

# AHEM News

Volume 5 • No 3 • Spring 2008

Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts, Inc.

**What  
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need  
to  
know  
when  
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it**

## **Saturday Evening Spring Social: Eat, Drink, Dance, Chat, and Support a Good Cause**

Park Avenue Congregational Church  
50 Paul Revere Road, Arlington, MA  
April 12, 2008, 6:00 - 9:00 PM

### **Graduation Ceremony**

AHEM is pleased to invite parents who would like to recognize their graduating teenagers to participate in a special ceremony to be held during our Spring Social on April 12th, 2008. A one or two sentence bio about them will be included in our event program, space permitting. To participate, send your name, contact info, and a short bio highlighting your teen's accomplishments and their plans for the future, to Roberta at [roberta@thecaringtree.net](mailto:roberta@thecaringtree.net) or call 617-923-2368. To participate in the ceremony, you must also preregister for the Social (see below).

### **Silent auction**

Auction items include:

- Boston Duck Tours tickets
- Coco Key Water Resort passes
- Massachusetts Audubon family membership
- Math Monkey of Newton gift certificate
- Museum of Science tickets
- New England Aquarium family membership
- New Repertory Theatre tickets
- Peabody Essex Museum passes
- Plimoth Plantation family pass
- Trader Joe's gift basket

### **Book Sale**

Bring books, CDs, DVDs, games, puzzles or other educational materials in good condition that are ready for a new home and browse what others have to offer. If you would like to arrange for pickup in the Boston area before the Social, email [info@ahem.info](mailto:info@ahem.info) or call Stephanie at 781-646-4541. Any leftovers from the sale will be sold to benefit AHEM or donated to charity. (No toys, stuffed animals, or clothes please.)

### **Pizza and Dessert Bar**

Pizza, hot and cold beverages, and scrumptious goodies

will be available for purchase all evening. Bring your sweet tooth and indulge!

### **Dancing**

There will be dancing for all ages, including the Cotton Eyed Joe, the Macarena, the Cha-Cha Slide, the Electric Slide, the Hustle, and much more. For those that don't know a dance, there will be people available to lead and teach them.

All proceeds will benefit AHEM. AHEM is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

### **How to reserve in advance**

We're glad that you are interested in joining us on April 12! To reserve in advance, please:

- Write a check for \$5 for each adult and teen, \$3 for each child age 5 - 12, under 5 free, to Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts, Inc. (AHEM);
- include names of all people in your party, ages of children, your address, and telephone number;
- return it all in an envelope addressed to AHEM, PO Box 1307, Arlington, MA 02474.

**Mailed reservations must be postmarked no later than March 22, 2008.** No refunds after March 22, 2008.

Confirmation will be sent via email (preferred) or enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope. You will be added to the Friends of AHEM list unless you specifically opt out. Friends of AHEM receive special notices of upcoming AHEM events.

*Space permitting*, you may also pay at the door. Cost at the door will be \$7 for each adult and teen, \$5 for each child age 5 - 12. Don't forget your checkbook or cash for the Silent Auction, Book Sale, and Dessert!

Questions? Interested in helping out with the event? Email [info@ahem.info](mailto:info@ahem.info) or call 781-641-0566.

### **Directions**

From Route 2:

- Take the Park Avenue exit (Exit 58);
- Turn north into Arlington on Park Avenue;
- Continue to the top of the hill, past the water tower on the right, and down the long, steep hill just until

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The information in this newsletter does not constitute legal advice; it is provided for informational purposes only. AHEM is a 501 (c)(3) charitable organization. All donations are tax-deductible.

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[www.AHEM.info](http://www.AHEM.info)



you see the traffic lights at the intersection of Park Avenue and Massachusetts Avenue.

- The church is on the left, one block south of Massachusetts Avenue at the intersection of Park Avenue and Paul Revere Road.

### Make a Weekend of it!

Find ideas for ways to spend the rest of the weekend taking in the Boston area here:

<http://www.ahem.info/WeekendExplorations.htm>.

For the latest updates on the Spring Social check

<http://www.ahem.info/SpringSocial.htm>.

## Current State Issues . . .

### Legislative Update

The current legislative session, which got underway in January of 2007, will end in December of 2008. There has been activity on several bills that AHEM has been tracking.

The following bills have been included in SB 2462, "An Act to Improve Dropout Prevention and Reporting of Graduation Rates":

- HB 394, "An Act Raising the Compulsory Attendance Age to 18"
- HB 401, "An Act Relative to School Age Attendance Requirements"
- HB 402, "An Act to Prevent Students From Dropping Out of School"

- HB 463, "An Act Relative to Encouraging Students to Stay in School"
- HB 576, "An Act to Increase the Mandatory School Age"
- HB 577, "An Act Relative to the Development of a Comprehensive Strategy to Prevent Students from Dropping Out of School"
- SB 304, "An Act Relative to School Attendance"
- SB 329, "An Act Changing the Maximum Required Age for School Attendance"
- SB 343, "An Act to Encourage School Attendance and to Strengthen Parental Responsibility"
- SB 357, "An Act Relative to School Attendance"
- SB 366, "An Act to Amend School Attendance"

This new bill, SB 2462, makes tools available to school districts for accurate reporting of high school graduation and drop out data. It also establishes the "Graduation and Dropout Commission" to study dropout prevention and dropout recovery programs throughout the state. This commission will make recommendations on certain issues, such as raising the compulsory attendance age from 16 to 18. The text of the new bill can be found at <http://www.mass.gov/legis/bills/senate/185/st02/st02462.htm>.

HB 400, "An Act Relative to the Awarding of High School Diplomas," has been included in HB 4536, an order that gives the Education committee the authority to sit during the recess of the General Court to investigate and study issues relating to MCAS. The committee will make recommendations to the General Court on or before 12/31/08. The text of HB 400 can be found at [www.mass.gov/legis/bills/house/185/ht04pdf/ht04536.pdf](http://www.mass.gov/legis/bills/house/185/ht04pdf/ht04536.pdf).

HB 416, "An Act Providing That Parents and Legal Guardians be Held Responsible for School Attendance of Children in Their Care," is now part of HB 4596, a study order relative to authorizing the committee on Education to make an investigation and study of certain House documents concerning governance, parents and bilingual education.

HB 507, "An Act Relative to Homeschooling" and HB 523, "An Act Permitting Non Public School Students to take MCAS Exam" have become part of HB 4530. This bill gives the DOE responsibility for investigating the feasibility and costs associated with allowing non-public school and homeschool students to voluntarily be allowed to take MCAS in grade 10. The DOE will report their findings by November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008. We have included the full text HB 4530 below:

**“AN ACT PERMITTING NON PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS TO TAKE MCAS EXAM.**

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:*

The Department of Education shall issue a report, not later than November 15, 2008, on the feasibility and costs associated with non-public school students and home schooled students in grade 10 voluntarily taking the MCAS exam at a non-public school site; and provided further, that said report shall be provided to the secretary of administration and finance, the secretary of education, the chair of the house ways and means committee, the chair of the senate ways and means committee, the house and senate chairs of the joint committee on education.”

There has been no activity on HB 399, “An Act Relative to Full Day Kindergarten” and HB 527, “An Act Relative to Mandatory Minimum Age for School Attendance.”

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## **Summary of Data from Homeschool Policy and Practice Database, February 2008**

Here are collated responses to Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts’s questionnaire about homeschool policy and practice in Massachusetts. For over four years, AHEM has been collecting information from homeschoolers about official town policy (including the policies themselves), and about how homeschooling actually works in towns in Massachusetts, according to homeschoolers. So far we have received 236 responses. The majority of respondents are people who receive regular AHEM updates either via email or US mail, although some respondents received the questionnaire as a forwarded email and others found it on our website. The results draw an interesting picture of the way homeschooling works in general (pretty smoothly) and homeschoolers’ personal experiences of dealing with school officials (overall, no major problems).

### **How much in advance of the school year do school officials ask that you submit homeschooling plans? What do you do? Please explain.**

Most schools request that plans be filed before beginning to homeschool, or before the beginning of the school year. Some mention a specific amount of time prior, ranging from one week to three months before school starts. Most homeschoolers submit a plan over the

summer, the majority in August. There were no reports of problems if a plan was filed later than requested.

### **Do school officials ask to meet with homeschoolers? Do you comply? Please explain.**

Sixty-seven percent of respondents report that school officials do not ask for face-to-face meetings. Eleven percent report that school officials ask for an initial meeting with homeschoolers when they filed their first plan; seventy-eight percent of these agreed to a one-time meeting when first starting homeschooling. Twenty-two percent of homeschoolers are asked to meet annually with school officials. Of these, forty-nine percent choose to comply, fifty-one percent do not. While it sometimes takes some negotiating to decline a meeting, homeschoolers who chose not to meet with school officials were ultimately approved.

**“School policies that exceed *Charles and Brunelle* do not have to be adhered to by homeschoolers.”**

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### **Do school officials ask to visit your home? Do you comply? Please explain.**

Ninety-six percent of respondents do not have school officials ask to visit their homes. There were no negative consequences for not agreeing to a home visit. Indeed, the 1998 *Brunelle* Supreme Court decision made it clear that home visits cannot be required as a condition of approval.

### **Do school officials ask for a daily schedule? For number of hours on each subject? Do you comply? Please explain.**

Seventy-two percent of respondents are not asked for a schedule or number of hours, a decline in requests for schedules from last year. Twenty-eight percent of respondents are asked to supply a schedule or number of hours per subject.

Of those asked to supply a schedule, twenty-five percent comply, and seventy-three percent do not. (Two percent were unclear whether or not they comply.) Forty-one percent of these seventy-three percent state instead that they will meet or exceed the 900/990 hours of instruction in the public schools, and that seems to be acceptable. There were no negative consequences for those who chose to give the broader answer rather than a grid type schedule.

### What form of assessment do you provide and how many times a year?

- Fifty-eight percent of respondents write a progress report. About eight percent of the people who write progress reports indicate that the schools expect them to also submit work samples (a report combined with work samples is commonly referred to as a portfolio). Please note that *Charles* requires homeschoolers to submit only one form of evaluation. A report alone should suffice, or work samples without any written narrative, should suffice. While a portfolio is nice to have as a record for your own use, there is no need to give that much information to school officials.
- Fourteen percent of respondents choose to test. Tests used include the California Achievement Test (CAT), the Personalized Achievement Summary System Test (PASS), the Wide Range Assessment test (WRAT), the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS), the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, the Stanford Test and others.
- Eleven percent of respondents submit work samples.
- Eleven percent of respondents submit no evaluation at all.
- Five percent of respondents indicated their evaluation method varies; parents choose from year to year.
- One percent of respondents indicated use of a form of evaluation other than testing, progress reports, or work samples.

Eighty-six percent of homeschoolers who indicated frequency submit evaluation once a year, Twelve percent submit twice a year, two percent submit four times a year.

### Do school officials provide you with a letter of approval?

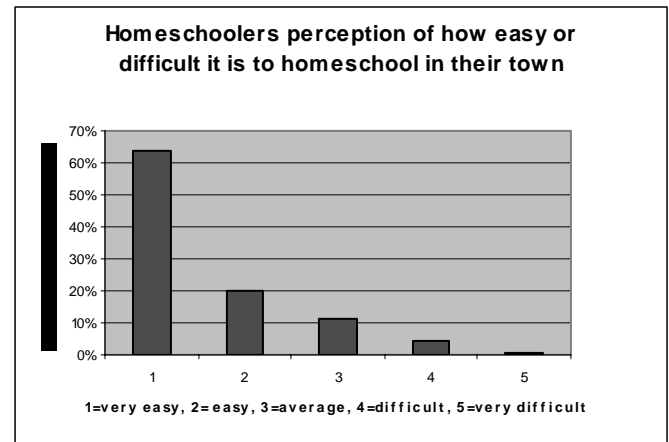
Eighty-one percent of respondents receive an approval letter. Nineteen percent do not receive a letter of approval.

### Do school officials allow homeschoolers to participate in school activities? Please be specific.

Eighty-two percent of respondents report that their school allows them to participate in either classes, sports, extracurricular activities, or some combination of these. Eighteen percent report that their school does not allow them to participate in school functions at all.

### “On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being very easy to deal with and 5 being very difficult, how would you rate your town’s treatment of homeschoolers?”

Eighty-four percent of respondents reported their town to be easy or very easy to deal with, 11% reported their town to be average, 5% reported their town to be difficult, and less than one percent of respondents considered their town to be very difficult to deal with. Some towns that homeschoolers rate as friendly include Cambridge, New Bedford, North Andover, Waltham, and Woburn.



In summary, things continue to go pretty smoothly for homeschoolers here in Massachusetts. Most homeschoolers report no difficulties in dealing with school officials. In cases where school officials ask for more than *Charles* allows, we see over and over again that homeschoolers who are aware of their rights simply submit what *Charles* allows, and there are no negative repercussions for standing up for oneself in this way. Furthermore, standing up for your rights in this way strengthens the ability of other homeschoolers to do the same, and lessens the likelihood that school officials' demands will escalate. We can't say it enough: School policies that exceed *Charles* and *Brunelle* do not have to be adhered to by homeschoolers. See *Tips for Writing your Education Plan* <http://www.ahem.info/TipsforWritingYourEdPlan.htm> for ways to satisfy the requirements of *Charles* without going into needless detail. Questions? Call AHM. <http://www.ahem.info/CountyContacts.htm>.

This is an ongoing project: We hope you will help us build the database further as the more responses we get, the clearer the picture of homeschooling in Massachusetts becomes. The more questionnaire responses we receive, the easier it is for us to pinpoint hotspots or identify trends. Please take a few minutes to fill out the questionnaire, which you can find at <http://www.ahem.info/index.htm>.

### Important California Home Schooling case: In re Rachel L.

In recent weeks, a court decision involving homeschooling in California has received national media attention. Discussion and allegations about the fate of homeschooling in California have been circulating through Internet venues such as discussion lists, web sites, and even Facebook. AHM has heard from several local homeschoolers expressing concern about the court decision and its implications.

As experienced homeschoolers and organizers of a state group seeking to strengthen the grassroots presence of homeschoolers, AHM knows that the first line of inquiry in any state situation is through the state groups. Homeschooling regulation varies widely from state to state. It can be complex, comprising a mixture of statute, case law, and actual practice. Therefore, local homeschoolers and state homeschool advocates are likely to have information superior to media and Internet sources.

When we looked at the situation through the lens of established homeschooling organizations in California, it became clear that while there is certainly concern, they are actively handling it. There is also no reason to believe, at this juncture, that the decision in California will have any effect on homeschooling in the rest of the country.

Below is text regarding the California case written by Linda Conrad, moderator of the Association of Home School Attorneys (AHSA-USA) Yahoo list, an informal network of attorneys and others interested in the legal rights of home schoolers. Linda is a homeschooling mother and an attorney (since 1978) in California. She was the Legal/Legislative Chair of the HomeSchool Association of California for a number of years. Since 2001, she has been handling civil and dependency appeals.

On February 28, 2008, one of the appellate courts in California (Second District, Division 3) held in *In re Rachel L.* that parents do not have a constitutional right to home school their children. The appellate court stated, "enrollment and attendance in a public full-time day school is required by California law for minor children unless (1) the child is enrolled in a private full-time day school and actually attends that private school, (2) the child is tutored by a person holding a valid state teaching credential for

the grade being taught, or (3) one of the other few statutory exemptions to compulsory public school attendance (Ed.Code section 48220 et seq.) applies to the child." The court held that the parents had not demonstrated that any of the exemptions in the Education Code applied because the children were enrolled in a private school independent study program.

According to the opinion and a companion unpublished opinion, this case arose out of a series of dependency cases involving physical, emotional, and sexual [by an unrelated individual] abuse allegations. In the underlying case, the juvenile court thought the home schooling the children were receiving was "lousy," "meager," and "bad," and isolated the children. But it thought the parents had a constitutional right to home school their children and would not order them to send the children to public or a campus-based private school. The attorney representing the six and nine year old children appealed.

The appellate court cited the need for an educated citizenry set forth in the California Constitution, and two old California homeschooling cases, *In re Shinn* (1961) 195 Cal.App.2d 683, 686-687 and *People v. Turner* (1953) 121 Cal.App.2d Supp. 861, 865. *In re Shinn* cited *Pierce v. Society of Sisters* (1925) 268 U.S. 510 (right of parents to choose private school), *Meyer v. Nebraska* (1923) 262 U.S. 390 (teaching of German in a private school), and *Ex parte Liddell* (1892) 93 Cal.633 (reform school habeas petition) for the proposition that the states have the power to reasonably regulate schools and enforce compulsory education of children.

The appellate court followed *Turner v. Shinn* and held that parents instructing their children at home do not come within the private full-time day school exemption in California Educational Code section 48222. [Note: Section 48222 has been used by home schoolers in California to set up private schools in their homes for the purpose of homeschooling. The California Department of Education has made it easy for home schoolers to do so by making the form available online.]

The California Appellate Court determined that even though the mother operated through Sunland Christian School where the children were enrolled, the home did not qualify as a private full-time day school. The appellate court thought that in order to qualify as a private full-time day school the children

had to receive their education at the private school campus. The court was not persuaded by a letter from Terry Neven, the school administrator, that the children were enrolled in an independent study program through his school because there was no Education Code section that provided for parents teaching their children by “independent study” through private schools. The court thought enrolling the children in the private school independent study program was a “ruse” to let them stay home and be taught by a non-credentialed parent.

The appellate court rejected that schooling under the California exemptions from compulsory education could take place in the home without a teaching credential. It noted that section 48222 provides an exemption from compulsory public school education for “[c]hildren who are being instructed in a private full-time day school.” [Note: Emphasis was added by the court-implying the instruction must be in” the school.]

The appellate court also rejected the parents’ claim that they home schooled their children due to religious beliefs. It found that there was not sufficient evidence to support the parents’ claim that they home schooled due to their “sincerely held religious beliefs.” [Note: An argument can thus be made that parents who can prove they have “sincerely held religious beliefs” may home school.]

The appellate court remanded the matter back to the juvenile court in order to make factual findings regarding the parents’ compliance with California’s compulsory public education law. The appellate court told the juvenile court it should not allow the children to be enrolled in Sunland Christian School because it participated in the deprivation of the children’s right to a legal education.

This opinion is not final. Several home school organizations are determining what action to take. If the parents decide to file a petition for review in the California Supreme Court and the California decides to hear it, then the issue may come before the California Supreme Court. The California Supreme Court may also order that the case be depublished.<sup>1</sup>

If this decision becomes final, California parents will not be able to home school through private school independent study programs. In my view, the opinion does not say that parents cannot establish a legitimate private school in their home and educate their children at their home campus. Thus, if my children were not grown, I would continue to home school my children by setting up a private school in my home. I would be vigilant in keeping the necessary records and making sure my children were actively involved in the community.

Nonetheless, it may be a matter of time before the *In re Rachel L.* decision is used to prevent individuals from establishing private schools in their homes. In my view, home schoolers and home schooling organizations need to take action now to request depublishation and/or review of the case. If those requests are denied, then California home schoolers may wish to consider another option. Thus, home schoolers may wish to contact their home school organization to determine what action it intends to take and what assistance it may need from its members.

Text of court opinion *In re Rachel L.*:

- <http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/opinions/documents/B192878.PDF>

California statewide homeschool groups from whom you can obtain updated information:

- HomeSchool Association of California  
<http://www.hsc.org/>
- California Homeschool Network  
<http://californiahomeschool.net/default.htm>

## Yo Jo . . .

### Advice on a Homeschooling Mom’s Freak Out

by Joanne Casiello

As the big yellow school bus rolled away carrying the rest of the kids in the neighborhood a young mother silently freaked out about the decision she had made to homeschool her five year-old-daughter. “What am I doing? This could be a really bad idea and I’m going to ruin her life and she’ll hate me forever!” she thought in a wonderful moment of absolute panic.

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be officially published. Such cases do not appear in Cal. App. bound volumes and may not be cited (CRC 8.1115).

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<sup>1</sup> From University of San Francisco. 2007. Depublication of California Cases, California Research #4 - Dorraine Zief Law Library Handout. <[http://www.usfca.edu/law\\_library/depub.html](http://www.usfca.edu/law_library/depub.html)> (cited 10 March 2008): “Depublication occurs when the Supreme Court (acting under California Constitution Article VI, Sec. 14 and California Rules of Court 8.1105(e)(2)) orders that an opinion of the Court of Appeal not

### Volunteering for AHEM

From day one, AHEM has intended to make it transparent to Massachusetts homeschoolers how they can get involved and empowered as part of a network of Massachusetts homeschoolers committed to maintaining the rights of individual families to homeschool today and in the future.

You've already taken the simplest step to that end if you are a Friend of AHEM, which means you stay informed of issues that affect Massachusetts homeschoolers, and that strengthens all of us.

We have both online and in person volunteer opportunities. Our Spring Social is coming up in April, and we could use some on site help with that. Please call 781-641-0566 or email [info@ahem.info](mailto:info@ahem.info) if you would be available to help out some that evening.

Here are some sample jobs a "virtual" volunteer might do:

- Proofing the web site
- Organizing a field trip
- Analyzing data
- Fundraising
- Tracking legislation
- Writing newsletter articles

Most of our virtual volunteer opportunities take only a few hours to complete. All can be done from the comfort of your own home. Some are opportunities for kids or teens, as well as adults, to help out a cause that is important to them. Please take a look at our web site, <http://www.ahem.info/VirtualVolunteers.htm>, to find out more. We hope you will consider AHEM a worthy cause to which to contribute some of your valuable time, and we look forward to getting to know some of you better through working together to support homeschooling in Massachusetts.

AHEM is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Financial contributions to support our work are always greatly appreciated as well. Checks should be made out to AHEM and mailed to PO Box 1307, Arlington, MA 02474. All donations are fully tax deductible.

Thank you for helping to foster an active and informed population of homeschoolers in Massachusetts, committed to maintaining our right to independently homeschool, whether you do so by reading our emails, opening your checkbook, or offering your time to help us out on one or more projects!

As the mother of four young adults and aunt to 21 more kids from 7 - 33 years of age let me reassure that young mother that no matter what decision you make about how to raise your child there will come a time when that child will tell you it was wrong. There will then come a later time when the child may decide to make exactly the same decisions you did with their own kids.

I have added the mother's prayer to my daily routine. "Dear Lord, give them the strength to overcome any of the terrible things I may have done." My friend has her own version of the same thing. She tells her teenagers, "Yeah, well when you are adults in therapy because of me just make sure you tell the therapist I love you."

Another solution to that feeling is to have several children. The more kids you have the more you realize that you really don't have as much influence over their lives as you thought.

My sons say that the reason all homeschool parents have that freaked out feeling you describe is simple. When schooled kids turn out terribly THEIR parents can blame the schools.

But seriously, starting to homeschool is not like taking vows. You can stop homeschooling anytime you want to stop (really, since it is only mildly addictive). Your child is not yet five. If homeschooling really doesn't work for your family she can go to school next year and have years to recover from your incompetence before she is permanently damaged.

As to the stakes being so high, there are some things you can do in life that have immediate and irreversible repercussions. Stepping out into the path of an oncoming truck could be one of them, but many things you do in life can be reversed. If I overeat today I can work it off at the gym tonight. If staying home doesn't work for your child, she can go to school. Learning is a lifelong process not one final exam. And you know what? Even if you fail a final, you can take the class over.

Did your daughter learn to walk and talk? Eat solid foods? Is she toilet trained? Then you must have been homeschooling her all along and didn't recognize it.

And you know what? The worst feeling of freak out I had came as I made the decision to homeschool, then disappeared for a long time after we really experienced the joyful freedom of learning together at home.

*Send Joanne your question about homeschooling. Either email [info@ahem.info](mailto:info@ahem.info) with Attn: Joanne in the subject field, or write to Joanne, c/o AHEM, PO Box 1307, Arlington, MA 02474.*

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## PhotoWalk [www.photowalks.com](http://www.photowalks.com)

Back by popular demand: Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts is planning a *PhotoWalk* of the **Boston Back Bay** for ages 12 and up on **Friday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2008** at **11:00 AM**. We will meet at 10:45 AM in Copley Square – specific info on where to meet will be sent once you register.

*Important info regarding inclement weather:* Monday, May 5<sup>th</sup> is the rain date, same time and place. Please only sign up for this trip if you are able to hold both dates open (although only one will run), or are willing to forfeit your payment should we have to postpone due to heavy rain (no refunds after April 18).

PhotoWalks offers guided walking tours of Boston presented with historic commentary and creative photography tips. Discover Boston's fascinating history and capture amazing pictures of its famous landmarks. Learn *how to see creatively* on a photo tour! Copley Square is the heart of Back Bay. Discover the best viewpoints for taking amazing photographs of the Trinity Church reflected on the mirrored glass of the John Hancock Tower. Learn how to apply creative photography techniques to compose abstract shots of modern buildings, Victorian homes, and eclectic statues in Copley Square and on Commonwealth Avenue. Capture abstract and dramatic photographs using elegant architectural details. Back Bay's interesting history and endless photo opportunities are waiting to be discovered on PhotoWalks' newest tour! Tour is approximately 2 hours long.

**Cost:** \$15.00 per student age 12-17; \$20.00 per adult (18+). Students ages 8 – 11 can join the tour for \$8 each, but must be accompanied by paying adult(s).

**If you want to go:** Mail a check made out to *Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts* to AHEM, PO Box 1307, Arlington, MA 02474. Please include

- the names and number of children and adults,
- ages of children,
- your address, and
- email or phone number.

Those with email will receive confirmation about a week before the visit.

Space is limited; **checks must be postmarked by April 18<sup>th</sup>**. No refunds after April 18<sup>th</sup>.

Email [FieldTrips@AHEM.info](mailto:FieldTrips@AHEM.info) for more information or call 781-641-0566. Field trip participants will be added to the Friends of AHEM list unless they specifically opt out.

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## Become a Friend of AHEM

Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts (AHEM) is a nonprofit, independent, grassroots, volunteer-run, educational organization that gathers and disseminates information about homeschooling in Massachusetts through education, advocacy, and events. We believe that informed and active homeschoolers are their own best advocates in maintaining the right to independently homeschool. We welcome and value the participation of anyone interested in homeschooling in Massachusetts. AHEM, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. All donations are tax-deductible.

Friends of AHEM keep abreast of legislative and other issues that affect Massachusetts homeschoolers via an announcement-only email list or this newsletter. Friends of AHEM with email get special notice of AHEM events, field trips, and get-togethers. Be proactive: become a Friend of AHEM. Even if your involvement is simply to stay informed, that strengthens all of us.

To become a Friend of AHEM and receive email updates, send your name, address, and email address to [info@AHEM.info](mailto:info@AHEM.info). To become a Friend of AHEM and receive *AHEM News* by US mail instead of email updates, send your name and address to AHEM, PO Box 1307, Arlington, MA 02474. Donations to offset cost are appreciated.

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## Why Are You Getting This Newsletter?

You are receiving this paper copy of the newsletter through the mail instead of our timely announcement-only emails because we have you listed as a Friend of AHEM, but either the email address we have for you has been bouncing, or we don't have an email address for you. We'd appreciate hearing from you with an updated email address in order to conserve paper and postage, and to keep our costs down.

If you would like to keep receiving this paper version of the newsletter, please consider making a tax-deductible donation to AHEM to support efforts like sending this newsletter to Massachusetts homeschoolers who don't have computer access. And please pass your newsletter on to a friend or leave it in your local library when you're done with it. Thanks!

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