

# Keystone

A Bi-Monthly Journal for Christian

Home Educators

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November 2005

Blessed is the man who fears the LORD, who delights greatly in His commandments. His descendants will be mighty on earth. — Psalm 112:1-2



*Featured family*  
**Dirk and Joanne Den Harder**  
Jared 16, Dalena 20, Ali 13,  
Aidan 12, Isaac 18

# Editorial



The Alliance for the Separation of School and State ([www.HonestEdu.org](http://www.HonestEdu.org)) is very much like the wider home education movement: it attracts people from all parts of society, every religious faith, across ethnic and national lines. I talk about meeting up with the leader, Marshall Fritz, in the article on page 30. The Alliance only asks people to lend their names and locations to a "Declaration" saying "I proclaim publicly that I favor ending government involvement in education". This is not a petition and will not be presented to anyone. The objective is to get people to re-think, "Hey, whose responsibility is it to educate children, the government's or the parent's?" We Christian home educators are surely more convinced than most that it is definitely the parent's responsibility. To say it is the government's job, is way too big a compromise. Once you give the government your own children, you might just as well give them everything else.

In addition, signing this declaration challenges the concept of "compulsion" in schooling: why does the government compel parents to send their children to these schools when the government cannot guarantee their physical, moral or emotional safety or that they will end up knowing how to read and write properly? Why does the government compel students to be immersed in a curriculum whose ideals and philosophies are often foreign if not outright hostile to those of the family, especially to Christian families? And why does the government compel these Christian families, who generally could raise the most objections to being compelled to send their children to these institutions...why are these families further compelled to pay for this indoctrination, especially when they make use of private or home education?

Please take a moment for each adult to sign the enclosed card and send it back to me in the little brown Home Education Foundation freepost envelope.

This issue of *Keystone* has a few extra pages...we just had so much more we wanted to share with you all. The article on page 31 attempting to summarize our travels through the USA is full of web addresses: they really are well worth investigating. We spoke face to face with all the people mentioned. And we have articles by a number of them in this issue of *Keystone*. I have come home convinced that the Christians of New Zealand need to get serious about their faith, the men in particular. Home educators are uniquely positioned to have a mighty impact on our culture *over time*... I'm talking about two or three generations as we prove to be faithful in raising up the next generation to be God-fearing disciples of Christ who will likewise train up the next generation. We oldies will see glimmers of this in our lifetimes, but our grandchildren will start to taste the fruit. But the key is this: *we* need to get started *now*!

With this in mind, keep an eye open for a Christian

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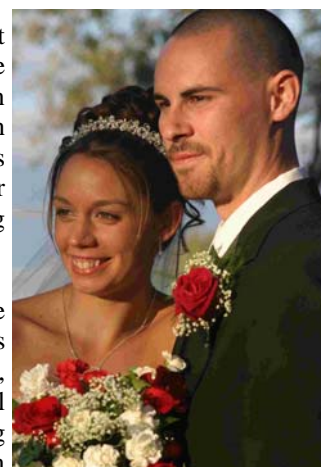
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Men's Pre-Summit meeting near you. We want to see men sharpening this vision together as iron sharpens iron up to a major Summit with Doug Phillips in 2008.

We were thrilled to be present at our son, Zach's wedding in Illinois, USA...an international alliance of two young people who have been home educated since day one! It is exciting to think about what God will do with this union and the generations to come (DV).



*Zach and his radiant bride, Megan at the beginning of their new lives together.*

**TEACH Bulletin** (Thorough Education Achieved in a Caring Home) is a monthly newsletter of the Home Education Foundation. Articles deal with political developments which may affect New Zealand home educators, statist and professional trends, correspondence with politicians and educationalists and other items of general interest to home educators. Published since January 1997, **TEACH Bulletin** has been used to sound legislative alerts, rallying home educators to write submissions to their MPs and Parliamentary Select Committees when legislation unfavourable to home educators was introduced into Parliament. The six-page newsletter comes out 11 times a year (none in December) for an annual subscription of NZ\$16 or two years for NZ\$30.

**The Home Education Foundation** is a charitable trust established to serve, promote and strengthen the home education community in New Zealand and beyond. The Home Education Foundation, Christian Home Schoolers of New Zealand and the projects they take on are supported entirely by home educators subscribing to *Keystone* and/or *TEACH Bulletin*, investing in books the Foundation sells or making tax-deductible donations either by cheque, credit card or by automatic bank payment (ask us for a form). The Foundation can also be supported through Telecom who gives a percentage (5%) of your toll bill to the Foundation, *painlessly and without costing you an extra cent!* Telecom subscribers can ring 0800 724 665 and ask to support "Christian Home Schoolers of New Zealand", reference 10898651, ph. (06) 357-4399, through Telecom's "School Connection" Programme. Please ring today!

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# Dirk and Joanne den Harder

From Upper Hutt

Introducing the den Harder's:

Dad (Dirk) is a self-employed building contractor, works hard, loves his job and is involved in a couple of church activities so doesn't have a lot of spare time.

Mum (Joanne) is a full-time homemaker/educator and is interested in lots of things but never actually gets around to doing many of them. I need one of those round tuits!

Dalena, now 20, is working full-time, selling and tinting paint and doing some colour consulting and has also worked for a while as a doctor's receptionist and nanny/helper for another homeschooling family with 9 children. In the early years of home schooling she 'hated' it but when her Aunts started having babies and she was able to take her work with her and stay and help, she decided that it wasn't so bad after all. She plans to marry on 16 December, D.V.

Isaac, 18, started a building apprenticeship a year ago with a local Christian company, Norda Pacific, which is just great – and he loves it. Comes out with some very embarrassing statements or questions at times, which must make people wonder what type of (if any) education this boy has had!

Jared, 16, is still studying and also doing an online computer course. He has had some leaning difficulties along the way but with the flexibility of homeschooling, I believe he has done so much better than he would have done in a classroom situation, where he would have become discouraged at not keeping up and always feeling like a failure. Not that anyone would ever guess, meeting him, that he has struggled with this as he 'knowledgably' spouts vast quantities of facts, even when you really don't want to know, and at a tremendous rate!

Ali, 13, is progressing well, has a good attitude to work and even though she struggles in some areas, is willing to put in the work to sort this out. She adds the 'crazy' element to our day!

Aidan, 12, is also plugging away at his assigned work. He enjoys being able to get his work done so he can get onto other important things like riding his bike and skating.

Dirk and I having, by God's grace, both been raised in Christian families, were always convicted that we wanted a Christian education for our children. As members of the Reformed Churches, there were a number of schools in the area, run by parents (Board of Trustees) and we just always thought our children would go along there.

At the time our eldest daughter, Dalena, turned five, we were in a very tight spot financially and decided that we would keep her home until she was six, in order to save the school fees, as we were trying to save for a house. She then went along to the local Christian School for two terms until we moved out of the area to go farming in the Wairarapa. There was a Christian school about  $\frac{3}{4}$  hour away, and we duly sent her and Isaac, now also 5  $\frac{1}{2}$ , on the bus to school. They left home at 7:15 and arrived back at 4:30. Looking back, I really regret doing this, as it was far too much for them and especially being subjected to teasing on the bus by college children, about Satan and the fact that they went to a Christian school.

Dalena struggled during her 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  years at school and we had a couple of long chats with the teacher about her progress. She was going to have to repeat her Std 1 year, as she wasn't coping with the work. Isaac, being a visual, left-brained person, did OK in the school environment.

After our two-year contract was up, we were on the move again to another farm in the Manawatu. Our criteria for work was always that there be a Reformed Church and a Christian school within driving distance. There was a Christian school 25km away and so the children started there. I did car pool with another lady for some of the trips but with school cleaning and lunch duty as well, found that I spent a large chunk of my time in the car. When I got back in the morning, Dirk would want me to sit and have breakfast with him as he had already done half a days work and then it was only a matter of hours until I had to pick up the children from school. I had 3 pre-schoolers as well and often had to wake them from their afternoon sleeps to do this.

There were several other factors, equally important, apart from the time spent away from home that steered us into a decision to keep the children home. One of the main reasons was that we were moving a lot so home schooling would give more continuity. We were up to our 9th house, since we were married, by then!

Another factor was the change we could see in Dalena with the easier work standard and much smaller class size at the new school. She practically blossomed before our eyes as she started to take a real interest in her work and share it with us. About this time we got to know a wonderful family in Palmerston North who were veteran home educators and we liked what we saw and heard about home schooling...

So.... We started at the beginning of 1995, with a 9, 7, 5- $\frac{1}{2}$  year old and 2 pre-schoolers. At that time it was fairly unusual to take your children off school and teach them yourself and quite a few friends and family

## KEYSTONE

is the Journal of  
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**KEYSTONE** is the journal of Christian Home Schoolers of New Zealand, a part of the Home Education Foundation, a Charitable Trust established to promote the concept of home education to the Christian community and beyond.

**KEYSTONE** is intended to inform, challenge, encourage and inspire. The Christian faith is being undervalued. Christianity alone is fully able to present a worldview that is comprehensive, coherent, consistent and complete.

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*The fear of the LORD is the  
beginning of wisdom,  
a good understanding have all those  
who do His commandments.  
— Psalm 111:10*

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It was Henry R. Van Til, in The Calvinistic Concept of Culture (1959) who stated that "culture" is religion externalised. Look at the expressions of our culture today: hatred, violence, murder, infanticide, anti-Christianity, immorality, drugs and other crimes. The religion, the faith which our popular culture externalises is demonic.

Oh, Lord, please give us the wisdom and vision to home educate our children for Your Glory. May they not only live and work honourably as Christ-like role models in the midst of this crooked and perverse generation but also fearlessly, tirelessly, lovingly offer them Your Words of eternal life. Amen!

had reservations about it. Now three of my sisters home educate also!

I had spent a few months looking at various curriculum and buying books and then set up 'school at home.' I had a very structured programme but found I just didn't have the time to do all the subjects on my timetable with all of the children. I was also always worried that I wasn't doing enough or keeping up with the school. It was a stressful time and it took me a couple of years, really, to relax and feel confident enough to just use the textbooks as a reference, not as a taskmaster, and to tailor the curriculum to suit each child, rather than use a 'classroom' approach.

Over the years we have tried lots of different methods, routines and books and have found what suits us as a family.

We use mostly Saxon for maths but have used other books for those who have struggled. I have just started using IGCSE for the higher grades as the scope is broader and more in line with the NZ curriculum. We use A Beka Science and Health up to Grade 9 then Apologia Science. For Geography and History we loosely follow the Diana Waring outline. We do some Latin and Logic as well as Reading, Writing, Phonics/Spelling. We have used Wordly Wise and Vocabulary from Classical Roots as well as A Beka Language from Grade 1-6. We are also working our way through the book "Building Christian Character," by Blair Adams and do most of our Bible memory work in relation to this.

I usually assign books for the children to read each term and, as they get older, work related to them. We have recently spent some time studying and memorising some of Shakespeare's work and have just finished a literature unit on "To Kill A Mockingbird."

We generally spend the morning from 8.30ish to 12:00 on 'book' work and may do art, history and other more relaxed subjects in the afternoon as well as finishing off assigned work and doing memory work. At the moment we are operating a system where I spend one whole day doing subjects that are taught by me and I assign work for the rest of the week. This approach seems to work well for us and we always come back to it after trying something new! Some terms have been very disrupted due to shifting (yet again) or other circumstances, but then we also have terms where we really power through the work, so I guess it all sorts itself out in the end. I am sure I am not alone in that I have sometimes had periods where I have asked myself, "Why on earth I am doing this?" but the good times always outweigh the bad and no matter how close I've been to throwing in the towel at times, I know in my heart that this is best for us at this time and know that God will give us the strength to carry on.

One thing I found helpful, after reading an article in the *Teaching Home* magazine, was to set long term goals for exactly what I wanted to achieve by the time the children were 18. I find this very encouraging to look at when I feel we have had a slack term (or year) as I think we often don't realise just how much we do

actually get through over the course of a child's education.

In 2002, we were given the opportunity of going to Ireland for 6 months. We figured that it would be too good to miss as the children were old enough to remember and enjoy it and Dalena was going to work the following year, so the timing was just right. We spent some time in England, drove through Wales, drove to Paris to go up the Eiffel tower and see the Notre Dame (there and back in one long day!) and spent about 3 weeks in Holland meeting family. The rest of the time was spent in Ireland where we studied the life of St Patrick and were able to visit a lot of related historical sights as well as soak up the history of the place.

We have many happy memories that we cherish as a family and couldn't have done it if we hadn't home schooled. It does mean that the children are slightly behind their peers with their academic education but we had the opportunity of a lifetime to be educated in other ways and took it, with no regrets.

For me, this current year has been quite different to previous ones, now that I only have three at home and they are older. The last year and a half we also had a foster child, who needed a lot of help and attention from me as he had learning difficulties, but he is no longer with us. With Isaac also off to work now, it has suddenly given me so much more time to concentrate on areas of weakness as well as the regular work, with the other three.

Over the years I have done a fair amount of research into different learning styles and learning disabilities and can definitely see the benefits and beauty of a 'tailor-made' curriculum for each child. With two of the children in particular, I believe that a classroom situation would have been detrimental, and being able to work at their own pace, with no competition or pressure (peer or otherwise) and one-on-one teaching, has given them an environment conducive to learning for them. As a parent, seeing the children 24/7 means that you have a very good idea of where they are at spiritually too, which is ultimately the most important aspect of our training/nurturing and gives us a unique opening to use different situations as an opportunity to teach them about God and our world-life view.

So... 10 years on and I still enjoy having my children at home and can definitely see the blessings it has brought to our family.



# The Faith of Us Fathers

## A Father's Resolutions

by Cotton Mather



Parents, Oh! how much ought you to be continually devising for the good of your children! Often devise how to make them “wise children”; how to give them a desirable education, an education that may render them desirable; how to render them lovely and polite and serviceable in their generation. Often devise how to enrich their minds with valuable knowledge; how to instill generous, gracious and heavenly principles into their minds; how to restrain and rescue them from the paths of the destroyer, and fortify them against their peculiar temptations. There is a world of good that you have to do for them. You are without the natural feelings of humanity if you are not in a continual agony to do for them all the good that ever you can. It was no mistake of an ancient writer to say, “Nature teaches us to love our children as ourselves.”

### RESOLVED—

1. At the birth of my children, I will resolve to do all I can that they may be the Lord's. I will now actually give them up by faith to God; entreating that each child may be a child of God the Father, a subject of God the Son, a temple of God the Spirit—and be rescued from the condition of a child of wrath, and be possessed and employed by the Lord as an everlasting instrument of His glory.

2. As soon as my children are capable of minding my admonitions, I will often, often admonish them, saying, “Child, God has sent His son to die, to save sinners from death and hell. You must not sin against Him. You must every day cry to God that He would be your Father, and your Saviour, and your Leader. You must renounce the service of Satan, you must not follow the vanities of this world, you must lead a life of serious religion.”

3. Let me daily pray for my children with constancy, with fervency, with agony. Yea, by name let me mention each one of them every day before the Lord. I will importunately beg for all suitable blessings to be bestowed upon them: that God would give them grace, and give them glory, and withhold no good thing from them; that God would smile on their education, and give His good angels the charge over them, and keep them from evil, that it may not grieve them; that when their father and mother shall forsake them, the Lord may take them up. With importunity I will plead that promise on their behalf: “The Heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit unto them that ask Him.” Oh! happy children, if by asking I may obtain the Holy Spirit for them!

4. I will early entertain the children with delightful

stories out of the Bible. In the talk of the table, I will go through the Bible, when the olive-plants about my table are capable of being so watered. But I will always conclude the stories with some lessons of piety to be inferred from them.

5. I will single out some Scriptural sentences of the greatest importance; and some also that have special antidotes in them against the common errors

and vices of children. They shall quickly get those golden sayings by heart, and be rewarded with silver or gold, or some good thing, when they do it. Such as:

- Psalm 111:10—*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.*
- Matthew 16:26—*What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?*
- 1 Timothy 1:15—*Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.*
- Matthew 6:6—*When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret.*
- Ephesians 4:25—*Putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour.*
- Romans 12:17, 19—*Recompense to no man evil for evil....Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves.*

6. Jewish treatise tells us that among the Jews, when a child began to speak, the father was bound to teach him Deuteronomy 33:4—*Moses commanded us a law, even the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob.* Oh! let me early make my children acquainted with the Law which our blessed Jesus has commanded us! 'Tis the best inheritance I can give them.

7. I will cause my children to learn the Catechism<sup>1</sup>. In catechizing them, I will break the answers into many lesser and proper questions; and by their answer to them, observe and quicken their understandings. I will bring every truth into some duty and practice, and expect them to confess it, and consent unto it, and resolve upon it. As we go on in our catechizing, they shall, when they are able, turn to the proofs and read them, and say to me what they prove and how. Then, I will take my times, to put nicer and harder questions to them; and improve the times of conversation with my family (which every man ordinarily has or may have) for conferences on matters of religion.

8. Restless will I be till I may be able to say of my children, “Behold, they pray!” I will therefore teach them to pray. But after they have learnt a form of prayer, I will press them to proceed unto points that are not in their form. I will charge them with all possible cogency to pray in secret; and often call upon them, “Child, I hope, you don't forget my charge to you, about secret prayer: your crime is very great if you do!”

9. I will do what I can very early to beget a temper of kindness in my children, both toward one another and toward all other people. I will instruct them how ready they should be to share with others a part of what they have; and they shall see my encouragements when they discover a loving, a courteous, a helpful disposition. I will give them now and then a piece of money, so that with their own little hands they may dispense unto the poor. Yea, if any one has hurt them, or vexed them, I will not only forbid them all revenge, but also oblige them to do a kindness as soon as may be to the vexatious person. All coarseness of language or carriage in them, I will discountenance.

*Cotton Mather.*

10. I will be solicitous to have my children expert, not only at reading handsomely, but also at writing a fair hand. I will then assign them such books to read as I may judge most agreeable and profitable; obliging them to give me some account of what they read; but keep a strict eye upon them, that they don't stumble on the Devil's library, and poison themselves with foolish romances, or novels, or plays, or songs, or jests that are not convenient. I will set them also, to write out such things as may be of the greatest benefit unto them; and they shall have their blank books, neatly kept on purpose, to enter such passages as I advise them to. I will particularly require them now and then to write a prayer of their own composing, and bring it unto me; that so I may discern what sense they have of their own everlasting interests.

11. I wish that my children may as soon as may be, feel the principles of reason and honor working in them—and that I may carry on their education, very much upon those principles. Therefore, first, I will wholly avoid that harsh, fierce, crabbed usage of the children that would make them tremble and abhor to come into my presence. I will treat them so that they shall fear to offend me, and yet mightily love to see me, and be glad of my coming home if I have been abroad at any time. I will have it looked upon as a severe and awful punishment to be forbidden for awhile to come into my presence. I will raise in them an high opinion of their father's love to them, and of his being better able to judge what is good for them than they are for themselves. I will bring them to believe 'tis best for them to be and do as I will have them. Hereupon I will continually magnify the matter to them, what a brave thing 'tis to know the things that are excellent; and more brave to do the things that are virtuous. I will have them to propose it as a reward of their well-doing at any time, I will now go to my father, and he will teach me something that I was never taught before. I will have them afraid of doing any base thing, from an horror of the baseness in it. My first response to finding a lesser fault in them shall be a surprise, a wonder, vehemently expressed before them, that ever they should be guilty of doing so foolishly; a vehement belief that they will never do the like again; a weeping resolution in them, that they will not. I will never dispense a blow, except it be for an atrocious crime or for a lesser fault obstinately

persisted in; either for an enormity, or for an obstinacy. I will always proportion the chastisements to the miscarriages; neither smiting bitterly for a very small piece of childishness nor frowning only a little for some real wickedness. Nor shall my chastisement ever be dispensed in a passion and a fury; but I will first show them the command of God, by transgressing whereof they have displeased me. The slavish, raving, fighting way of discipline is too commonly used. I look upon it as a considerable article in the wrath and curse of God upon a miserable world.

12. As soon as we can, we'll get up to yet higher principles. I will often tell the children what cause they have to love a glorious Christ, who has died for them. And how much He will be well-pleased with their well-doing. And what a noble thing 'tis to follow His example; which example I will describe unto them. I will often tell them that the eye of God is upon them; the great God knows all they do and hears all they speak. I will often tell them that there will be a time when they must appear before the Judgment-Seat of the holy Lord; and they must now do nothing that may then be a grief and shame unto them. I will set before them the delights of that Heaven that is prepared for pious children; and the torments of that Hell that is prepared of old for naughty ones. I will inform them of the good things the good angels do for little ones that have the fear of God and are afraid of sin. And how the devils tempt them to do ill things; how they hearken to the devils, and are like them, when they do such things; and what mischiefs the devils may get leave to do them in this world, and what a sad thing 'twill be, to be among the devils in the Place of Dragons. I will cry to God, that He will make them feel the power of these principles.

13. When the children are of a fit age for it, I will sometimes closet them; have them with me alone; talk with them about the state of their souls; their experiences, their proficiencies, their temptations; obtain their declared consent unto every jot and tittle of the gospel; and then pray with them, and weep unto the Lord for His grace, to be bestowed upon them, and make them witnesses of the agony with which I am travailing to see the image of Christ formed in them. Certainly, they'll never forget such actions!

14. I will be very watchful and cautious about the companions of my children. I will be very inquisitive what company they keep; if they are in hazard of being ensnared by any vicious company, I will earnestly pull them out of it, as brands out of the burning. I will find out, and procure, laudable companions for them.

15. As in catechizing the children, so in the repetition of the public sermons, I will use this method. I will put every truth into a question to be answered with Yes or No. By this method I hope to awaken their attention as well as enlighten their understanding. And thus I shall have an opportunity to ask, "Do you desire such or such a grace of God?" and the like. Yea, I may have opportunity to demand, and perhaps to obtain their early and frequent (and why not sincere?) consent unto the glorious gospel. The Spirit of Grace may fall upon them in this action; and they may be seized by Him,

and held as His temples, through eternal ages.

16. When a Day of Humiliation arrives, I will make them know the meaning of the day. And after time given them to consider of it, I will order them to tell me what special afflictions they have met with, and what good they hope to get by those afflictions. On a Day of Thanksgiving, they shall also be made to know the intent of the Day. And after consideration, they shall tell me what mercies of God unto them they take special notice of, and what duties to God they confess and resolve under such obligations. Indeed, for something of this importance, to be pursued in my conversation with the children, I will not confine myself unto the solemn days, which may occur too seldom for it. Very particularly, on the birthdays of the children, I will take them aside, and mind them of the age which (by God's grace) they are come unto; how thankful they should be for the mercies of God which they have hitherto lived upon; how fruitful they should be in all goodness, that so they may still enjoy their mercies. And I will inquire of them whether they have ever yet begun to mind the work which God sent them into the world upon; how far they understand the work; and what good strokes they have struck at it; and, how they design to spend the rest of their time, if God still continue them in the world.

17. When the children are in any trouble—if they be sick, or pained—I will take advantage there from, to set before them the evil of sin, which brings all our trouble; and how fearful a thing it will be to be cast among the damned, who are in ceaseless and endless trouble. I will set before them the benefit of an interest in Christ, by which their trouble will be sanctified unto them, and they will be prepared for death, and for fullness of joy in a happy eternity after death.

18. Among all the points of education which I will endeavor for my children, I hope to see that each of them—the daughters as well as the sons—may gain insight into some skill that lies in the way of gain (however their own inclination may most carry them), so that they may be able to subsist themselves, and get something of a livelihood, in case the Providence of God should bring them into necessities. Why not they as well as Paul the Tent-Maker! The children of the best fashion, may have occasion to bless the parents that make such a provision for them! The Jews have a saying worth remembering: "Whoever doesn't teach his son some trade or business, teaches him to be a thief."

19. As soon as ever I can, I will make my children apprehensive of the main end for which they are to live; that so they may as soon as may be, begin to live; and their youth not be nothing but vanity. I will show them, that their main end must be, to, acknowledge the great God, and His glorious Christ; and bring others to acknowledge Him: and that they are never wise nor well, but when they are doing so. I will make them able to answer the grand question of why they live; and what is the end of the actions that fill their lives? I will teach them that their Creator and Redeemer is to be obeyed in everything, and everything is to be done

*(Continued on page 35: Cotton Mather)*

# Teaching Tips

## The Wonders of Classical Music

by Jude Wanniski



If you are thinking of Christmas gifts and are stumped with a person young or old, you might consider the gift of discovery — the discovery of classical music. When I was 13, I discovered classical music through an accidental Christmas gift. Here is how it works:

The biggest reason people do not enjoy classical music is that they do not know how to get into it. They know there must be something to it because high society people put on the ritz to go to concerts and operas. They may even think that the upper crust has a superior intelligence which makes them appreciate things that ordinary folk could never enjoy. They eat caviar, for example, which tastes terrible when you first try it. They go to Shakespearean plays, and who understands that stuff? They speak French and Italian and who knows what else? Classical music is part of that mystery, I think.

Classical music is a bit different than Shakespeare and foreign languages and even caviar. I found that almost everyone can "access" classical music and learn to love it, to appreciate it, to make it a part of their lives and the lives of their families. They only need the key, the key that can unlock its mysteries and access its endless profound pleasures. The key is: repetition... repetition... repetition.... This is what a wise man taught me when I was 13 years old, when I asked him how come I didn't like classical music (except I did like George Gershwin's Concerto in F, which my father had given me as a Christmas present in 1949). I really didn't like the music, but because it was the only recording I had, classical or popular, I wound up playing it over and over, and one day I had to play it twice, and the next day I had to run home from school to play it again and again. The longer I listened to it while I was doing my homework or reading comic books, the deeper it was digging its way into me. I began to realize the difference between popular and classical music was that you could listen to a popular song and the first time fall in love with it, but three weeks later never want to hear it again. With classical music, when you hear it the first time you never want to hear it again, but if by chance you hear the same piece for three weeks, you always want to hear it again, to the end of your life.

The wise man was my Uncle Vince, my mother's younger brother. He knew all kinds of things I didn't understand. He took me to my first baseball game, Memorial Day 1946, a doubleheader at Ebbets Field

between the Dodgers and the Boston Braves. He taught me how to play chess. He taught me about loyalty, and how you had to keep promises. He taught me how to always think about how the other fellow thought about things, to look at the other side of the coin, which was a favourite phrase of his. He was a devoted liberal and loved *The New York Times*, but still he singled out its columnist Tom Wicker for special attention, because he always looked at the other side of the coin.

When it came to classical music, I knew Uncle Vince knew all about it. He was always listening to WQXR (which you can now access via Internet anywhere in the world at [www.WQXR.com](http://www.WQXR.com)) and had shelves piled with records, the old 78-speed discs. In fact, the three discs my Concerto in F by Gershwin came packaged in were 78s — six sides totalling 30 minutes! When I told him how much I loved it after listening to it a dozen times, he said I was ready to try something else, but that I should do the same thing and only listen to one piece until I understood it and enjoyed it. He gave me Beethoven's 6th Symphony, "The Pastorale," which was the music behind the mythology segment in Walt Disney's "Fantasia." This for a 13-year-old boy who spent most of his time following the Dodgers, Knicks and Rangers — when he was not playing stickball or punchball in the streets of Borough Park, Brooklyn. Sure enough, I did not like Beethoven's 6th Symphony, but I now knew that I would have to listen to it a dozen times and I would!

Ah wonders! After the fourth or fifth playing the music became familiar, and by the tenth play, I could practically whistle my way through all four movements. What next? I called Uncle Vince and he told me that now that I had a start on Beethoven's nine symphonies, I should try No.7, which I did with the same results. Should I go on to the others? No, he said I should now shift to Brahms, and instead of a symphony, I should learn his first piano concerto. These he supplied, with the 78-speed albums. A year later at Christmas I was now completely hooked. I answered an ad in *The New York Times* for a mail-order long-playing record changer, a "VM" model, as I recall. The man who answered said I could save the mail costs if I came by his loft in lower Manhattan, and when I did he offered me a job, three-hours a day after school and all day Saturday. He paid me \$1 an hour, big money back then, as a subway ride still cost only a dime. With my first payday, I took the train up to Sam Goody's at 49th Street off Broadway, and bought my first LP — Beethoven's 4th Piano Concerto, with Arthur Rubenstein at the keyboard, Sir Thomas Beecham with the baton. (I still have the record, although the Gershwin 78s were ditched long ago when they were scratched to pieces.) I now have more than 1600 LPs and several hundred CDs.

What happened? I've since made several important discoveries about how the human brain develops. It now is clear that I did have a predilection to classical music because of my father's interest in grand opera — which I did not pick up until my 30s. What the Gershwin did was provide a bridge between popular music and classical, as the piano Concerto in F was one step further in complexity to Rhapsody in Blue, which

must still be considered "jazz," as opposed to "classical." The synapses of my brain which had refused to accept my father's opera or would have had great difficulty coping with Beethoven's 9th, got some easier exercise in dealing with Gershwin and the "Pastorale." By the time I was whistling through Brahms' second piano concerto, my brain was conditioned when I hit it with yet another symphony or concerto. By the time I was 16, I was spending Sunday afternoons at any free concerts I could find listed in *The Times* at one of the Manhattan museums.

In the years since, I have introduced a great many people to this tried-and-true method of getting hooked on classics — always warning novitiates not to make the mistake of moving on too quickly from one piece to another. When they get impatient, their brain at times gets confused, being asked to decipher the complexities of one piece before it has thoroughly dealt with the earlier efforts. It does not always work, I'm afraid, but even when it fails, the people who have tried still are open to the pleasures of classical music, even though they never go to concerts or buy classical recordings or know what it is they are listening to.

Sometime around Christmas 1950, I tried an experiment with several of my buddies, who got together on Saturday night to play penny-ante poker in a game that lasted several hours. I purposely stacked the Gershwin on the player and every time it concluded, I began it again, so that by the end of the evening the boys were screaming at me to stop. I was discouraged until the following afternoon, when the doorbell to our apartment rang and I answered the door to find Richard Campanella, one of the boys. He had walked six blocks to ask if he could borrow the Gershwin, he said, as he could not get it out of his head. His father was a city cop on the Sheepshead Bay beat, with no discernible liking for anything classical. Campanella now lives in Vancouver, B.C., a professor of structural engineering at UBC the last time I heard from him. His classical collection is not as extensive as mine, but it is respectable, and he has over the years thanked me for making him suffer through that poker game.

Those I have encouraged since then have been given varied lists of ways to go. But I always suggest they start with the Concerto in F or Maurice Ravel's two piano concerti. Like Gershwin, Ravel bridges the world of popular/jazz and the classical world. It helps that you sneak up on your brain, before it realizes you are asking it to decipher classical.

Uncle Vince also gave me some interesting advice on the sequence of my appreciation of classical music. When I was 16 or 17, he told me I should wait until I was in my mid-30s before I began to seriously tackle grand opera, and that I should wait until I was in my 40s before I approached chamber music. Because he was such a good guide from the start, I took him seriously. Now, more than 40 years later, chamber music is near the top of my evening programming, especially Mozart and the late Beethoven string quartets.

(Continued on page 36: **Classical Music**)

# When the Going Gets Tough

## Rest for Weary Homeschool Mums Part 1

*by Jane Bentley*



Soccer tonight from 4:00 til 5:00, rush home, get supper, to prayer meeting by seven. Field trip tomorrow at 9:00, piano at 3:00. Angela was trying to arrange a play date before the end of the week, co-op is on Friday.....

You remember the conversation about Beth last week. She put the kids in

school. Public school. Her husband travels so much. She just couldn't keep up with the house and the yard and the lessons and all the rest. Said she cried for a full week about the decision, but was getting used to it. At the time you had shaken your head and marveled. Today, you know exactly how she felt.

Occasional weary days are a normal part of the life of a homeschooling mom, but when days become weeks or months, and the siege never seems to end, something is wrong. How do we regain the joy? How do we move from a sense of defeat to one of success and victory? How do we calm the nagging doubt that perhaps we can't do this after all, that maybe we are ruining our children just like the naysayers warned us?

This article is intended to be a checklist or roadmap to aid in the process of getting back on track. God is faithful. He delights to bless His obedient children. His disobedient kids He desires to bless as well, though not in their disobedience. Repentance, redirection, and restoration are His themes throughout scripture. If any of these things seem to be something you're looking for, read on.

Throughout scripture God called His children to remember. They were to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. They were to remember the yearly feasts and the meanings behind them. They were to remember God's commands and faithfully do them. Being exhorted to remember is important because we are a forgetful people. We may not intend to disobey or get off track, but things have a way of getting lost between the cracks. We make good beginnings, but our lives end up like the wheat and the tares, the good fruit getting choked out by the cares of the world and distorted priorities (Matthew 13:22). So what do we need to remember?

### Remember the Vision

It's tempting to start with the vision of homeschooling, but the vision to remember goes far deeper than this. What is the chief end of man? Why did God create you and me in the first place? The Westminster Shorter Catechism tells us it is that we might glorify God and enjoy Him forever. I can't think of a better summary of our purpose in life. We exist to worship God, in our thoughts, words, and deeds. Our joy is rooted in a right relationship with Him, knowing His peace, celebrating His goodness.

How much of our weariness is related to chasing after things wholly unrelated to glorifying God? How much

You look up as the school bus rumbles by, screeching its brakes as it lets the neighbor kids off at the top of the hill. Suzie sits at the end of the dining room table, a pile of tissues beside her, crying through yet a third hour of her math lesson. Billy...where is that child!?... should have been at the other end of the table finishing the writing composition you assigned two weeks ago—no longer a twenty minute quickie. And where is John? No, not in the toi.... Yes, in the toilet again.

You deal with the toddler, toss the rags from the bathroom's mopping in the washer, and sigh. The merry voices of the neighbor kids echo outside and Suzie's tears begin afresh. "I'm never going to get done," she laments again.

Billy dashes by the window. You grab him and look him in the eye. "Oh no, you don't, young man. Back to the composition. And then finish your piano practicing and get ready for soccer. At this rate, you'll have to miss soccer again."

What's going on, you wonder? Where is the joy and confidence and excitement that began this grand adventure of home education? You started so well. The kids were so glad to be home. You were so glad to have them here. You had such a sense of the great things God was going to do through your faithful obedience and joyful surrender. But look at today. Look at the work undone, the tears, the frustration. Look at the dishes in the sink, the clutter everywhere, the projects that have taken over the house and left it practically unlivable. Where can you go to scream? Where can you go to cry? Why is it this way? There must be some magic key you're missing. There must be something you're doing wrong. There must be.....

The phone rings. It's your husband. It's going to be another late night. Before you can return the phone to the cradle, it rings again. It's the Sunday school coordinator calling to see if you'll coordinate the upcoming kids' fair to raise money for missions. After all, you're home all day. Most of the other mothers work. And before you can take a deep breath, there's another call — the lady down the street who needs a sitter tomorrow morning. She figured you'd be home anyway.

You tick off future commitments on your fingers.

is tied to being at odds with Him through disobedience, wrong motives, and wrong priorities? What are the practical implications of such questions? Think it through. By God's grace, take action.

## **Remember the Battle**

News reports of terrorists aside, most of us expect to live in relative peace. We expect things to go fairly easily. We don't anticipate persecution or opposition. We think things should be good, life should be stable, relationships should be rewarding. But the truth is, we are engaged in a spiritual battle. The Enemy of our souls never rests. His heart's desire is to strike at our heavenly Father through defeating His children — you and me — and our kids as well. Two of his main strategies are discouragement and distraction. Add to this the battle with the world and the flesh, and you have an equation for constant warfare.

The good news is, God has provided the tools necessary for fighting the battle. But we need to recognize the fact that it's going on, take up our armor and advance. As women, we don't tend to naturally think in terms of warfare, but we must. Spend time in Ephesians 6:10-20. Remember who the enemy is. It's not the disobedient or distracted child. It's not the clutter or tiredness. It's not the stress that comes from over commitment. It is the fact that we truly have spiritual enemies who need to be addressed.

My pastor is in the process of preaching through "the armor of God" in Ephesians 6, and an exciting insight that has come from our study is the idea that the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God is two-faceted. First is the sword itself — sound doctrine. It is imperative that we have a good sword; an accurate knowledge of the Word. It is also necessary that we learn to use the sword — how to apply it in our lives. In Judges 3:1-2 it is recorded that God did not drive out all of the enemies of the Israelites at once so that He might teach generations to come how to do battle. Is it possible that the battles of your life are for the purpose of you learning to wage war? Is it possible that these things are actually for your benefit instead of your destruction? And if the Sword of the Spirit is the Word of God, is it possible that the Kingdom will advance as we forge our sword through learning sound doctrine and wield it through simple obedience? Nothing fancy, nothing terribly heroic, just plain, simple obedience. What makes this possible? The next "remember:"

## **Remember the Source**

One of my very favorite scripture verses is Romans 7:18. You probably won't find it in those cute little bread loaves with the verse cards. You probably won't find it on the short list of favorite verses for very many people, because what it says is, "For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh..."

How depressing is that??? Why would this be on anyone's favorite verse list??? Simple. It proves to me over and over again, that success in life is not about me. Nothing good dwells within me. I see the truth of this daily. So does God. And it doesn't depress Him. It doesn't need to depress me, either. Instead, it moves

me quickly to the companion truth that "God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us...made us alive together with Christ...that He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus." (Eph.2: 4-7). The gospel is for sinners. I qualify. My sin and failure doesn't surprise God; He knew about it all along. And He doesn't deal with it by telling me to try harder. He deals with it on the Cross, by suffering and dying for it and setting me free to live, not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit (Romans 8, Galatians 2, 5, etc.).

We do a pretty good job remembering that our salvation is by grace alone through faith alone, but we're terrible at clinging to the truth that our sanctification is also through God's grace. Instead of going straight to our Heavenly Father in humility and weakness, we scurry around trying this program or that "key" or even somebody's latest Bible study or curriculum or seminar. We try harder, worry more, increase our activity level, and fix our eyes on how we're doing. And it doesn't work. If we have the presence of mind to respond to our need with prayer and searching the scriptures, we still may come up short. Why?

Perhaps we need to see ourselves as we really are. Our true need is not just a little help (and then I'll take it from here, thank you very much) but total transformation. Without God's enabling we can do nothing. Nothing. Only as God enlivens and empowers our efforts can they begin to be successful. The "key" to success is God's mercy, grace, and power at work in and through us. It is not about how awesome we are. It is about His faithfulness. It is about learning to rest in His power and grace. It is about dying to my agenda and yielding myself to His. It is about learning to draw our strength from Him and Him alone. Any time our reliance is on ourselves, we will either fail miserably and become depressed or succeed still more miserably and be consumed by pride.

In my flesh there dwells no good thing. Without grace we have no hope. But God promises grace to the humble (I Peter 5:6). Pitch your tent upon this truth. It is where God meets with us. It is where the fountains of grace flow forth. It is where your source of life is always to be found. And it is always enough.

## **Remember What Is Truly Important**

"He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8 ).

" 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it; 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets." (Matthew 22:37-40).

"...make it your ambition to lead a quiet life, and attend to your own business and work with your

hands..." (I Thess. 4:11).

Did you notice the command to involve your kids in ballet and soccer? To serve on the decorations committee for the bazaar? To teach that Bible study? To volunteer for the political action group at church? To sew your girls matching dresses? Hmmm. Me neither.

The world is full of good things to do. Neither soccer nor ballet nor political action committees nor matching dresses is sin. But neither are these things required of us. God, in His infinite wisdom, made us finite. Really. It is His plan and will that you accept this fact. There is no way in the world that you can possibly do all the good things available to you. God has specifically called you to some general things — loving Him, loving your neighbor, showing mercy, working for justice. He commanded us way back in the beginning to be fruitful and multiply, to fill the earth and subdue it. He created us as women to be suitable helpers to our own husbands. Before we get overwhelmed by the extras, we need to take a solid look at the things God is committed to.

Years ago, we lived in a house with a bit of land and half a dozen fruit trees. It was really nice to have our own fruit trees, except for one thing. They never bore any fruit worth eating. At one point I did a little research on caring for fruit trees and found that I seriously needed to prune. Ouch. Being basically incompetent when it comes to horticulture, I was afraid to cut off too many of those lush branches. What if I hurt the tree? Trees need leaves, you know. I could always cut out more later if I needed to. And so year after year, we raised scrawny, wormy fruit.

For many, the homeschooling experience is like the way I cared for my fruit trees. We desperately want to make sure our kids have all they need so we enroll them in supplementary classes, co-ops, baseball, music lessons and all kinds of other good things. We search out the best curriculum and try to use it all. But the good things, like the unpruned branches of my trees, suck the life out of the best things. They show themselves to be, if not sin, folly.

A master gardener who wants to grow good fruit, carefully prunes his trees. He leaves enough branches to support the tree, but is careful to direct most of its energies into fruitbearing.

As you pursue God's calling to disciple your children, what do they truly need? Another activity? The ability to spell Saskatchewan? A solid grasp of the Caesars of the Roman Empire?

II Peter 1:5-10 has been a guiding principle in our family since the beginning of the homeschool journey. To avoid being ineffective and unfruitful, we're exhorted to add to our faith virtue, and to virtue, knowledge. Did you notice the order? Faith is where it all begins. And to faith we add godly character; virtue. Knowledge comes next. If you start with knowledge, as some educators try to do, you build without a foundation. When life is ending, when we prepare for

eternity, our knowledge will be of little consequence. Our faith will be the most important thing in life. If we supplement it with Godly character, we will be able to look back upon a life well lived. If we supplement character with knowledge, we will likely see increased fruitfulness, just like apple trees thrive when they are open to the light. But knowledge cannot come first. Nor can football or cheerleading. Or piano. Or art or auto mechanics or tatting or business or anything else.

So what is God committed to? How do we sort through the myriad of choices available to us? Where do we need to invest our energies?

May I suggest first filtering everything through the grid of what has eternal value? Jesus exhorted his listeners to seek first the Kingdom of God. What does this look like? While He lived on earth He invested in relationships. He talked with crowds. He mentored the disciples. He spent special time with Peter, James, and John. He spent time with His Heavenly Father, too.

How are you directing your children to invest their lives? Will it draw them closer to the kingdom? Will it distract them? Will it help them submit themselves to the Lordship of Christ? Will it leave time for real meditation, for thoughtful consideration of what is truly valuable in life? Do they understand that history is about the work of God through time, a testimony of His faithfulness and the warning of His judgment on those who will not submit to His ways? Do they know they're learning to read so they can study God's Word and be more effective servants of the King of Kings? Or do they think it's about doing well on standardized tests? Or becoming great athletes? Or preparing to make lots of money? Or impressing others? What do their parents think? What do you communicate? Are you equipping your kids with the skills necessary to be fruitful for the Kingdom? Or will you just grow fruitless branches with pretty leaves?

And as we seek first the Kingdom of God, it is also necessary to consider our individual callings. Woman was made for man — not men. You were designed to be a helper to your husband. You are to train up your children. Your primary responsibility is not to fulfill the responsibility of another. Can you help others? Certainly — but not at the expense of neglecting your own calling. What is God's design for accomplishing His work? Seek it out in scripture. Apply it in life. Note the commands to fathers and mothers, to husbands and wives. Note God's call to hospitality and the personal bearing of one another's burdens. As you follow God's design, you will probably find the time for humanly designed programs and other substitutes disappearing. But in due season you will also be able to pluck large, juicy fruit from your own trees — a gift to refresh others through the work of the Light, the Living Water, and a well tended tree.

*Jane Bentley is an occasionally weary homeschooling mother of eight with three graduated, one married, and five more to go. She lives in Mobile, Alabama, with her husband Jack, and delights in encouraging homeschooling moms to put aside the nonessentials and press on for the things that count for eternity.*

# Worldviews in Focus

## Christians, Home Educators, Dominion and Filmmaking

by Douglas Phillips, Esq.

Henry Van Til correctly observed that “culture is religion externalized.” By this, he meant that the culture of a people reflects their true religious priorities. The music, paintings and film of a nation (not to mention the thousands of daily cultural expressions — how we live, eat, work and entertain ourselves) express our priorities, our values and our true faith. The Bible teaches that all men have faith, in that they either worship the creature or they worship the creator, but no man is free from religious commitment. When a people worship sensuality or embrace dark visions of reality, it is always evidenced in the arts. There is no neutrality! On the other hand, when a nation fears and loves the God of Holy Scripture, their religious commitment is evidenced in the music they play, the way they dress and their vision of family life.

Hollywood has a negative monopoly stranglehold on film and culture. The humanistic religious worldview of Hollywood elites and their intense hatred for Christianity and the value system which it embodies has created a rift in American culture and profoundly damaged the American family. We intend to respond, not by cursing the darkness, but by lighting candles. Building a community of independent Christian filmmakers is one such candle.

The vision of the San Antonio Independent Christian Film Festival ([www.independentchristianfilms.com](http://www.independentchristianfilms.com)) is to make one of the many steps needed to lead men to Christ, to train Christians to actually think like Christians and to take back the culture for the Lord Jesus Christ in the area of film by encouraging,



motivating and rewarding those uncompromising, creative and innovative filmmakers who are willing to take the narrow path.

This is a wonderful time to be a Christian engaged in the arts. The cultural antithesis between good and evil is ever widening. The enormous leadership vacuum within our culture has opened a world of opportunity for a new generation of maverick Christians to challenge the status quo presented by Hollywood. More than ever before we have access to the tools for waging a new form of cultural guerilla warfare against the elites who would redefine the Biblical family out of existence and present a dark and nefarious vision of reality to the future. We need Christians to challenge the present culture of death, infidelity, perversion and ethical malaise by boldly



proclaiming the crown rights of Jesus Christ over every sphere of life and thought — including film. God has given us a tremendous window of opportunity. We must seize the day!

### The Vision

At least four factors fuel this revolution in filmmaking:

First, the domination of the film industry by Christ-hating, family-denigrating elites and the general absence of family-affirming, spiritually truthful media at a time when the family is being redefined out of existence has created a vacuum in our culture. Christians with a spirit of innovation and wisdom have an opportunity to fill this vacuum by communicating life, hope and beauty from God's perspective.

Second, we can market our products without selling our souls to the enemy. The growing availability of alternative distribution networks means that independent Christian filmmakers have the ability to encourage the Body of Christ and influence the culture as a whole, while generating a dollar return sufficient to finance their projects.

Third, Christians now have access to the tools. Technologies which were once primarily available only to well-funded Hollywood studios are now readily available. For less than \$10,000, the independent Christian filmmaker can set up a basic digital studio capable of noteworthy productions. For less than \$5,000, the Christian film student can have a working platform to make digital film shorts.

Fourth, recognizing that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, many of the next generation of independent Christian filmmakers will be mastering their craft outside indoctrination centers which do not fear God — centers which, consequently, are fundamentally handicapped in their ability to wisely mentor. The rise of less expensive, family-friendly, discipleship-based, diverse creative alternatives for training should be heralded with thanksgiving as the wave of the future.

(We must remember, of course, that the existence of inexpensive technologies, alternative distribution networks and alternative education training models in no way ensures the creation of quality cinema by Christians. Careful thought, wisdom and significant vision are needed to produce culture-challenging media which is not only timely and theologically sound but retains high production values.)

*Doug Phillips is the founder of Vision Forum Ministries which is an organization designed to communicate a vision for the restoration of the Christian family and the rebuilding of culture for the glory of God. It is through Vision Forum Ministries that he ran the first and second San Antonio Independent Christian Film Festivals and hopes (Lord willing) to run a third in October 2006. He and his wife, Beall, live in San Antonio, Texas, with their seven children.*









# Graduates Speak

## “Amputation” and the Art of Christian Parenting

by Amber L. DeLadurantey



A ghostly form lay paralyzed on the sheet-lined operating table. The battle taking place mere yards away was a reality, and the scenes would be permanently emblazoned in the memory of the young man breathing heavily on the blood soaked table. Hastily his father was called from the battlefield to the makeshift operating room. There was not a moment to spare; his near lifeless body shook with the tremors of death. Undoubtedly a decision needed to be made; his leg was mutilated and ravaged from gun shot wounds and the decision of amputation was imminent.

As a parent the thought of a child facing this world with one leg was heart wrenching, but the father understood the failure to amputate would lead to infection and gangrene possibly sending his young son swirling into an untimely death. But how could he say “yes” while his son placed a vice like grip on his hand as he begged and pleaded “Father, you don’t understand”. This man had seen many a battle wound but never had it come so close to home, how could he deny his son his request, he was a “good boy”? He had no option: either he would grant his son a temporary request with the probable result being death or stand beside his son as he writhed in pain screaming, “No, you can’t do this to me!” while they removed his ravaged leg. The decision was his.

Such a decision would seem simple to most people familiar with the consequences of infection and gangrene, but how would you handle such a situation? The reality is today’s Christian young people are plagued by a generation of parents who fail to make the call of “amputation”.

I am often asked by many Christian parents, “Why have we lost the hearts of our older children?” These same parents raised their children in the church; in fact they even home schooled them. So how could this happen? I have often heard these stories and have even seen it first hand in the lives of many of my friends. It deeply saddens me to see such things, but my thoughts must go beyond feelings and delve into the deeper reasons of why such things are taking place in the lives of many Christian families. My desire is to gain insight into the reasons for these problems in an effort to avert the same fatal mistakes if God blesses me with children someday.

I am struck to the core with the failure of Christian parents to realize they are in a “battle” — a battle for

the souls of their children. Their children’s souls *are* at stake, their enemy *is* real, there *is* a heaven and a hell and Satan *is* here to “steal, kill and destroy”. Soldiers must be prepared for battle, but no matter how well a soldier is trained, it is unlikely a soldier will escape without some type of battle wound. No matter how prepared your child may be, they are tempted and tested, and failure can often occur (I know from personal experience!). It is crucial how you as a parent handle such situations. Regularly my parents have had to make hard calls in the raising of their eleven children and have often said to their children at one point or another, “I know you don’t like me right now, but you will love me later!” How true this is as I look back as an adult. In every situation my parents were willing to sacrifice the temporary feeling of being “liked” by their children because of a deeper responsibility to God.

My parents have often reminded me of the reality that life is not a game; there are no second chances (as my Mom always says “this is for keeps!”). Parenting is unrelenting and often painful: I don’t mean to sound morbid, just honest. The call of parenting does not include being “liked” by your children as the world would lead you to believe. Their idea of such “love” is not a Christ-centered love. It is self-fulfilling and self satisfying. Christ calls parents to a much higher level of love and sacrifice, one which does not just include the feeling of being “liked”. God loved us with a perfect love, a love which included placing His very own Son on the cross to die for our sins. Parenting requires a love which goes beyond a feeling and must become a calling which God has placed on you. *If need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ* (1 Peter 1:6-7).

Today’s culture would convince Christian parents that it is wrong to tell their children “no”. The majority of parents have believed this lie from the world; the lie that it is wrong for their child to suffer or feel uncomfortable. Would you allow a child to guzzle antifreeze because of its extremely sweet flavor? — absolutely *not*! I have heard the statement all too often from parents: “Well, he/she is a good kid, how can I tell them ‘no’?” How foolish can we be! Just because he/she is a “good kid” does not exempt them from harmful influences. The last time I checked, antifreeze will kill you whether you are “good kid” or a murderer!!!

Too many Christian parents today would rather have the temporary feeling of being “liked” rather than face the reality of pain, suffering, confrontation and rejection. I will be honest: my parents have faced many a sleepless night, painful discussions and hurtful words. As a result my parents have been richly blessed for their willingness to suffer for the sake of their children. Through it all they have taught me the importance of answering God’s call first and never placing their desires above God, no matter how painful. *For the children ought not to lay up for the parents. But the parents for the children. And I will*

very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved (2 Corinthians 12:14-15).

### Three Steps to Effective “Amputation”!

#### 1. Attention to the Details

*Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil (Proverbs 4:25-27).*

It is the small overlooked or unheeded details which will leave the most devastating scars. “Good” things can often become major distractions causing you to be robbed of the “best” things. Undoubtedly you will find many home school families involved in every activity under the sun in an effort to prove their aptitude and academic abilities. I am afraid that, in an effort to prove themselves, they have lost the “best” things this life has to offer them. Always remember the age-old adage, “If some one jumped off a bridge, would you?” Never be afraid to question why you are participating in an activity or attending an event. This is called **thinking**! “Ponder the path of thy feet...”

#### 2. Act Now!

*He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him quickly (Proverbs 13:24).*

Every moment is precious and should not be wasted. Prolonging “amputation” often leads to removing more “flesh” than would have been necessary had it been removed ASAP! During my teen years my parents felt the need to remove me from **all** youth related activities (you can bet I was **mad**!). I had finally reached the age of maturity (or so I thought!), and now they were removing everything from me. In my mind they had no idea what they were doing. My parents did not wait until I had been involved for years before removing me from such an environment, experimenting to see if God really knew what He was talking about. Swiftmess is the key! Because of this swiftmess I have been saved from years of fruitless activities, a desire to never grow up which I am afraid most of my friends will never recover from, and a peer dependant mind set. This one swift act enabled me to be miles ahead of my peers and saved me a lifetime of heartache and struggles. **Act now!**

#### 3. Above and beyond

*And it came to pass, when Israel was strong, that they put the Canaanites to tribute, and did not utterly drive them out.... And an angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I sware unto your fathers; and I said I will never break my covenant with you. And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice: why*

*have ye done this? Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your sides...(Judges 1:28, 2:1-3).*

During “amputation” doctors remove beyond what often seems reasonable to the majority of people. Why? Let’s put it this way, if the only thing needed to be removed was the end of a “finger”, and all you did was remove the end of the “finger”, you could end up having to remove an entire hand because you didn’t want your child to suffer beyond what you thought at the moment seemed reasonable! One small infection can lead you into more trouble than you could possibly imagine. It is far better to be safe than sorry!!! Parents will often remove activities from a young person, but in an effort to retain their love they will not go far enough. This is one of the most crucial aspects of “amputation” and often has the most devastating effects if it is not done properly. The effects are not only left on the child, but this “good” child will become as a “thorn in your side” a constant reminder of your unwillingness to heed God’s direction. I frequently see cases in which a child at one moment is on the road to recovery and everything seems fine, and then out of nowhere things are ten times worse than they were. Never question what God may be asking you to do, even if at the time it seems completely ridiculous. Do not allow sympathy for your child’s pain to stand in the way of what God may be telling you to “utterly drive out”. Remember it is far better to be loved later rather than to be “liked” for a moment.

The question of “amputation” is easy if you are living out the calling of Christian parenting. No matter how painful, gruesome or ugly things may be, your ultimate responsibility is to God. Why parents fail to remove harmful things from their “good kids” is difficult for me to comprehend. Their children’s souls are at stake; instead of holding their child’s hand, telling them as Christ once told us, *It is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish and not thy whole body be cast into hell* (Matthew 5:30), they choose instead to have their children “like” them for a brief moment while allowing infection to set in and slowly sap its victim of all energy and possibly sending them to an untimely and gruesome death.

Though the thought of the term “amputation” may seem disgusting, it is a reality that each parent must grapple with; realizing God has left them with the charge of raising these children for Him, God has not given them children to merely satisfy their own personal needs and desires. This charge may seem overwhelming at times, but the results of such a life will reap innumerable blessings.

**Amber** is a home school graduate and has the privilege of being the eldest of eleven children. She currently resides with her family in Michigan, USA. Although she wears a variety of hats as a sister, friend, writer, musician, administrative assistant and teacher, her greatest joy is found in supporting and furthering her father’s vision. She has been featured in Homeschool Digest, Encouraging Word and Family Reformation Magazine; and is also a contributor to the new book *So Much More* by Anna Sophia and Elizabeth Botkin.

# Graduates Speak

The following article fits perfectly into both our Graduates Speak column and our Home Educators Did It column. It includes a speech by a home educated graduate, Noah Riner, as well as some commentary from Albert Mohler about the controversy which was stirred up as a result of the speech (this is the Home Educator's Did It part!).



(L-R) R. Albert Mohler Jr. & Noah Riner

## Division at Dartmouth—A Home Educated Christian Speaks His Mind

by R. Albert Mohler, Jr.

Dartmouth College is older than the United States of America, having been established in 1750 as “Moore’s Indian Charity School.” That’s a part of Dartmouth’s history that would be unknown to most Americans, but the school was established by Reverend Eleazar Wheelock, a leading figure in the nation’s first Great Awakening. Wheelock established the school with the purpose of evangelizing American Indians, and he intended for the school eventually known as Dartmouth College to compete with Harvard and Yale in terms of academic distinction. In other words, Dartmouth College is an Ivy League institution originally established for the evangelization of Native Americans.

Keep that in mind as you learn of more recent developments. On September 20, Dartmouth’s student body president, Noah Riner, delivered the customary convocation address — a responsibility that comes with his elected position. Mr. Riner’s speech was relatively short, intensely personal and intellectually courageous. All that explains why Mr. Riner, a home-schooled native of Louisville, Kentucky, soon found himself at the center of controversy.

The response to Riner’s speech included vitriolic outrage. He was denounced, criticized and lambasted for the content of his controversial address. The Student Assembly’s vice president for student life resigned the very next day, indicating that she could not serve with Riner because of his “appalling” speech to incoming freshmen.

What in the world did Riner say? “You really are special,” he told the Dartmouth class of 2009. But Mr. Riner didn’t stop there.

## Dartmouth Convocation Speech

by Noah Riner, Dartmouth College student assembly president, 20 September 2005

You’ve been told that you are a special class. A quick look at the statistics confirms that claim: quite simply, you are the smartest and most diverse group of freshmen to set foot on the Dartmouth campus. You have more potential than all of the other classes. You really are special.

But it isn’t enough to be special. It isn’t enough to be talented, to be beautiful, to be smart. Generations of

amazing students have come before you and have sat in your seats. Some have been good, some have been bad. All have been special.

In fact, there’s quite a long list of very special, very corrupt people who have graduated from Dartmouth. William Walter Remington, Class of 1939, started out as a Boy Scout and a choirboy and graduated *Phi Beta Kappa*. He ended up as a Soviet spy, was convicted of perjury and beaten to death in prison.

Daniel Mason, ‘93, was just about to graduate from Boston Medical School when he shot two men — killing one — after a parking dispute.

Just a few weeks ago, I read in the D about PJ Halas, Class of 1998. His great uncle George founded the Chicago Bears, and PJ lived up to the family name, co-captaining the basketball team his senior year at Dartmouth and coaching at a high school team following graduation. He was also a history teacher, and, this summer, he was arrested for sexually assaulting a 15-year-old student.

These stories demonstrate that it takes more than a Dartmouth degree to build character.

As former Dartmouth President John Sloan Dickey said, at Dartmouth our business is learning. And I’ll have to agree with the motto of Faber College, featured in the movie *Animal House*, “Knowledge is Good.” But if all we get from this place is knowledge, we’ve missed something. There’s one subject that you won’t learn about in class, one topic that orientation didn’t cover and that your UGA won’t mention: character.

What is the purpose of our education? Why are we at Dartmouth?

Martin Luther King, Jr. said:

*But education which stops with efficiency may prove the greatest menace to society... We must remember that intelligence is not enough. Intelligence plus character — that is the goal of true education.*

We hear very little about character in our classrooms, yet, as Dr. King suggests, the real problem in the world is not a lack of education.

For example, in the past few weeks we’ve seen some pretty revealing things happening on the Gulf Coast in the wake of hurricane Katrina. We’ve seen acts of selfless heroism and millions around the country have

united to help the refugees. On the other hand, we've been disgusted by the looting, violence and raping that took place even in the supposed refuge areas. In a time of crisis and death, people were paddling around in rafts stealing TVs and VCRs. How could Americans go so low?

My purpose in mentioning the horrible things done by certain people on the Gulf Coast isn't to condemn just them; rather it's to condemn all of us. Supposedly, character is what you do when no one is looking, but I'm afraid to say all the things I've done when no one was looking. Cheating, stealing, lusting, you name it: how different are we? It's easy to say that we've never gone that far: never stolen that much; never lusted so much that we'd rape; and the people we've cheated, they were rich anyway.

Let's be honest, the differences are in degree. We have the same flaws as the individuals who pillaged New Orleans. Ours haven't been given such free range, but they exist and are part of us all the same.

*The Times* of London once asked readers for comments on what was wrong with the world. British author, G. K. Chesterton responded simply: "Dear Sir, I am."

Not many of us have the same clarity that Chesterton had. Just days after Hurricane Katrina had ravaged the Gulf Coast, politicians and pundits were distributing more blame than aid. It's so easy to see the faults of others, but so difficult to see our own. In the words of Cassius in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, "the fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars but in ourselves."

Character has a lot to do with sacrifice, laying our personal interests down for something bigger. The best example of this is Jesus. In the Garden of Gethsemane, just hours before His crucifixion, Jesus prayed, "Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from Me: nevertheless not My will, but Thine, be done." He knew the right thing to do. He knew the cost would be agonizing torture and death. He did it anyway. That's character.

Jesus is a good example of character, but He's also much more than that. He is the solution to flawed people like corrupt Dartmouth alums, looters and me.

It's so easy to focus on the defects of others and ignore my own. But I need saving as much as they do.

Jesus' message of redemption is simple. People are imperfect, and there are consequences for our actions. He gave His life for our sin so that we wouldn't have to bear the penalty of the law; so we could see love. The problem is me; the solution is God's love: Jesus on the cross, for us.

In the words of Bono:

*[I]f only we could be a bit more like Him, the world would be transformed....When I look at the Cross of Christ, what I see up there is all my s— and everybody else's. So I ask myself a question a lot of people have asked: Who is this Man? And was He who He said He was, or was He just a religious nut? And there it is, and that's the question.*



Noah Riner giving his speech at Dartmouth College.

You want the best undergraduate education in the world, and you've come to the right place to get that. But there's more to college than achievement. With Martin Luther King, we must dream of a nation — and a college — where people are not judged by the superficial, "but by the content of their character."

Thus, as you begin your four years here, you've got to come to some conclusions about your own character because you won't get it by just going to class. What is the content of your character? Who are you? And how will you become what you need to be?

## Division at Dartmouth—A Home Educated Christian Speaks His Mind

...continued...

by R. Albert Mohler, Jr.

The response [to Noah Riner's speech] was immediate, vitriolic and revealing. The cartoonist for the college's campus newspaper, *The Dartmouth*, drew a comic strip depicting Riner as a crusading theocrat and Jesus as a marijuana smoker. Kaelin Goulet not only resigned as vice president for student life, but also condemned Riner for his speech. "Your first opportunity to represent Student Assembly to the incoming freshmen was appalling," she wrote. "You embarrassed the organization; you embarrassed yourself." In an email message cited by the campus newspaper, Goulet charged, "I consider his choice of topic for the Convocation speech reprehensible and an abuse of power."

**"What is wrong with the world?"**  
**"Dear Sir, I am."**

"I have been looking forward to working with you all and thought we were in agreement for what SA stands for," the former vice president wrote. "Apparently, I was incorrect." Her spirit of cooperation evidently did not extend to Mr. Riner's right to speak his mind in his convocation address.

Leaders of Hillel and Shanti, the Jewish and Hindu religious groups on Dartmouth's campus, wrote a letter

to the campus newspaper that described Noah Riner's convocation address as a "disrespectful action" which represents "the complete antithesis of the value that Dartmouth espouses."

The editors of *The Dartmouth* acknowledged the college's roots, reminding readers that Dartmouth had been founded "to bring Christianity to Native Americans." Nevertheless, the paper celebrated the fact that "Dartmouth has more recently eschewed this goal in favor of providing a balanced, secular and inclusive education to its students."

According to the editors, "The problem with Riner's address was his insinuation that turning to Jesus is the only way to find character. Indeed, Jesus was the only positive example of character Riner offered. While many of the ideas Jesus exemplified and his followers espoused stretch across faiths, statements such as, 'Jesus is a good example of character, but He's also much more than that. He is the solution to flawed people like corrupt Dartmouth alums, looters and me' and, 'The problem is me; the solution is God's love: Jesus on the cross, for us,' are explicitly Christian and, as such, managed to alienate many in the audience regardless of their faiths."

Note clearly — the very fact that Dartmouth's student body president would espouse convictions consistent with the college's founding vision was considered an act virtually tantamount to treason against Dartmouth's current "secular and inclusive" vision.

Brian Martin, guest columnist for the campus newspaper, described Riner's convocation address as "fire-and-brimstone remarks" that demonstrated "casual disrespect for the diversity of the captive audience."

"We are a community that welcomes and respects all its members, no matter what your creed," Martin insisted. Evidently, this means welcome and respect to all members and all creeds — except for the founding creed of the institution.

Martin pushed his point one step further, arguing that "Jesus would not have wanted to make new students feel unwelcome, to make faculty feel uncomfortable or to make alumni question whether this was the same Dartmouth that they had attended." Are we to assume that Jesus Christ would have felt Himself constrained by Ivy League etiquette? So much for cleansing the Temple.

Mr. Riner was not without his defenders. "Had Noah Riner opened his convocation speech with 'I'm gay,' this wouldn't be happening. That's not Noah, but if it were, no one would have resigned. No one would be organizing protests. Such a reaction, according to our rigid social standards, would be bigotry. If there were any Op-Eds or outcries, they would be praising his

ability to encourage individualism and progressivism in Dartmouth." Those are the words of Stacey Kourlis, who defended Riner in a column published in *The Dartmouth*. "We chose a leader who is willing to stand up and articulate his or her beliefs," Kourlis argued. "We didn't default to someone who's doing this for a resume. That's a testament to how special we [are] as a community. So let's take it one step further and allow Riner to say precisely what he thinks, without fear of political correctness."

The charter that established what we now know as Dartmouth College was granted by King George III of England, who stated that the purpose of the institution should be "for civilizing and Christianizing the children of pagans, as well as in all liberal arts and sciences, and also of English youths and any others." Noah Riner's crime was to fulfill that mission by speaking honestly, courageously and sincerely about his Christian faith. It was a bold and powerful demonstration of Christian witness, and it was one young man's demonstration of the very strength of character that authentic education is to stimulate and strengthen, not subvert and marginalize.

The controversy over Noah Riner's convocation address at Dartmouth is a bracing reminder of the fact that America's most prestigious

academic institutions have become openly hostile to the very convictions upon which they were established. In the name of diversity, voices such as Noah Riner's are decried and condemned. Just sixty years ago, Ernest M. Hopkins, then president of Dartmouth, said, "Dartmouth is a Christian college founded for the Christianization of its students." One wonders whether Reverend Wheelock and President Hopkins would be welcomed today on the campus of the college they respectively founded and led.

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*Noah Riner's speech published with his permission.*

I thought [Noah Riner's speech was ] excellent [and one which he] had every right to give. I'm especially proud that Noah continues to speak the truth in grace even in the midst of the firestorm. He's met personally with the critics of his speech to listen and dialogue with them in Christian charity.

~ Jeff Myers  
President of the Myers Institute for Communication  
and Leadership

# Home Educators Did It!



## Journal Entries

### From My Time as a Camera Operator on a WWII Film Documentary

by Isaac Botkin

#### March 6th

Not very many people ever visit Iwo Jima. Apparently more people have climbed Mount Everest than have stood on the summit of Suribachi since the 50s. It's a rare privilege to be able to work on a project that takes place in such a unique setting, and so I jumped at the chance to be a camera operator on a Faith of Our Fathers film project, a WWII documentary called *The League of Grateful Sons*, focusing on the battles of the Pacific and Iwo Jima.

What I didn't realize at the time was that my involvement on this project was more than just a chance to visit a historical battleground that is off-limits to the general public. During our six weeks of filming I had the opportunity to speak to over a hundred WWII veterans and sit in on over a hundred hours of interviews with them, see the battlefields where they fought, see how the Pacific has changed since then and be able to measure some of the different cultural changes that have happened globally over the past sixty years.

My first opportunity to do so was at a Texas parade honoring the men who fought and died. It was also a mini reunion for a number of the veterans that are still alive, who actually led the parade in Marine trucks. The entire town of Fredericksburg (near San Antonio) turned out for the parade and the subsequent reenactment of the taking of Mount Suribachi. The turnout was impressive, and it was a very moving event to watch the younger generations thanking their elders.

For the few days around the parade I almost exclusively interacted with veterans and reenactors. We stayed in old houses, filmed on remote farms and based ourselves out of the local WWII museum where we were surrounded in period hardware and historic artifacts. The men we interviewed told us about their lives in the 30s and 40s and what they had experienced during the war. When we filmed the actual reenactment, I felt like a newsreel photographer trying to record the actual battle.

Everything that I'd ever read about that historical period started to come to life. And after being so

completely immersed in that historical period for a week, I think we all experienced a little culture shock when we had to fly into the hustle and bustle of 21st century Los Angeles to work on the logistics of our journey to Iwo itself. That was where we met up with Historic Military Tours and the rest of the veterans who were going on the Pacific trip.

#### March 8th

From LA we flew to Hawaii for a short layover, which was dark, muggy and filled with Japanese tourists. I didn't realize it at the time, but from here on out our group would be outnumbered, and every airline and hotel announcement would be made in Japanese. It was ironic that a band of men who had crushed the Japanese Empire on nearly every island of the Pacific would now be the somewhat unwilling guests of the Japanese tourism industry for their return trip.

Here I saw a second major difference between the pilots and infantry. The first was on their perceptions of death; the foot soldiers were conscious of death every minute, and expected to be shot or mortared or bayoneted at any time. The pilots, so they said, never thought for a moment that they could be injured, even when leaping out of flaming aircraft. The second difference is probably related to that. While most of the pilots had completely forgiven the Japanese people and many of them even visited Japan as missionaries, the Marines are much less trusting.

Our next stop was Nagoya, Japan. It was the first time that most of our veterans had ever seen the Japanese mainland. The last time my friend 2nd Lt. Bill Brown had seen Nagoya from the air, he was flying a P-51 Mustang, escorting B-29s in for a fire-bombing raid. I asked him about it once we landed, and he told me it hadn't changed much... just more buildings these days.



The journey Isaac took with the film crew and veterans of Iwo Jima (apart from flying from New Zealand to the USA and back!).

#### March 11th

Eighty-seven veterans and their families had come back to visit Iwo Jima for the 60th anniversary, and we wanted to find out why for the documentary. Why they fought in the first place, whether they talked about it when they got back, why or why not, and why they were coming back now. We weren't the only media crews there, but we were the only ones traveling with the veterans, and the only ones interested in the multi-generational angle.

We only had a few days on Guam, so we tried to fit as many interviews in as possible. We talked to men who never told anyone about their service and only recently have realized the importance of passing family history on to their sons. We talked to men whose fathers died

on Iwo, and their only connection was the letters that their fathers wrote them when they were young children. Nearly everyone we talked to understood the importance of what was done during WWII and the importance of explaining that to the next generation.

Unfortunately, after VJ-Day, most American soldiers went home and refused to talk about anything that had happened during the war. Some of them did it because they themselves were trying to forget. Others were painfully aware that most families had lost someone and assumed that nobody wanted to hear about anything that would awaken painful memories. Most men didn't want to be thought of as heroes, because they saw the real heroes as those who had paid the ultimate sacrifice and weren't able to tell people what they had done.

Nearly all of the veterans were in their early eighties, and this will have been their last reunion and certainly their last chance to visit Iwo. I think a number of them also felt that it was their last chance to explain things that they did or didn't do, and we managed to get some very moving and personal material in our interviews. Most moving were the testimonies of men who realized that unless they pass on the stories of what happened, the real heroes of Iwo, who never made it home and never had a chance to explain their own stories, will be forgotten.

We could all feel the clock ticking before our departure for Iwo itself. The anticipation of that day was different for everyone. I think only the media and tour organizers were without apprehension. Only a few of the veterans had visited since the war ended, so most of the group members were completely unsure of what emotions they would experience when they saw it again.

### **March 12th**

Over the last 1500 years, throughout the entire span of the Chrysanthemum Dynasty, no territory of Japan was ever successfully attacked, invaded or occupied. On Iwo Jima, during February and March of 1945, the US Marines did all three of those things. In the entire history of war, no conflict has ever been quite the same. It was all-out fighting on an isolated island, pure and simple, with no distractions, complications, pity or remorse.

On Sulfur Island there was no water, no food, no natural resources of any kind, no vegetation, foliage or buildings; hence no secondary objectives to detract from the goal of utterly destroying the enemy. The Japanese refused to take or be prisoners; it was kill or be killed on a massive scale. There were no civilians or noncombatants on Iwo; every single man would need to win or die. It was a battle of extremes; no exceptions, demilitarized zones, middle ground, compromise, surrender or escape.

It was the ultimate battle. Any support or resource that an invading army could have wanted, the Marines brought, from naval batteries to aerial bombardments. Any strategic positions or weapons a defending force

could have used, the Japanese had built, from Kamikaze squadrons and pre-sighted mortars to hidden tunnels and booby-trapped supply caves. There were no obvious weaknesses, serious disadvantages or strategic blunders on either side. There was no room for complicated maneuvers or time for code breaking or intelligence operations. It was pure force and tactics that would win the day.

After thirty-six days of hard fighting, the US Forces did win and then used Iwo as a launching pad for fighters escorting bombers into Japan's mainland and as an emergency landing strip for damaged planes. Another difference between Iwo and other battlefields is its current condition. The island was given back to the Japanese in the 50s, and they have a very small advance defense there, which consists of about 100 troops and 100 support staff stationed on an advance radar base. Apart from recovering about half of the Japanese dead from the island and disposing of unexploded ordinance around the new airfield, Iwo has been almost untouched.

The skeletons of scuttled and kamikazed US warships still rot off the coast, every pillbox is complete with its rusting gun, and the caves and tunnels are still littered with whatever was left there when the Americans pulled out. The main difference is the greenery that now covers the island. As Mount Suribachi came into view, the mood of the plane completely changed. There was a feeling of apprehension, and an awe that was built on fear and hate.



The coastline and Mt. Suribachi where the American invasion commenced. Photo from [www.visionforum.com](http://www.visionforum.com).

For the infantry traveling with us, that mountain represented 36 days of hell; the incoming fire that raked the beaches, the mortars that pounded every inch of the island and the men that died trying to take the flag to the top. It was only different for the aviators; that mountain had represented safety to them for many months. After hours flying over the Pacific ocean returning from sorties over Japan, often in damaged planes, the sight of Suribachi meant that they had made it home.

Once we landed and stepped out of the plane, it was like being on hallowed ground, even if it was just airfield tarmac. The USMC base in Okinawa had transported some trucks and humvees for us to get around in and assigned a number of Marines to be our escorts on the island. We loaded up and drove to Green Beach, where the first transports came ashore. Elsewhere green overgrowth covers the landmarks of the struggle, but the black sand beaches where the battle first started haven't changed.

Major Bill Henderson landed on Green Beach with the 5th Marines under withering fire and speedily led his men across the southern end of the island, isolating Mt. Suribachi. Today he has been slowed a little by a recent stroke, so he spent much of his time sitting in a wheelchair. The shifting volcanic sands that bogged down transports and soldiers sixty years ago is still treacherous terrain, so the Major stayed in his chair and was carried by younger marines down to where he first stepped ashore.



Isaac (on the left) is filming Major Bill Henderson (Fifth Marines, 28th Division, Green Beach, D-Day Iwo Jima) as he sits with his son and grandsons just yards away from the site where sixty years ago he first hit the beaches of Iwo Jima (Suribachi is in the background). Photo from [www.visionforum.com](http://www.visionforum.com).

Sixty years hadn't dimmed his memory or lessened his officer's bearing. From his chair he was commanding the battle again, glowering over the beaches and pointing out strategic points and explaining his tactical decisions to the marine escort as if they were soldiers in his outfit. And they acted as if they were, displaying the respect and reverence due someone of Maj. Henderson's experience and position. Where a casual observer might have seen an elderly man with limited mobility being helped down a hill by some kindly servicemen, they would have missed a Marine honor guard proudly bearing a war hero and humbly submitting to a superior, if long-retired, officer.

I had spent over a week with Maj. Henderson and his family by the time we landed on Iwo and, having gotten to know him, had the utmost respect for him. However, in just five minutes the young marines and he seemed to have had an understanding that I didn't fully grasp. In some ways, the fellowship of the Corps seems to be stronger than the fellowship even of the family, particularly the modern family. Throughout the day I noticed similar examples of this: the Marines on the island treated the veterans with more respect and reverence often than their own wives and children did.

Part of this was due to Iwo Jima's iconic significance in the legacy of the Marine Corps and to the fact that the brotherhood of soldiers transcends generations. And by comparing the generations of soldiers, I was once again reminded of the strength of resolve that our veterans had, particularly in Maj. Henderson. While describing how he gutted a Japanese rifleman to save a buddy one dark night, he mentioned finding pictures of the dead soldier's family when they searched his

pockets.

"And how did that make you feel?" someone asked, possibly expecting some wishy-washy, turn-the-other-cheek answer from this professing Christian.

"I just wished I could have killed him sooner," the Major answered evenly. "It might have saved some of my men's lives."

And most of the regrets shared by the veterans are similar. If only we had shelled the enemy for longer. If only we had brought more ammo and explosives. If only we had used more flamethrower tanks. If only we had been more efficient at killing the enemy, we would have won the war quicker and with fewer casualties. There was little remorse for the deaths of the homicidal and often suicidal infantry of a truly evil empire. It wasn't that the Americans had no respect for the human lives of their Japanese adversaries; it was that they had great respect for the human lives being crushed by Japan's brutal expansionism. This fact was overlooked by organizers of the next event.

There was a ceremony scheduled between the US visitors and a Japanese delegation, who were an hour late. As frustrating as it was to waste an entire hour waiting for our hosts and

another hour listening to them say surprisingly little about anything related to Iwo or WWII, it was nothing compared to some of the speeches given by the American representatives. In an effort not to offend the bureaucrats who had flown down from Japan for the afternoon, most of the speakers lamented the fact that so many Japanese soldiers died defending their homes and families and hoped that the dead on each side had been "given peace by their respective gods."

By equalizing the moral reasons behind each sides' fight, this viewpoint equalizes the sides, turning a fight between good and evil into nothing more than groups of men butchering each other on an island for no reason. The US veterans are no longer heroes because they sacrificed their lives to stop an anti-Christian regime bent on conquering the globe; they're heroes merely because they followed orders to do something difficult and unpleasant — just like the Japanese forces did. Of course, the same could be said of the war criminals tried at Nuremburg. So the feeble excuses of yesterday have turned into the praises of today.

And the veterans listened quietly as the price their fallen comrades paid was cheapened by worthless rhetoric. The heroes sat while politicians stood in front of flags and brought attention to themselves and their own politically correct magnanimity.

Our next stop was Mount Suribachi itself, which is dotted with plaques and a few monuments to the Marine Corps. From here we could see almost the entire eight square miles of Iwo. A sniper rifle or mortar could reach almost any point on the island. The view served to underscore the mammoth task it was to

land on such a defensible stronghold. Behind us flew the American flag, not far from the spot where it was first raised on D-4 in Rosenthal's famous photo. This was our last stop of the day, and it was a perfect way to end our time on Iwo Jima.

### March 16th

We didn't spend much time in Guam. We interviewed a number of sons of veterans who now felt that they truly understood what their fathers had gone through. Some of them had learned about the war from questions they'd asked and stories told by their fathers, but others only knew about it from history books and were here to get a glimpse into the things that they were never told about.



Joe Rosenthal's famous photo.

The tour took us to Hawaii next, to attend ceremonies at the Oahu Marine Base and the Punchbowl, where most of the soldiers who died in the Pacific are buried. The cemetery grounds are exquisitely maintained and possibly the quietest spot in the hustle and bustle of Hawaii's vacation paradise. Here under the well-trimmed grass lie heroes who never had educations, or peace, or families, so that others could. They were the friends and brothers of the veterans who had gone back to Iwo with us.

It's always staggering to visit military graveyards and see the tally of casualties laid out by the acre instead of simply numbered on a page. But this was more than that, because I was standing next to soldiers who remembered the men under the markers, who could recall walking, talking, eating and fighting with them. Resting beneath the rolling hills of headstones were the marines who had shared foxholes and rations with the veterans I now knew.

The remembrance ceremony at the Marine Base was more reverent than the event we had sat through on Iwo. This was a gathering of Marines honoring other Marines. There was only the deepest respect and appreciation for the work that had been done in defense of freedom. It was the last scheduled event for the veterans before they flew home. The young Marines said goodbye to their forerunners, the men who had made history, and we all got on the buses heading back to the hotel.

That was the end of the tour. The media team and I stayed on for a few days more in the heart of all-American tourism. Screeds of high-schoolers were there for spring break, totally focused on having lots of unsupervised fun. The legacy of the WWII generation was still there, but it had been changed. The freedoms they had defended were being misused. It was something I'd never really noticed or given much thought to before.

I saw gross consumerism in Japan, selfish hedonism in Guam, obscene decadence in Waikiki, and it was really nothing new to me. But on this trip I met some of the men who helped usher it all in. And they were the

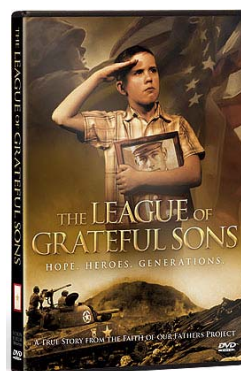
heroes of Iwo Jima. Their fathers taught them to be men, and when evil arose, they stood against it and crushed a global threat. They fought long and hard and paid immense prices so that everything that their families and country had stood for would no longer be in danger. They sacrificed more than everything, and then some of them came home and didn't talk about it.

I believe that they were one of the greatest armies ever mobilized. Any military force made up of Christian men as seriously committed as Maj. Henderson and completely unflappable as 2nd Lt. Brown would be invincible, easily overpowering forces driven by mere hate or mindless fanaticism. And yet, the vast majority did not pass along the values that had made them great.

They didn't tell their own sons about the horrors of Iwo Jima or what their buddies died for. Sometimes this was out of respect, sometimes this was to protect others, and sometimes it was pure humility. Nevertheless, a new generation grew up without talking to their fathers, and that just became the norm. It wasn't just that they missed out on an interesting history lesson, or even that they didn't hear about the importance of freedom. I think the main lesson they missed was that fathers need to pass on a family vision.

Nowadays each generation creates its own vision and reality, its own good and evil and a new subjective way of looking at the world. The few strong families who traveled to Iwo together so that the fathers could pass on their experiences, and the respect for tradition and rigid discipline of the Marine Corps were the exceptions that made the rule even more obvious. The men of WWII did not train their sons as well as they had been trained.

And yet, there is still time to ask questions of the elders. Fathers must teach; sons must ask. I was given a tremendous opportunity to sit at the feet of men who are now my heroes and learn more about what makes men heroic. I'm still thinking about all the things I saw on my trip to Iwo, and about all the things I've seen my whole life that visiting Iwo has caused me to rethink. At the end of the day, I think the most valuable lesson is the simplest one of them all; the responsibilities of fathers and sons is to learn from the past and communicate those values to future generations.



*Isaac Botkin is from Christchurch, New Zealand. He began his professional career in filmmaking at age 14 in his father's production business and is the author of the upcoming book Outside Hollywood. Get the book and the documentary from [www.visionforum.com](http://www.visionforum.com).*

# Over a Cuppa



## Seven Weeks in the USA: 16 September Through 9 November

by Craig Smith

### Top Lesson to Learn and Apply

Network. Talk to others. Initiate contact and conversations.

### Top Concern

The loss of our freedoms and liberties and worse: being unsure of what these are and unaware of how we're losing them.

### Reason to Rejoice

There are some incredibly gifted home educators out there who are helping others to wake up to our calling to disciple our children for Christ and that home education is the key.

### The Story

Our children first showed us how to network: the four-year-old daughter chatted to the ukelele players at the Tahiti airport and scored hand-made leis of real flowers full of natural perfume. The seven-year-old son walked up to every soldier and policeman he saw and asked about their weapons: so he got to inspect machine guns, hand guns and the latest electronic wire-shooting stun guns that the cop said scare people more than bullets do. They both got invited by the pilot to sit in the cockpit of a Boeing 737 and held the controls while he demonstrated various buzzers and alarms. A



Kaitlyn hang-gliding in California.

casual comment to a hang-glider on the beach at Santa Barbara, California, got them into the harness and "floating" along the beach while the owner and I held the glider from taking off. And Americans absolutely love the New Zealand accent, so talk a lot and talk loudly when you are over there.....people will not be able to resist asking you questions to hear you speak some more.

Folks we'd stopped in to see on the way to Auckland,

the Reymers and Bearsleys of the Hamilton Family Bible Assembly (a totally home education friendly church!) also reported what a good reception their youths had at a couple of "meet the candidates" meetings back in September.....other attendees congratulated them on asking the hard questions about abortion and interfering with families by proposing to ban smacking, and the candidates almost did a runner when they saw these same youths at the second meeting!! These folks also found mainly positive responses from the public as they passed out Family Integrity brochures about the proposed repeal of Section 59.



With Marshall Fritz outside his HQ.

However the real master of networking has to be Marshall Fritz of the Alliance for the Separation of School and State in Fresno, California ([www.HonestEdu.org](http://www.HonestEdu.org)). When we rolled up to his house, he and his 2IC, Allan Scheaffer, were on a conference cell-phone call with John Taylor Gatto....and Marshall immediately said to Mr Gatto, "A home schooler from New Zealand just arrive here, John, and you've got to talk to him," then thrust the cell phone into my hand. What do you do? Mr Gatto and I talked about New Zealand's South Island, naturally. Marshall kept in touch with us all through our travels, informing us of people of note we needed to call in and see since we were in the area. It was so painful to have to pass by many of them, but we did connect with others.

One of these extra connections was with Marshall himself about 3,000 miles east of Fresno where we first met. This time we both happened to be in Atlanta, Georgia, so we drove south of town to the Renaissance Hotel conference site where Marshall addressed a 20th anniversary celebratory conference of a freedom organisation Marshall had founded. He chided the room full of libertarian types for not having enough children nor disciplining them in principles of freedom and self-government so as to impact succeeding generations and for incongruously being addicted to O. P.M. (sounds like opium), which stands for Other People's Money.

We had a lot of fun with Marshall and Allan and Allan's family, and we thoroughly agree with the thrust of their organisation: to get the government out of the compulsory schooling business. Surely Christian home educators see clearly that over time the state's secular and compulsory approach with a one-size-fits-all curriculum pulled this way and that by political and special interest philosophies only dumbs down the

children's literacy, defiles their innocence, compromises their family's standards and encourages the parents to abdicate many of their parenting responsibilities.

Building upon this was our time in Philadelphia viewing the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall where the US Declaration of Independence was signed in 1776 and at the famous (Remember the) Alamo in San Antonio, Texas, plus our stay with E. Ray Moore of Exodus Mandate ([www.exodusmandate.org](http://www.exodusmandate.org)) in the heart of the Old South: Columbia, South Carolina, where the Southern States signed the Articles of Confederation and left the Union, leading to the Civil War of 1861-1865. We talked with E. Ray virtually non-stop from the Sunday afternoon we arrived until we drove away at 7:15 Tuesday morning. We heard so much about the need for Christians to rescue their children out of Pharaoh's schools in order to disciple them for the King of kings, how the enemy is destroying Christian families through the public school system faster than Christian families can recognise what is going on, and we heard so much more about the principles of the Biblical self-government of the Christian home and family, in conjunction with the church, with the civil government keeping its proper distance. This is just what we need to understand here in Kiwiland: that the civil government has overgrown its proper Biblical boundaries and is out of control, reserving to itself the power to regulate and control any area of New Zealand society it fixes its sights upon. We must remember the frightening words of Prime Minister Helen Clark, and do all we can to resist them, when she said on the front page of the *Dominion Post* on 4 March 2003 that "the Government's role is whatever the Government defines that role to be".

That was a shockingly arrogant statement claiming raw, unlimited power. Yet NZers responded to this challenge of "Who's in charge?" with a tired yawn. When William Travis, commander at the Alamo in 1836, was told by the tyrant Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna to surrender to his authority, Travis answered with a cannon shot! He went on to write: "I shall never surrender nor retreat...Victory or Death." He died for the principle of challenging who would rule over Texas. Can we do any less when the NZ Civil Government challenges Christian families as to how we discipline and educate our own children, as seen in the moves to repeal Section 59 of the Crimes Act and tighten up exemption criteria?

Other folks we started networking with by simply making a private comment on an email list have had us to stay at their place, and they've come all the way over here to visit us: the Fletchers of Modesto, California. The Lord has brought quite a collection of families together near there, families who all wanted to home educate and strengthen their family cohesion

with a church that encouraged this rather than (sometimes apparently) working to split families with their various ministries to mums here, dads there, princess over yonder with the nice youth leader, junior at mini-golf and the babies in the crèche. We got to stay a night with these folks whose church ([www.cverc.org](http://www.cverc.org)) has worship services plus meetings of the heads of households to disciple the fathers who then disciple their respective families!



*With Betsy Ray in front of the Liberty Bell.*

My mom's housekeeper in Fresno is Sima, a young mum from Iran. She converted to Christianity and had to leave the country with her family. But she was full of faith and a love for Jesus that would compel her to speak of Him whenever she could. And she told

how there are people who love Jesus even in the "holy pilgrimage" cities of Qom and Masshad in Iran, dangerous towns in which to be a Christian. Even so, Sima said, Muslims there want to know about Jesus Christ!

Marshall also put us in touch with Gary and Denise Kanter who live in the hilly suburbs south-east of Los Angeles....even so, as soon as we stepped from the van into the moonlight at their house, we could hear coyotes howling!! The Kanter's have a Creation Science ministry going (<http://www.cabazondinosaurs.com/main.htm>) as well as a great network of home educators introducing others to home education ([www.ConsideringHomeschooling.org](http://www.ConsideringHomeschooling.org)).

We kept meeting people who were re-thinking the Christian Faith, or I should say, how we should express it....traditionalism really leaves a lot of people cold, here in New Zealand as well as overseas. Home educators seem to be at the epicentre every time. We met Eric Wallace the author of *Uniting Church and Home: A Blueprint for Rebuilding Church Community* ([www.unitingchurchandhome.org](http://www.unitingchurchandhome.org)); Mark Holden of ARCH (Association for the Restoration of Church and Home, [www.restorechurchandhome.org](http://www.restorechurchandhome.org)); and of course Doug Phillips of Vision Forum (Doug is scheduled to visit New Zealand in early 2008) which sponsors the National Center for Family Integrated Churches ([www.ncfic.org](http://www.ncfic.org)). Christian home educating families should endeavour to read the material from these groups and listen to their tapes, for it seems to me this combination of home education and integrating families and church is just the answer to revival, restoration and reformation of our families, our churches and our society.

In fact, Bill Roach of the Christian Home Educators of Colorado is organising a Summit for Christian home educating fathers, hoping to sharpen this vision among the home education community itself. It will be held in Oklahoma City 9-11 February 2006, and there is no charge for the six meals, hotel room or registration fees! Contact: Chad Roach, [chad@chec.org](mailto:chad@chec.org), ph. 001-303-956-3455 (from NZ) or <http://chec.org/Files/>

And we heard a very powerful sermon by Rev Mark Henninger, the preacher who married our son Zach & Megan, on why our countries are in such a mess and what we need to do about it. We thought it had been written specifically for us in NZ, it was so spot on! Listen to it via MP3 at <http://pcaredeemer.org/sermons.php>; the sermon is titled *A Profaned Ministry* dated 6 November 2005.



*With the Blueborns in Illinois. Their house is covered in books!*

Again and again we got to rub shoulders with home educators who are helping to shape the future in significant ways: Harvey & Laury Blueborn have produced perhaps the best all-time apologetic for home education contained in the opening chapters of the best all-time book on Christian home education in the Classical style (*Teaching the Trivium*, [www.triviumpursuit.com](http://www.triviumpursuit.com)). Their website is a gold mine of books to buy, articles to read and audio messages to download for free! Their sons Nathaniel and Hans have produced another goldmine of a website with [www.Christianlogic.com](http://www.Christianlogic.com), again with lots of free articles to read. Their daughters cooked up some great meals while we were there, and they escorted us on our first trip across the mighty Mississippi River into Muscatine, Iowa (where Barbara had to have an aching tooth extracted). (We crossed the Mississippi again at Baton Rouge and St Louis.)

We met up with Bill and Diana Waring (as well as Isaac, Michael and Melody) ([www.dianawaring.com](http://www.dianawaring.com)) at our son Zach's wedding. They had just gotten back from ministering in the UK as they have ministered to us home educators here in NZ twice now. Home educating families Scott & Janice Price and Bryan & Kim Evans run Samaritan Ministries International ([www.SamaritanMinistries.org](http://www.SamaritanMinistries.org)), a heart-warming Biblical approach to helping other Christians with health and medical expenses. Grady &

Tina Arnold's place had just suffered a direct hit from Hurricane Rita, but this Texas Southern Baptist preacher and home educators still had us in to stay. They also actively lobby other Christians to "Get the Kids Out" of state schooling institutions ([www.gtko.org](http://www.gtko.org)). Good on ya! And we also got to meet up with Joyce Burges, just north of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, who with husband Eric founded the National Black Home Education Resource Association ([www.nbhera.org](http://www.nbhera.org)). In the aftermath of Katrina, these lovely folks were visiting the refugee centres talking to people about the home education option, while the state agents were trying their best to send all these traumatised children off to a new school to be further traumatised as the "new kids" who are also so poor they got no where else to go. I thought Joyce's move was a stroke of genius!

We also stayed with Bruce and Lan Shortt in Houston. Bruce wrote *The Harsh Truth About Public Schools*. I said, "Bruce, I'm almost at the point of saying publicly that it is a sin for Christians to send their precious children to the state schools which are little better than temples of secular humanism, the devil's own religion."

Bruce: "I don't tell people it's a sin to do that."

Craig: "You don't?!!!"



Bruce: "No. I tell them it's a **gross** sin." (Read Home Educator Cathy Duffy's review of *Harsh Truth* at <http://www.cathyduffyreviews.com/general-book-reviews/harsh-truth.htm>.)

We had some marvellous fellowship with long-time home educators Jack & Jane Bentley (see Jane

# Help for Home Schoolers

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*The Contra Dance in Floresville, Texas. The Hubers were our hosts and the Zes girls did the calling.*

Bentley's article on page 10) and family in Mobile, Alabama, where Genevieve got to fulfil her dream of skinning a real snake. Jack is a retired US Coast Guard helicopter pilot so took us to this amazing military aircraft museum in Pensacola, Florida.



*Philip and Lanier Ivester in front of their home. Lanier has a wonderful website: [www.laniersbooks.com](http://www.laniersbooks.com).*



*Genevieve with two Serven girls. Their father is a pastor in Troy, MO. They have a great Psalm-singing ministry. Go to [www.genevanfoundation.com](http://www.genevanfoundation.com).*

Lanier Ivester wrote the most moving story of pioneer home education I've ever read in the September 2005 issue of *Keystone*. We stayed with her and husband Phillip in their 1851 Southern mansion on the outskirts of Atlanta, Georgia. Got to meet her dad, Harrison Adams, star of her story, a Georgia state court judge: as we sat around the camp fire, he told of his high regard for his dad, a man of amazing commitment to Christ and self-discipline, developed from when he became the head of the household at age 8!!

Staying with the Ivesters in their southern mansion prepared us for the treat of attending a Contra Dance in Floresville, Texas, where we did some English Country Dancing (*Mr Beveredge's Maggot, the Virginia Reel*, etc.) along the lines of what one would see in the *Pride and Prejudice* movie. Everyone who attended dressed for the occasion and we had many Darcys and Elizabeth Bennetts as well as Colonial costumes, Southern Belle costumes and Renaissance dresses.

In Columbia, South Carolina, E. Ray Moore introduced us to Command Sergeant Major (82nd Airborne, Green Berets) James Alford, part Cherokee Indian, part African, part European (French



*Craig and Barbara Smith with James Alford and E Ray Moore Jr.*

Huguenot) - which would explain his blue eyes and freckles! He said he traces his ancestors to the 1607 settlement in Jamestown, Virginia! This man was home educated back in the 1940s when his Pentecostal preacher parents simply decided

they could do a better job than the local school. When his grandmother died, he ran away from home, and at age 14 he lied about his age in order to join the Army. He fought all through the Korean War and the Viet Nam war and never got a scratch. He speaks Korean, Laotian and Viet Nameese. The Army sent him to an all-white school to get some college credits, and he creamed all his competition. In his 70s he now runs a multi-million dollar business and was out jogging when we caught up with him.

Yes, we met some remarkable people and visited some remarkable places and did some remarkable things, such as whale watching off Monterey; Abraham Lincoln's Tomb; Superman's home town of Metropolis; Nashville; the Chatanooga Choo Choo; the Coca Cola Museum in Atlanta; the longest European inhabited place on North America, St. Augustine in Florida where Ponce de Leon landed in 1513; set foot in 20 different states. At the HSLDA annual conference we met Brian & Betsy Ray of the National Home Education Research Institute ([www.nheri.org](http://www.nheri.org)); Mike Farris, Mike Smith, Scott Sommerville and Chris Klicka of the Home School Legal Defense Association ([www.hsllda.org](http://www.hsllda.org)); Gregg Harris, Steve Demme, Jeff Myers, Zan Tyler, etc.



*Visiting the mighty Atlantic.*

One evening we talked at length with Mike and Pam Richardson who lead the Christian home education movement in Mexico....for years they and their nine children have lived west of Monterrey (west of the southern most tip of Texas) in a little valley with no electricity and where there has never ever been any Christian work before! They publish a bimonthly home education magazine in Spanish that goes all over South America and beyond, and they put on an annual conference all for free....the



*Anna and Elizabeth Botkin signing copies of their book So Much More at the Film Festival. See the ad on the inside back cover of this issue of the Keystone Journal..*

Lord provides ([www.elhogareducador.org](http://www.elhogareducador.org))! It was fun meeting

Christian home education leaders from Japan, Canada, Puerto Rico plus the much persecuted Richard & Ingrid Guenther from Germany. Two characters I thoroughly enjoyed were Wiesiek Stebnicki from Poland and Imre Szoke from Hungary. These guys were so enthusiastic and committed to the vision of discipling the next generation for Christ via home education, even though the numbers doing so at present are tiny and the state is oppressive.

We had a most traumatic event towards the end of our trip: one of Barbara's artificial hips popped out of the socket as we were settling in to watch the world premiere of *The League of Grateful Sons* at the second annual San Antonio Independent Christian Film Festival. We both experienced our first rides in an ambulance, but Barbara had to put up with some exquisite pain for a few hours before the team of one bone specialist doctor, two burley paramedics plus another two female nurses man-handled the joint back into place. Even though heavily sedated, when it popped back into place, Barbara cried out, "Praise the Lord, it's in!" and then conked out.

The Film Festival itself was populated with unique people with unique talents such as past Presidential candidate Howard Phillips; Balladeer Charlie Zahm ([www.charliezahm.com](http://www.charliezahm.com)); Actor George W. Sarris ([www.worldsgreateststories.com](http://www.worldsgreateststories.com)); Alabama Supreme Court Justice Tom Parker; battle of Iwo Jima veteran Bill Brown; preacher, home educator and author R.C. Sproul, Jr, Amber DeLadurantey (the author of the article on page 21), Matt & Jennie Chancey (Jennie is the co-founder of [www.ladiesagainstofeminism.com](http://www.ladiesagainstofeminism.com)), Geoff & Victoria Botkin and family who have moved from near Christchurch, New Zealand, to San Antonio for a few months to help Doug & Beall Phillips and Vision Forum complete some new projects. Geoff and his two oldest sons, Isaac (see his article on page 26) and David, all told me they are looking forward to coming back to NZ to work with others here to help advance the Revival and the Reformation Christianity in NZ sorely needs right now. And Doug Phillips (see his article on page 16) is scheduled to come to Kiwiland in early 2008.

The message that hit me from the Film Festival was how powerful is the visual media: it comes in technicolour and stereo and is designed to hit with maximum impact. This stuff is never, ever neutral. It may be the most effective means of imparting ideas, lessons and concepts. So we are starting to see the implications for us parents: not only do we really need to seriously filter what we allow our children to be exposed to, we need to seriously plan what we will pump into them!

Probably the most remarkable of all was the couple of days we spent with the Pete and Linda DeRosa family of Creation Expeditions ([www.creationexpeditions.com](http://www.creationexpeditions.com)) in Florida. Totally home educated and self-taught, this family has become, in only four years, funded by donations rather than university budgets or government grants, world class palaeontologists who the Lord has enabled to find two of at most 2,000 "complete" dinosaur skeletons in the world. That is 0.1% of the world's total have been unearthed by these Bible-believing, six-24-hour day creationists; and these are skeletons far more complete than most and far larger than most... and one has large sections of skin still intact and the other has unfossilised, organic material in its mouth.....meaning it cannot be "millions of years old" as the secular folks would have it. These home educated Christians are doing something unique: challenging the evolutionary establishment at the very core of their business: in finding, unearthing, preserving and interpreting the fossils themselves.



*Pete DeRosa Jr showing us how to care for a fossilized dinosaur humourous once it has been excavated from the field.*



*Sifting for fossils in the Peace River. Pete DeRosa Jr emptied many spade loads from the bottom of the river into our sifters and then helped us to identify what was left after the mud washed away.*

The DeRosas took us canoeing along the Peace River south of Tampa, where we had fun falling into the water dark with vegetation stain, shovelling the gravel from below the water and sifting it to find sharks' teeth, mammoth bones, dugong ribs, dolphin jaws, etc. And then to find that the river is infested with alligators and poisonous snakes, several of which we saw as we paddled along among the cypress trees with the Spanish moss

*(Continued on page 36: USA)*

*One of the eight alligators Genevieve saw along the riverbank. She also saw two water moccasins fall from a tree onto the bank.*



# Letters



## Encouragement 1

Be encouraged in the Lord. I value your ministry and don't know what we'd do without you two.

Matthew Powdrell  
Wairoa

## Encouragement 2

I would like to encourage you and just say how much I appreciate your work.

Joe Sommeveld  
Drury

## Encouragement 3

[When I receive *Keystone*] I stop whatever I am doing and read each issue from cover to cover like someone finding another undiscovered dead sea scroll. And thank you Genevieve, for being willing to add your hands and skills to work together with your parents to continue this precious ministry further into the future.

If only you all knew how tenacious our hold on homeschooling has been over the last six years! We have weathered several of the most difficult consecutive crises we have ever had to face. Living in a rural area and being confined to home during a really difficult pregnancy and birth complications meant that even more I have relied on *Keystone* and your father's indirect mentoring to reassure me that I was doing the right thing, to continue the good fight, and that I was not completely insane. If it were not for *Keystone*, I simply would not be still homeschooling.

I have never been a strong person physically, even before I had children. I used to brush off wellmeaning friends and disapproving family in the earlier days of homeschooling, assuring them that I would do it as long as I was able to and that I knew my limits and could stop when it got 'too much for me.' The last six years that statement has surely been put to the most brutal test. My husband has been living away from home on distant work contracts, and I have spent the majority of time lying down. My seventh child was born last September and somehow my heart valves were affected during her pregnancy. I watched the schoolbus pass our farm gates each morning and wondered, Dear God, what exactly does 'too much' mean? I don't have a problem believing in the eternal value of what I'm doing, but doesn't the MoE have a different outlook?

But over and over again, the very bottom line simply ends up being this: if I stop now, we will forfeit everything that has been built up until this date. All the pain and sacrifice and weariness will have been spent for nothing if I must drop them back into that great, impersonal, secular machine of public education and watch them be ground up and spat out by gears designed by the devil himself. (whew, that really sounds fanatical, doesn't it?)

It's so simple: I can't stop. There really *is* no safety

net. These precious children, and the fruit that is growing in their small lives like delicate seedlings, will not just be trod upon but deliberately broken by a secular mass education schoolroom.

Thus my passionate advocacy for homeschooling has continued in spite of the most difficult circumstances, during conditions I imagined I would never have continued through. God has answered daily prayers for wisdom to discern that which was needful, and while the house and yards have truly suffered, learning has not. If there is one thing I crave to share with other families in difficult crisis times, it would be the one thing I wished someone could have told me, the encouragement to release the shame of the seen visible world (which is always judged so quickly by harsh human eyes), and to tune in to the invisible realm more quickly and more deeply, and trust in that future day when all works will be tested by fire.

You have no idea how sustaining your mum and dad have been over these difficult years and how *Keystone* remains literally the last lifeline God has used to encourage our peculiar family to continue along an uphill track which every one around us says will never 'work'...but which has been 'working' since 1998. May God permit that it continue yet and one day produce a Good Fruit for His unfathomable purposes.

Carol Magee  
Te Kauwhata

(Continued from page 8: **Cotton Mather**)

in obedience to Him. I will teach them how even their diversions, and their ornaments, and the tasks of their education, must all be to fit them for the further service of Him to whom I have devoted them; and how in these also, His commandments must be the rule of all they do. I will sometimes therefore surprise them with an inquiry, "Child, what is this for? Give me a good account of why you do it?" How comfortably shall I see them walking in the light, if I may bring them wisely to answer this inquiry.

20. I will oblige the children to retire sometimes, and ponder on that question: "What shall I wish to have done, if I were now a-dying?" — and report unto me their own answer to the question; of which I will then take advantage, to inculcate the lessons of godliness upon them.

21. If I live to see the children marriageable, I will, before I consult with Heaven and earth for their best accommodation in the married state, endeavor the espousal of their souls unto their only Saviour. I will as plainly, and as fully as I can, propose unto them the terms on which the glorious Redeemer would espouse them to Himself, in righteousness, judgment, and favor and mercies forever; and solicit their consent unto His proposals and overtures. Then would I go on to do what may be expected from a tender parent for them, in their temporal circumstances.

**Note:** 1. Heidelberg or Westminster Catechisms: see [http://www.prca.org/hc\\_index.html](http://www.prca.org/hc_index.html) and/or [www.shortercatechism.com](http://www.shortercatechism.com).

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(Continued from page 35: **Cotton Mather**)

One of the founding fathers of the USA, **Cotton Mather** (February 23, 1663-February 24, 1728 Boston, Massachusetts) was a Congregational Minister and in fact came from a prominent family of ministers (he was the son of Increase Mather and the grandson of John Cotton and Richard Mather). He graduated from Harvard and founded Yale. He was a reformer who campaigned against intemperance and mistreatment of slaves.

(Continued from page 9: **Classical Music**)

The amount of pleasure a person can get from food, or drink, or winning at cards or dice, or reading great works of literature, or making money is tiny compared to the pleasure derived from classical music over the course of his/her life. At this time of my life grand opera, more than anything else, fills my heart and enriches my soul. As a wise man once said, it is the most omnipotent of all the arts.

Try this sequence. Notice I'm not suggesting the Nutcracker Suite or Beethoven's 5th or Swan Lake, etc. It is a mistake to try to cultivate your brain by pandering to it with fluff. Beethoven's 5th is not fluff, but you should put it way down your list so you can appreciate its profound dimensions, not the familiarity of its opening notes. Challenge your brain as if it were a computer separate and apart from the rest of you.

1. Gershwin Concerto in F
2. Ravel piano concertos (one for the left hand only)
3. Beethoven #6 symphony
4. Beethoven #4 piano concerto
5. Beethoven #7 symphony
6. Brahms #1 piano concerto
7. Brahms #1 symphony
8. Brahms #3 symphony
9. Mozart #40 symphony
10. The Bach, Brahms and Beethoven violin concerti.

Once you have worked your way through this series, drop me an e-mail and I will throw another batch at you. If you disagree with the sequence, please tell me so. And if it works, pass this on to others. It is the easiest way to increase the sum total of human pleasure. If you are going to give someone a Christmas gift of discovery, simply print a copy of this *Memo on the Margin* and wrap it up. It would be nice if you included the first compact disc. Gershwin's Concerto in F is almost always accompanied by "Rhapsody in Blue" and/or "An American in Paris." The two Ravel piano concerti usually are recorded together. At this earliest stage, the recording artists are not as important as they will be when your tastes become developed. Happy New Year.

**Jude Wanniski**, late founder and chairman of *Polyconomics, Inc.*, was a world-renowned political economist. He appeared frequently in the broadcast and print media, and also wrote weekly commentary for the *Polyconomics* website. His archived daily Memos on the Margin can be found at

*Wanniski.com*. Trained in political science and communication, he brought a unique meld of experience in journalism, academia, politics and business to his audiences, demonstrating an uncommon facility in imparting efficient and profound information on the unfolding political economy. Jude Wanniski passed away August 29, 2005.

(Continued from page 15: **Little Bear**)

*props. Richard married Marilyn on July 29, 1972. They have three children: Noelle, Aimee and Joshua and live in Bulverde, Texas, just north of San Antonio.)*

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hanging over us. And the DeRosas also took us into their laboratory/museum to show us how to classify and restore fossil finds and to actually lend them a hand at it! We would encourage everyone to visit their website, to consider supporting them and to visit them if at all possible for the experience of a lifetime!

The personal highlight for us was Zach and Megan's wedding: two totally home educated Christians starting up a new kind of household, one that by God's grace will have a much more consistently Christian world view than the vast majority of us parents. Zach's answer to a party question before the wedding thrilled us: "What is your ideal job?" "The job itself doesn't matter so much, as long as my wife and children can be near me and involved in what I do."

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