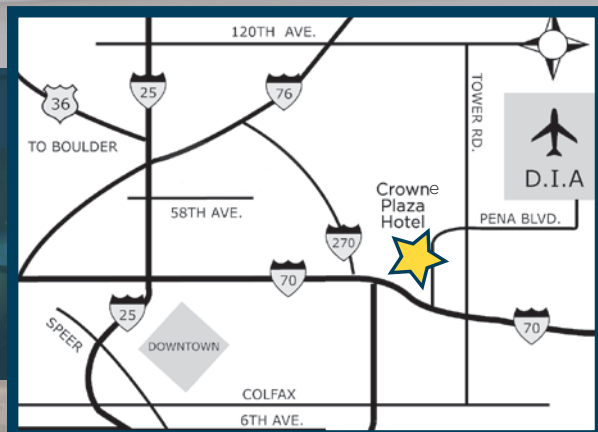
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BY CAROLYN MARTIN

BRUSHFIRES of Freedom

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ISTOCK

To stay up-to-date on legislative matters, join the Colorado Homeschool Freedom Team at [CHEC.org/Freedom](https://www.checcolorado.org/freedom)

“It does not take a majority to prevail, but rather an irate, tireless minority keen to set brushfires of freedom in the minds of men.”
—Samuel Adams

Early in our nation's history, brushfires of freedom sustained our independence from a tyrannical empire. Other brushfires throughout our history brought forward a civil war, women's suffrage, civil rights, abortion rights, marriage rights, and, more recently, gender rights. Not all these brushfires fulfilled the desired rallying cry of freedom because they were not grounded in God's righteousness.

Today, a brushfire is sweeping across the nation calling itself “school choice.” A majority of state legislatures introduced bills this year to establish programs to fund private schools and home education.

Not a True Choice

In the early years of the homeschool movement, a spark grew into a brushfire of freedom in large part because families were willing to sacrifice for the cause. For the Christians in the movement, God's command to disciple their children was

the central driving force. They saw clearly the trajectory of the government schools and its goal of stealing the souls of their children. Despite the real threat of being imprisoned, following God was not an option; it was the only choice.

Purveyors of the school choice movement are trying to convince homeschoolers that government money provides a way for families to choose the best education for their children. But what they're selling is a false choice. All the choices they are presenting will be ruled by government bureaucrats. We all inherently know: what the government funds, the government runs.

Most of the “school choice” bills introduced this year include bigger government and increased regulations for private and home educators who choose to accept taxpayer funds. Big, new government bureaucracies in partnership with private entities are built to manage the oversight of the funding. Requirements for homeschoolers using the funding often include frequent meetings with certified teachers, usage of curriculum tied to state standards, and yearly testing. Basically, it's public school at home. A choice we've already rejected.

True Brushfires of Freedom

It is time to rekindle the sparks that began the homeschool movement some fifty years ago and

revive the brushfire of educational freedom. **Government-funded programs will never bring God's truth to bear on the realities of this world. Brushfires begin within each heart and mind that is set on the truth of God's Word.** Jesus set us free and gave us liberty; it is this truth that God commands us to set ablaze in our children.

School choice advocates are relying on the greed of man to propel their cause. Politicians, nonprofits, and governments benefit from the enlargement of the government-funded and run education system and the number of people growing dependent on it. Yet, our cause rests in the humility of utter reliance on God for our very breath and a growing awe of who He is. The time has come to set afresh the brushfire that first brought us freedom and to lead others — especially our children — to the liberty found only in Jesus. ■



Carolyn Martin, CHCC's Director of Government Relations, and her husband, Todd, began homeschooling their three children in upstate New York before moving to Colorado in

2004. Her passion is to see homeschooling remain free from government intrusion for future generations. Be sure to attend Carolyn's workshop, “When the Left Rules,” at the RMHC.



SPEAKER



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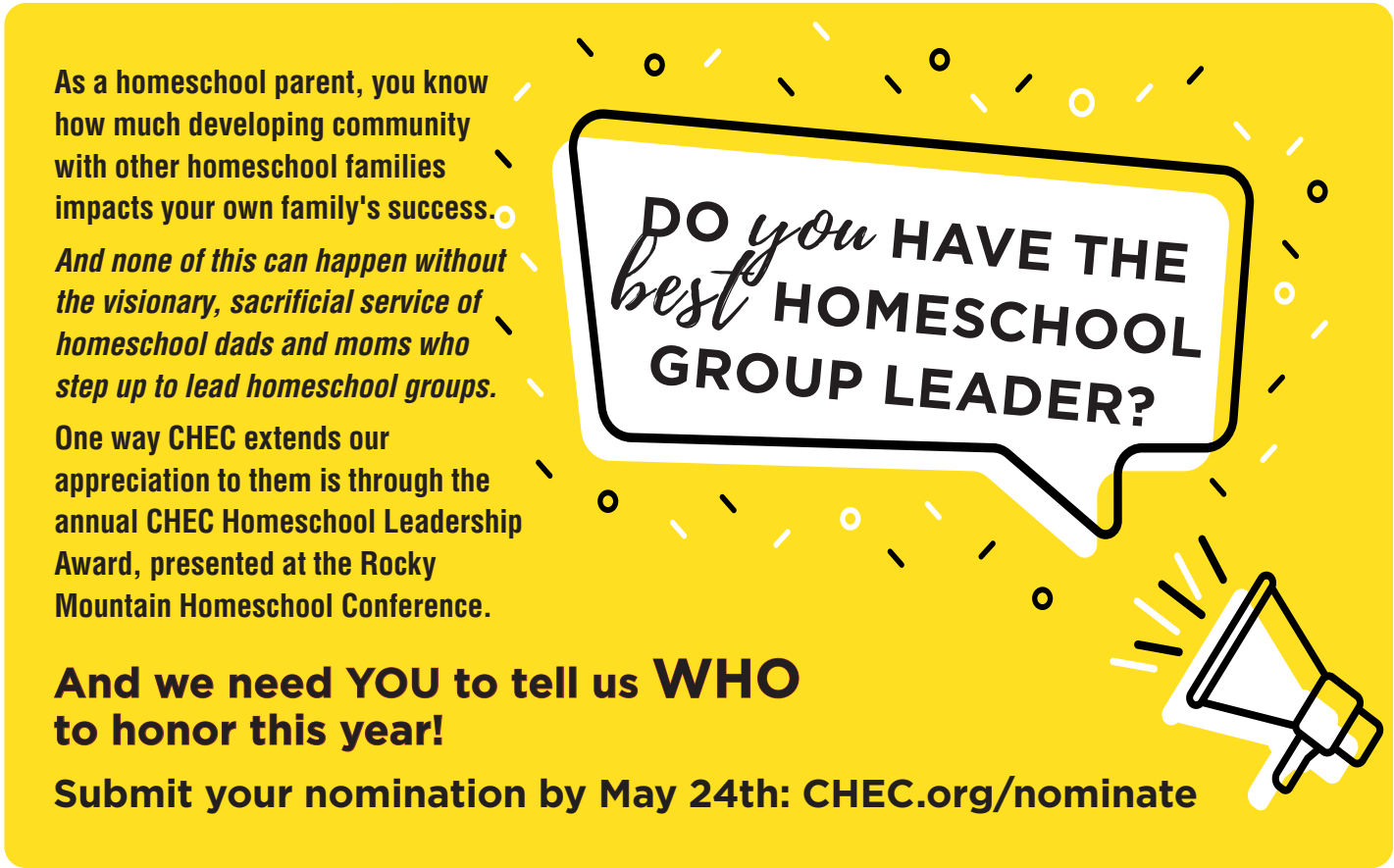
As a homeschool parent, you know how much developing community with other homeschool families impacts your own family's success.

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DO YOU HAVE THE
best HOMESCHOOL
GROUP LEADER?

BY
Homeschool Graduate
LUCAS JONES



Was Homeschooling Worth It?

For as long as I can remember, the voices of the homeschool movement have not changed. Except for a few who have moved on for various reasons, we have generally been listening for years to the same people repeatedly affirming that homeschooling is worth it. A handful of homeschool graduates, such as Israel Wayne, Kevin Swanson, and Bradley Pierce tout the benefits of a discipleship-based homeschool education, but for the most part, homeschooling was illegal while they were being educated. I am a recent homeschool graduate, but I wonder, where are all the others like me?

My parents were not homeschooled, and initially not even interested in having a large family. God in time changed their hearts, such that I am the oldest of seven and was homeschooled all the way through high school graduation. My experience was not unlike that of most average homeschoolers in the 2010's. For me, it was a very positive experience overall, and I have every intention of being a homeschool parent (once I get married and become a parent, of course).

Through a providential set of circumstances, I am currently working for Heritage Defense, an organization that gives Christian homeschool families peace of mind by providing full legal representation against CPS. (Employee bias aside, I highly recommend Heritage Defense membership for any homeschool family in addition to becoming a member of HSLDA.) It is a tremendous blessing to work with other homeschool graduates to defend other homeschool families.

Of course, I have plenty of friends and acquaintances (not to mention siblings) who homeschool their children or are still being homeschooled by their parents. I know other homeschool graduates are out there, but why do we not hear from them? Even more troubling, why are the vocal homeschool graduates the ones who disown their upbringing with negativity?

I believe part of the problem is that homeschooling was hard and dangerous back in the 1980's — when parents not only sacrificed their time and energy, but also risked their liberty by homeschooling illegally. Now that homeschooling is legal in every state, it is growing in popularity across all demographics. Could it be that now home education is an easier and more popular education choice, homeschool graduates take their education for granted and do not feel like they need to speak up for it? Or do they only see it as an option among other options?



The issue is much more serious than that. Home discipleship is a biblical imperative. To those of us who were homeschooled, the necessity and expediency of homeschooling seems obvious. But to anyone looking from the outside, the contrast between the vocal apostates and the apparent lack of recent success stories is striking. The homeschool legends cannot be the only ones to propound the blessings of homeschooling. It is time for average homeschool graduates to stand up and say it with them. We do see homeschooling as the best option. We are profoundly grateful for our parents' sacrifice. And we have every intention of homeschooling our children.

We cannot lose the vision to disciple children through home education simply because our parents happened to homeschool us in the 2010's (or 2000's, or 90's, etc). Standing on the shoulders of giants, we must not only *recall the glorious deeds of*

the Lord, and His might, and the wonders that He has done, but tell them to the coming generation (Psalm 78:4 ESV).

If we do not tell of the Lord's glorious deeds in homeschooling, we risk falling into the same trap as ancient Israel by becoming *another generation after them who did not know the Lord or the work that He had done for Israel (Judges 2:10 ESV)*. Galadriel's recounting that, "Much that once was is lost, for none now live who remember it,"¹ must not be true of Christian homeschoolers who seek to raise their children in the wisdom and instruction of the Lord.

The world is changing, and it needs to know that following God's instructions for educating children at home actually works. So, if you are a homeschool parent, thank you. If you are a prospective homeschooler, do it. And if you are a homeschool graduate, don't pretend you aren't. Carry on the heritage. Because you know better than anyone that homeschooling is worth it. ■

FOOTNOTE ■ ¹quotes.net/mquote/120314. Accessed 4.7.2023.

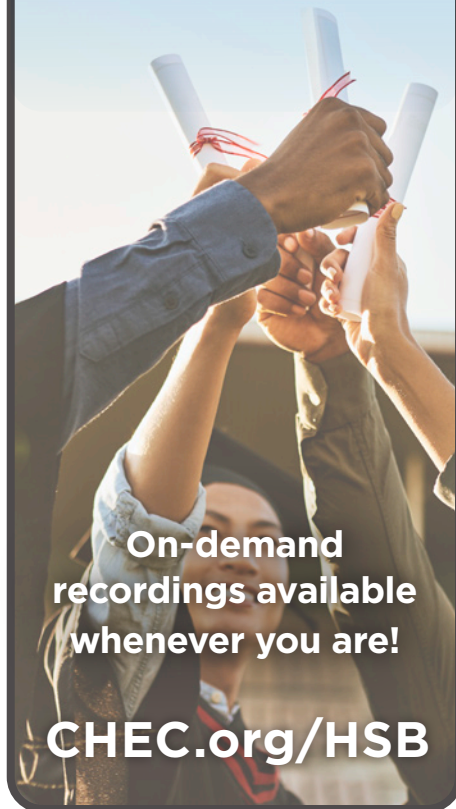


Lucas Jones is a class of 2020 homeschool graduate and paralegal for Heritage Defense. He is passionate about biblical homeschooling. In addition to law, his interests include speech and debate, theology, and apologetics. In his spare time, he enjoys The Lord of the Rings and the Babylon Bee.

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Teach Your UNIQUE LEARNER to Read

BY ANDREW PUDEWA

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ISTOCK

If you spend a short time with even a few children, you will quickly realize that they exhibit a wide range of reading readiness and aptitude. While few of us are stressed by early readers, many become concerned when reading is delayed or difficult for a child. In great part this is amplified by our national obsession with academic performance and a belief that earlier reading is somehow an indicator of future success — which it is not.

And while there are certainly better and worse methods of teaching reading, even the best instruction can still fail to help a child to read before he or she is ready. If you have enough children,

you will likely have at least one who gains reading fluency at an older age than you might prefer.

In our case it was, thankfully, number six of our seven kids who had the hardest time. I say “thankfully” because if he had been the first of our children, we would have believed that we were the most incompetent homeschool parents in the world. He could not really decode even four-letter words at ten years of age. He did not read a book until he was twelve, and getting him to do it was a constant challenge until about age fourteen. However, we had enough parenting and teaching experience to understand that it was his neurology — not his intelligence — that made it difficult.

Various factors influence reading aptitude. Most commonly, we hear the term dyslexia in regard to a person who cannot learn to read as easily as others. But there are other possible causes as well. Sometimes the challenge is visual: a lack of acuity or a weakness in convergence of vision. These conditions can often be helped by behavioral or practical optometry, so it is advisable to have a child’s eyes checked should vision be suspect. Another impediment to reading can be ADHD or even a form of auditory processing disorder, which can interfere with phonemic

awareness (attaching sounds to letters and letter combinations) or basic comprehension.

“True” dyslexics, like my son, will often find that two-dimensional figures such as numbers and letters will “flip” or “reverse” in their mind, thus creating inconsistencies in how they see text. To understand this better, I recommend Ron Davis’ book, *The Gift of Dyslexia*, wherein he tells how, as an autistic, dyslexic adult, he taught himself to read when he figured out what his brain was doing, and shares many of his strategies with the reader. Some of his techniques do not make much sense to us who are not dyslexic. But one of the most important things we should keep in mind is that indeed there are certain advantages to having this unusual skill: dyslexics often become excellent inventors, engineers, designers, or entrepreneurs because they actually see the world differently from the rest of us. Another valuable resource in this vein is *The Dyslexic Advantage* by Brock and Fernette Eide, whom I have interviewed on my podcast. I also asked my son (as an adult) to come on our podcast and reflect on what it was like growing up dyslexic. Links to these episodes and other helpful resources can be found at IEW.com/learning-differences.



Now I am not saying to give up on teaching dyslexic kids to read. They need the orthographic information and lots of practice, probably more than the average. What I do suggest is that you should not be stressed by the time it takes, and do not burden yourself with unnecessary worry by comparing your child's reading with other children's, based on their age. We generally don't worry about whether a child walks early or late — all children learn to walk (serious disability notwithstanding). If we begin something like music lessons, we do not compare children with each other based on age or number of years of practice. What's important is that they learn to play something and hopefully appreciate music more. Each child develops at his or her own rate, and as long as we continue to saturate their environment with letters and words, stories and literature, we can be confident that he or she will ultimately learn to read and probably enjoy it. It is extremely rare to meet a dyslexic home educated student who does not eventually come to read well; you just cannot cause that to happen by a certain age.

But what to do in the meantime? What if a child is nine — or twelve — and cannot read much? In

a typical school environment, this would be very handicapping because so much information has generally been acquired through reading. One way to think about it is to adjust your definition of reading. Commonly, reading is understood as “decoding with our eyes the symbols that make words, and visually taking in sequences of words which communicate ideas.” However, not everyone reads with their eyes. Blind people, for example, often learn to read with their fingers. Dyslexics often benefit greatly from “reading with their ears.” In fact, organizations such as the International Dyslexia Association and Learning Ally provide a multitude of resources including a huge collection of audiobooks that can be used by those who cannot read the text versions — even when at a college or university level.

This is what we (and many other parents) discovered. What did my son do for “homeschool” when he could not read or do math on paper? For seven or eight years!? Well, we not only read aloud to him as much as time would permit, we loaded him up with audiobooks, let him hang out with his older sisters and overhear what they were learning, and did spelling

and math verbally — no paper involved. One result of this was that he could “read” with his ears for many hours a day, sometimes five, six, eight, or more, while doing other things: building forts, playing with LEGOs, climbing trees, drawing pictures, pretending to do chores, etc. And during that time (approximately grades one through six or seven), he became the most literate of my children, having devoured so many books during the first half of his school years that he was like a walking encyclopedia of novels. When he did start writing fluently around the age of fourteen, his prose was in many ways more eloquent than any of his sisters' at that age. Why? He had the advantage of having heard more and better English literature than anyone else!

My most useful bit of advice is this: better late than too early. By stressing and trying to force a child to read before he or she is developmentally ready, we can exacerbate the problem. If a child can't read and is having a terrible time trying, our anxiety and insistence can cause the child to hate the very idea of reading and create more resistance, even after he or she is older and better able to wrestle control over eyes and brain. Try to stay relaxed, trust that it will all come out well in the end, and remain joyful. Many times I have said this prayer: “Okay, God, this is your child, so this is your problem. I can't fix it, but I know you have a perfect plan.” Which may be the most important thing of all when raising a child for whom reading does not come easily. ■

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Andrew Pudewa, director of the Institute for Excellence in Writing, has helped transform many reluctant writers and equip teachers with powerful tools to improve student skills. He and wife, Robin, have homeschooled their seven children and are now proud grandparents of fifteen, making their home in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Andrew will be speaking at the RMHC and helping with the IEW booth in the Exhibit Hall. He can be reached through IEW.com.



SPEAKER



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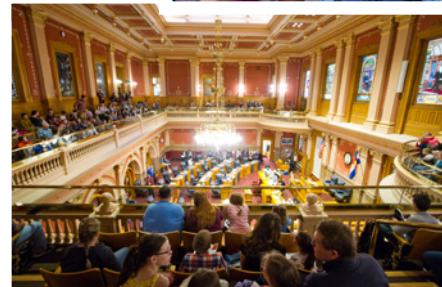
“Homeschooling is absolutely the best option for educating our children!” Rick Green declared amidst cheering crowds of homeschoolers rallying on the west steps of the Colorado State Capitol on April 13th. The 2023 CHEC Homeschool Day at the Capitol was a huge success, with professionally dressed families packing out the House and Senate galleries to witness the opening ceremonies.

Homeschooling was officially recognized in both the House and Senate, and several representatives emphasized their support from the podium. Governor Polis even asked to take a few pictures with some of the homeschool families who were there.

Attendees then walked to a historic church nearby for a passionate talk delivered by Rick Green, founder of Patriot Academy. After enjoying Chick-fil-A lunches, the homeschoolers marched back to the Capitol, led by the rousing tunes of a Revolutionary War fife and drum corps. At the rally, a dozen legislators came on stage to show their support, and joined former executive director of CHEC, Kevin Swanson, in prayer.

After an impassioned plea by CHEC Director of Government Relations, Carolyn Martin, to stay vigilant about preserving our liberty, Rick Green delivered a special message. He finished off the day with a constitution class for teenagers.

CHEC wishes to thank all the families who made the effort to attend and remind the Colorado legislators about the importance of protecting our homeschool freedom and parental rights. ■



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The *CHEC Homeschool Update* is published triannually by Christian Home Educators of Colorado, 19039 Plaza Drive, Suite 210, Parker, CO 80134.

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START

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ISTOCK

BY CINDY PUHEK

EDUCATIONAL GAMES *Add Fun!*

Learning that occurs while having fun is often the most impactful and memorable. Most adults learned the landmarks of Atlantic City and what it meant to mortgage a property while playing *Monopoly*, and we have retained that knowledge throughout our lives.

We gained this knowledge of the New Jersey Shore effortlessly while enjoying a board game with our families, and we can give our children this same effortless learning by wisely incorporating educational toys and games into our homeschools. Two companies that develop products to make learning painless and fun are *Discovery Toys* and *Historical Conquest*. *Discovery Toys* makes educational playthings for the very young through adults. *Historical Conquest* is designed for ages eight and up.

Discovery Toys offers educationally rich toys which have always had a place in my homeschool. *Discovery Toys* are the types of toys that get played with repeatedly, and these are high quality toys that get passed down

from child to child. My family owns a multi-piece marble maze from *Discovery Toys*, and it has been built, taken apart, and built again and again by my children. While the children are building, they are learning about gravity, motion, friction, and spatial awareness. Kids also practice problem solving as they work to get the marble from the starting point to the finish. Another favorite from *Discovery Toys* was the *Sky Spin Deluxe* disk launcher which provided hours of enjoyment as the kids learned about flight, helicopters, and centripetal force. Even now that most of my kids are teenagers, they continue to enjoy the games we have purchased from *Discovery Toys*.

Historical Conquest is a card game that uses real historical figures and events as the backbone of the game. The game plays like *Risk* but takes less time, and the basics of the game can be learned in six minutes. The aim of the game is world domination using historical figures and events from different time periods. For example, players can form an army using Abraham Lincoln and Albert Einstein working together to defeat the enemy during the Black Plague. The abilities of the historical figures in the game are based on the characteristics of these people in real life. Kids retain 70% of the historical facts they learn while playing, which is much higher than the 20% retained from textbooks or even the 50% retained from activity books. Virtual and local tournaments are hosted



regularly so students have many opportunities to play with others who are excited about the game. While strategizing and building armies and fighting battles, players gain a working knowledge of the people and events that have shaped the past.

Students learn best when they enjoy what they are learning. Educational games are an amazing way to infuse fun into any homeschool curriculum. *Discovery Toys* and *Historical Conquest*

are two great companies to consider when looking for resources. Their games and toys will enhance the learning experience of your children. Check out their respective booths at the Rocky Mountain Homeschool Conference, June 15–17, 2023, to learn about their products, experiencing them in a hands-on way. ■



Cindy Puhek resides in Colorado Springs and has been married to Peter for over two decades. They are well into their second decade of homeschooling their six children who range in age from toddler to high school graduate. Cindy holds a Master's degree in chemistry. You can visit her blog at HomeschoolEnrichment.com/blogs. Cindy will be teaching the "Nuts & Bolts" portion of the Homeschool Introductory Seminar that is free to attend at the RMHC on BONUS DAY, Wednesday, June 14, 2023.



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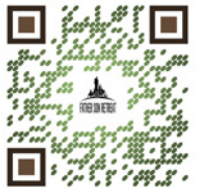
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