

# COLORADO LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

by Chris Rogers

In August AHEA had the privilege of being the only Canadian organization to be invited to a very small group meeting of home education leaders held by the Christian Home Educators of Colorado (CHEC), Vision Forum and Generations with Vision. Sixteen leaders from across the USA (some drove from as far as New York City and included it as a family vacation.) and I attended this leadership summit titled **Broaden the Vision While Sharpening the Focus.**

We had some incredible teaching/inspiration times with Kevin Swanson (Generations with Vision), Doug Phillips (Vision Forum), Mike Donnelly (who has taken Chris Klicka's international portfolio and is also handling single parent issues at HSLDA), Eric Weir (one of the sponsors/investors), and the leadership of CHEC as well as some town hall meetings where we could all exchange ideas, goals, successes and difficulties that our organizations face. It was inspiring and convicting to say the least!

It really hit me that no matter what we as individuals feel, we need to honor CHRIST in everything we do, "as we walk down the road as we get up and lay down", to paraphrase what I feel is one of the most important teachings of the Bible.

I had the opportunity to ask these leaders for some wisdom regarding issues that the Alberta government has indirectly and unintentionally caused for our membership, creating division within our circles. I explained how the government has classified home schoolers into 2 different categories: those that fall under the Home Education Regulations and those that fall under the School Act. I explained how the almighty dollar has become the most important thing to some supervising authorities and that they are actively encouraging home educators to potentially give up their rights by accepting more money from the government. And in doing so, these supervising authorities are not following the regulations as they are written. I explained to them that our laws state that if you are under the School Act, your facilitator is responsible for creating your plan for the year, picking curriculum, and even teaching that portion of the program. I explained that **currently**, the supervising authorities are still allowing parents to assume the facilitators' responsibilities. However, the government is beginning to take away some choices (IE: A Beka Math is no longer approved curriculum). The government has been auditing some supervising authorities and they in turn are asking parents for dated lessons. I told them of a family who fell under the School Act and went on vacation during the "school year" and how when they returned, they had to provide dated lessons to prove that they had been doing "school" during their vacation.

These leaders were shocked that this is allowed but were not

surprised that this has created division. They really encouraged me as your board member to stand for truth, to stand against government influence(s) in home education.

I came away knowing that our stand for supporting **Home Education** was the leading of Christ and that HE blessed that stand. We saw how even through the threat of a boycott and an email campaign of a few parents that do not understand why AHEA had to take a stand, we had the biggest turn-out ever and our main speaker, Ken Ham, did the most sales of any event he has ever attended of this size.

I was also reminded to continue our fight as a board to educate all home educators of the perils of accepting more of the money the government offers. (Really it is there to make you feel inadequate, to make you think that without the extra money you couldn't do it. I say you can!! We do, on a low single income with 5 children). One of the key talks was about trusting God for your finances and some stories of miracles for boards and families who honored Him by doing the right thing. He will provide! We saw it with our own eyes last convention, we see it in our families. Trust in Him, remember "He owns the cattle on a thousand hills." We spoke about Vision for our board and keeping AHEA focused on Christ. Our policy manual states "Keynote speakers must have a Christian Worldview" and Workshop/Panel speakers "must have a Christian Worldview or a presentation that does not in any way, offend, ridicule or make light of the Christian worldview". It is our mandate to keep the government at bay, out of our homes and with minimal input into the education of our children, and also to keep our choice of curricula without being told what is and is not acceptable! All of this is what some pioneering families in Canada and the U.S. went to jail for.

I also heard again, how in several Canadian and American studies anywhere from 70-90% (depending on the size of the study) of public, private, charter and even Christian school students leave the faith when they go to post secondary institutions and the opposite is the norm for home educating families. It has really convicted me that we as home educators need to be bold enough to tell our Christian friends who don't home educate this information. That home education gives us the opportunity to live out Deuteronomy 6: 5-7 which states "and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and thou shalt talk about them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." KJV

It is imperative that we ground our children in the Bible, that it is the basis of all our education. GOD tells us to give our kids a strong, solid and sound worldview based on the Truth of the Bible. The tools to refute the lies Satan has used through evolution and “millions” of years. The lies of the media regarding same sex marriage, co-habitation and pre-marital sex that will undoubtedly be pushed on them in our “institutions of higher learning”. All of these teachings are in the Bible. Proverbs is an essential, it teaches about money, lust, honor, well the list goes on and on. Kevin Swanson really explained the importance of Proverbs as a basic but extensive study guide of everything you need to know to succeed in everything you put your hands to. The evidence is all around us. Satan is a real deceiver; he has convinced a few generations that the government knows best in educating our children.

I will close with this thought...it was a small concerted minority that abolished slavery. That same voice caused a revolution and created a nation. That same voice legalized home education. **We are that small minority voice that will bring change to home education in Alberta, then Canada, and if we holler loud enough, the world!**