

OCHEC 2010 Speaker Biographies

Cheryl Burella started gleaning from experienced homeschoolers when her oldest of the two daughters she educates at home was just three years old. Of course the internet was a great resource for academic information but it lacked the meat and potatoes on avoiding the pitfalls. Over the last eight years Cheryl has had to creatively climb out of a few of them. Honestly, she was often pulled out. Because home educating is a life style choice, not an extra curricular activity there is much more than curriculum choices to navigate. How can you steward your time, money and curriculum without gaining more hours to your day and going crazy? Learn how to make the endless list of decisions and be an effective, teaching, domestic engineer without giving up your joy.

Donna Fawcett is the creative writing instructor for Fanshawe College. A graduate of Long Ridge Writers' Group in Connecticut, she has articles in national and international magazines and is the author of one non-fiction book and four fiction novels. Donna's novel *Vengeance* was a winner in two categories of The Word Guild Awards—"Best Contemporary Novel" and "Best IP Novel". Donna is a graduate of home teaching and she and her husband have had the joy of seeing two ADHD children receive Board of Governor Scholarships and Academic Scholarships to Redeemer University alongside their oldest child. All three children received math and English exemptions. Donna shares her children's triumphs with as many parents as possible in conferences and workshops.

Karen Gauvreau, graduated from U of T with her Bachelor of Education. She taught high school Math and English for seven years prior to starting her own family. She has homeschooled her three boys from JK to grade 2 and looks forward to many more mathematical adventures with them. Her heart is for equipping and encouraging homeschooling parents at any stage of their journey. She and her husband, Marc, serve at Portico Community Church in Mississauga, where he is the Pastor of Spiritual Formation and Small Groups.

Following in the footsteps of her two sons, **Tracey Hewitson** jumped into the world of Martial Arts in 1997 as a means of getting fit. Quickly she became aware that Martial Arts wasn't just a means to get fit physically, but to get fit mentally as well. Her dedicated journey to 1st degree black belt(Shodan) became a reality in 2001. She will say ..."the journey had really just begun." A lifelong learner, she earned her a 2nd and 3rd degree black belts in Karate, a 1st degree in Tae Kwon Do, a brown belt in Jui Jitsu and a 1st Kyu in Kendo. Teaching/coaching Martial Arts and all its attributes since brown belt level has been Tracey's most important learning tool. Tracey took another leap forward in 2009 and started Monkey see...Monkey do...Martial Arts. Providing Martial Arts/Leadership programming for homeschool families and other educational facilities. Focus on family values is important to Tracey and her team members, Brody, 2nd degree black belt, and Mitchell 1st degree black belt. A proud Mom!

John MacKinnon is a Christian believer for a long time, a husband for 24 years, a home schooling father for 16 years, and a police officer for 24yrs. His desire is to see home educating families succeed!

Chris Pacholczak, Presenter for The National Center For Biblical Parenting (NCBP)

Chris understands the pressure today's parents experience in raising and educating each of their own unique children. Why? He is one of them. Chris and his wife Shawnee, home educate their five enthusiastic children. Chris hails from Thunder Bay, Ontario where he is the Pastor of Grassroots Church (grassrootschurch.com), a growing church consisting of many young families. As a representative of the National Center For Biblical Parenting, Chris presents a parenting seminar entitled, 'Cooperation, Consequences, and Keeping Your Sanity' at churches and conferences. Chris operates a public speaking initiative under the brand *enthuse* (enthuse.ca). Adults of all ages have enjoyed Chris' down-to-earth and enthusiastic communication style.

Sandra Rusby Bell loves everything about books: how they smell, how they look on shelves, how they look stacked on tables, the feel of them, how children look hidden behind them and of course, the worlds found within them. So it is not surprising that she met Charlotte Mason while snooping through a basket of books at a friend's cottage. While her very understanding husband David took their children hiking through the dunes, Sandra devoured every word about nature study and living books and knew she had come home. She has now been educating her four children (15, 12, 10 and 8) using Charlotte Mason's methods haltingly, stumblingly, imperfectly but passionately for over a decade. She also has the privilege of working as a curriculum designer for ChildLight USA, an organization that exists to recover and promote the educational philosophy and practice of Charlotte Mason www.childlightusa.org

Elaine Togerez is married to Henry and they have six children, three of whom have been homeschooled through highschool and three of whom are still in elementary homeschool. A long-time member of Grindstone Creek Christian Home Educators, Elaine has been the OCHEC area 3 representative for the last few years and is happy to speak to new homeschoolers in the area.

Pauline Turton is the founder and director of Breakthroughs In Learning. Her Christian faith, teaching experience, home schooling, counselling and medical work prompted her to conclude that the brain has restorative capabilities. Pauline is the mother of two sons who have overcome significant learning disabilities. After seven years of extensive researching, Breakthroughs In Learning is now on the cutting edge in educational therapy.

Joanne van'tVoort is just a homeschool mom like you. She loves her quiet times, reading books, doing crafts, and having tea. However, God had other plans, and blessed her with nine children and forced her to learn to love noisy times messy times and multi-tasking. Joanne has had many years of experience in different aspects of homeschooling and leadership, and shares with you the growing pains of learning while doing. She too is still a work in progress, and by God's grace will persevere to the end.

The year **Jewell Williams** was born her Dad became a Christian. She gave her heart to Jesus at age 13 after serious conviction from the word of God as well as from the examples of her Christian parents. Jewell enjoys reminiscing about the years of being a deacon's, elder's, pastor's and bishop's daughter. She is also a licensed minister of the Gospel and her passion is working with young people. Jewell studied Business Administration in university, but realized that her "sweet spot" is teaching, and therefore maximizes on any opportunity to educate. She taught for two years at a public school, three years at a Christian School, and this is her second year homeschooling. She is married to Romeo for almost 18 years, and the Lord has blessed them with three energetic boys. Presently, Jewell balances homeschooling with being a Financial Representative with FaithLife Financial.