



AHEM News

Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts, Inc.

**What
you
need
to
know
when
you
need
to
know
it**

The Year in Review from AHEM!

Please consider AHEM when you are making end-of-year charitable donations!

We understand that you work hard for your money and that you cannot give to every organization that you come across. We also know that many organizations are asking for your support at this time of year. So why should you give to AHEM? Please consider:

- **AHEM is a statewide nonprofit organization in Massachusetts operating to support the grassroots strength of Massachusetts homeschoolers.** We are here for **YOU**. We are not beholden to any other organization or agenda, and we do not limit our advocacy on the basis of age, race, family status, religious belief, or sexual orientation. All donations are tax deductible.
- **Your donation keeps this organization up and running.** Like every other nonprofit organization, we have costs which include maintaining our web site, our PO box, photocopying, postage, etc.
- **Your donation goes farther.** We understand that you want as much of your donation as possible to go towards the mission of Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts, Inc. All of our workers are volunteers who donate their time and energy and do so without compensation. When we do spend money, we do our best to make sure that we have found the most efficient and effective option that uses the least amount of resources.
- **See below for what we've accomplished in 2009 and plans for the coming year.**

How to Donate

This year we have made it easier than ever to donate to AHEM by implementing online donations. **To donate via Paypal or with a credit card, go to <http://www.ahem.info/SupportAHEM>.**

We are also as happy as ever to accept personal checks or money orders. Please make them out to "Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts, Inc." and send them to the following address:

Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts, Inc.
PO Box 1307
Arlington, MA 02474

About the Deductibility of Your Contribution

Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. All donations are tax deductible (and greatly appreciated).

Highlights of 2009

A trip down memory lane, or an opportunity to catch up on events and information you may have missed the first time around:

In 2009, we enjoyed connecting with a cross section of Massachusetts homeschoolers in a variety of ways:

- AHEM's State House Day in April
- Homeschool Workshop at *Boston Skillshare* in April
- Homeschool Session at LLL of MA/RI/VT's *Breastfeeding and Parenting Conference*
- Field trips to:
 - Museum of Science High School Science Series Lectures in March and October
 - *Of Mice and Men* in March
 - Fruitlands in October
 - *Animal Farm* in November
 - New England Economic Adventure in November
 - *A Christmas Carol* in December

Throughout the year, we reported on a variety of issues important to Massachusetts homeschoolers:

- Graduation and Dropout Prevention and Recovery Commission
- Diversity vs. Dichotomy
- Massachusetts legislation
- Discounted MBTA Fares for Homeschooled Students

We were pleased to be able to offer:

- AHEM membership cards
- AHEM brochures with info on homeschooling in Massachusetts — perfect for handing out at gatherings or leaving at your local library (We are happy to supply you with some — just ask.)
- AHEM Unit Study on Massachusetts History and Government
- *AHEM News* for those Friends without email
- Not-Back-to-School events listing

We were pleased to be able to announce:

- AHEM web site makeover
- Online questionnaire on Massachusetts homeschool policy and practice

Ongoing efforts include:

- Legislative watch
- The Library Mailing Project, keeping Massachusetts libraries stocked with informative brochures about homeschooling in MA, along with an easy way for them to reorder

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- Policy & Practice Database about homeschooling in MA
- Communicating with our Friends
- Support group listings
- Events page
- County Contacts, available for phone or email help anytime.

Thank you

As we bid goodbye to 2009, we want to be sure to thank all of you for your support over the past year, whether it came in the form of reading our emails or newsletter, filling out the questionnaire, joining us on a field trip, coming to State House Day, handing out an AHEM brochure, accessing Amazon.com through AHEM, or sending us a cash donation. Any level of interest and participation is greatly appreciated and is what fuels our efforts.

We look forward to meeting more of you in 2010, and continuing to grow the number of informed and active homeschoolers in Massachusetts. We always appreciate feedback on how we are doing and ideas about how we can serve you better.

Looking ahead to 2010

- AHEM Salon Series
- AHEM Workshop on Getting Started Homeschooling
- Keeping an eye out for state bills that could affect homeschooling
- More field trips (MFA, New Rep, American Textile Museum, Big Apple Circus, Museum of Science, and more)
- Meeting and connecting with more Massachusetts

homeschoolers. Help us by encouraging *your* friends to become Friends 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.



Group photo with Rep. Sean Garballey at AHEM State House Day, April 27, 2009

Current State Scene . . .

Legislative Update

AHEM has previously reported on the Graduation and Dropout Prevention and Recovery Commission. This commission, signed into law in 2008, resulted when the legislature combined several bills dealing with an age increase in the compulsory attendance statute. The commission finally released its report in October of 2009. In it, they recommend raising the age of compulsory attendance from 16 to 18. The full report can be found at

http://www.mass.gov/?pageID=eoemodulechunk&L=1&L0=Home&sid=Eeoe&b=terminalcontent&f=Dropout_Commission_Report_Text&csid=Eeoe

AHEM has been watching several bills that have been referred to the Joint Committee on Education:

S 245 - AN ACT CHANGING THE MAXIMUM REQUIRED AGE FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE
(Michael R. Knapik, Republican – 2nd Hamden and Hampshire) This bill would change the compulsory attendance age to either the age established by the Board of Education, or the age of eighteen. This bill was referred to the Joint committee on Education 1/20/2009 and a public hearing was held 11/10/2009.

S 270 - AN ACT AMENDING SCHOOL ATTENDANCE
(Karen Spilka, Democrat – 2nd Middlesex and Norfolk) This bill would raise the compulsory attendance age from sixteen to eighteen. This bill was referred to the Joint

committee on Education 1/20/2009 and a public hearing was held 11/10/2009.

H 355 - AN ACT RAISING THE COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE AGE TO 18 (Garrett J. Bradley, Democrat- 3rd Plymouth) This bill would amend the compulsory attendance statute so that "all children under the age of 18 shall be required to attend school if they have not graduated." This bill was referred to the Joint committee on Education 1/20/2009 and a public hearing was held 11/10/2009.

H 369 - AN ACT CONCERNING KINDERGARTEN AND THE MANDATORY MINIMUM AGE FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE (Stephen R. Canessa, Democrat - 12th Bristol) This bill would amend the compulsory attendance statute so that "The mandatory minimum age for school attendance will be that each child must attend school beginning in September of the calendar year in which he or she attains the age of 5. Each school committee may establish its own minimum permissible age for school attendance, provided that such an age is not older than the mandatory minimum age. Each child will be required to attend a kindergarten education program before entering into first grade." This bill was referred to the Joint committee on Education 1/20/2009 and a public hearing was held 5/5/2009.

H 473 - AN ACT PERMITTING NON PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS TO TAKE MCAS EXAM (Elizabeth Poirier, Republican - 14th Bristol) This bill would allow a student in a non-public school to elect to take the MCAS exam. The cost of administering the exam to such students will be borne by the students This bill was referred to the Joint committee on Education 1/20/2009 and a public hearing was held 6/23/2009.

AHEM will continue to monitor these bills as the legislative session progresses and communicate any changes.

Summary of Data from Homeschool Policy and Practice Database

Here are responses to Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts's questionnaire about homeschool policy and practice in Massachusetts.

For over six 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. This year we switched over to an online survey collection method, which makes the process easier for everyone. 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).

When do school officials ask that you submit homeschooling plans?

Most schools don't specify. In towns where there is a requested date of submission, there were no reports of problems if a plan was filed later than requested.

Regarding face-to-face meetings:

63.3% of respondents report that school officials do not ask for face-to-face meetings. 7.9% report that school officials asked for

an initial meeting with homeschoolers when they filed their first plan. 7.9% are asked to meet annually with school officials. Of those asked to meet, 58.5% choose to comply, and 41.5% do not. While it sometimes takes some negotiating to decline a meeting, homeschoolers who chose not to meet with school officials were ultimately approved.

Hours and schedules:

40.1% of respondents are asked to state that they meet or exceed the 900/990 hours required yearly in the public schools. 22.6% aren't asked for anything. 7.3% are asked for number of hours spent on each subject. 4% were asked for a daily grid-type schedule.

When asked to supply a schedule, it often suffices to state instead that you will meet or exceed, or provide the equivalent of, the 900/990 hours of instruction in the public schools, or to ignore the request. In any case, there were no negative consequences for those who chose to decline giving a grid type schedule.

Access to materials:

57.1% of respondents provide a list or partial list of materials and/or resources. 13% say a list will be available upon request. 7.3% provide nothing. 2.3% percent physically show materials to a school official.

Educational background:

35% of respondents summarize their educational background. 27.1% say they are "of competent ability and good morals." 13% provide nothing.

Form of assessment:

- 46.9% of respondents write a progress report. Some 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.
- 9.6% of respondents submit no evaluation at all.
- 9.6% of respondents submit work samples.
- 8.5% 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, and the Stanford Test.
- Some respondents indicated their evaluation method varies; parents choose from year to year. A few indicated use of a form of evaluation other than testing, progress reports, or work samples.

Frequency of assessment:

71.8% of respondents who indicated frequency submit evaluation once a year, 11.9% don't submit an evaluation, 7.9% submit twice a year, less than one percent submit four times a year.

Approval letters:

57.8% of respondents always receive an approval letter, 11%

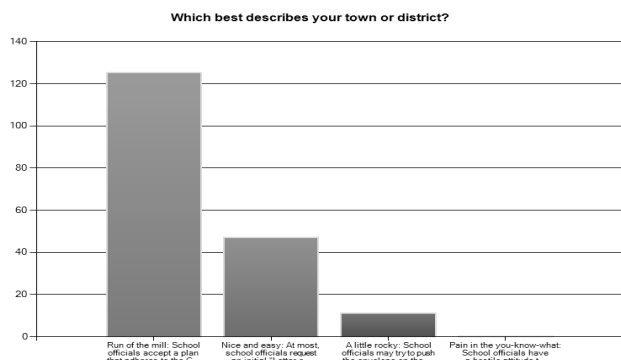
sometimes receive one, 8.7% usually receive one. 5.2% receive one only if they request one. 1.7% never receive one even if they ask for one. 5.8% do not receive a letter of approval and have never asked for one.

Do school officials allow homeschoolers to participate in school activities?

6.9% of respondents report that their school does not allow them to participate in school functions at all. Varying percentages of respondents report that their school allows them to participate in either classes (13.3%), sports (17.9%), extracurricular activities (16.2%), chorus or band (17.9%), borrowing books (8.7%), or some combination of these.

Which best describes your district?

69.2% of respondents reported their town to be “run of the mill,” 26.7% reported their town to be “nice and easy,” 4.1% reported their town to be “a little rocky,” and no respondents considered their town to be “a pain in the you-know-what.” Some towns that homeschoolers rate as friendly include Billerica, Boston, Cambridge, Dracut, New Bedford, and Southbridge.



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/Questionnaire.htm>.

Meet Massachusetts Homeschoolers . . .

Returning to Daddy

By Dennis Pratt

I was a daddy for the first seven years of fatherhood: “Daddy, wait for me!” “Daddy, be serious!” “Daddy, look at this!”

“Daddy” became music to my ears.

Before our daughter's birth, I had teased my wife that I wanted my daughter to call me “Sir.” I had loved the intimate, nurturing, respectful father-daughter relationship depicted in *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and Scout had called Atticus, “Sir.” My wife preferred practicality to romance, “Everyone is going to think that you have a cold relationship with your daughter!” With the confident patience honed over 20 years of marriage, she ignored me.

That is why, when we arrived at the hospital, I had no specific title in mind. “Father” was too formal and “Dad” too informal. I'd like to think that I wasn't fat enough for “Papa,” and Speed Racer disqualified “Pops.”

When I greeted our newborn on the warming table, a title bubbled up clearly from my subconscious. “I'm your daddy,” I sung to my new daughter. Why “Daddy”? Perhaps by “Daddy” I wanted to answer the echoed cries of my sister? Or maybe “Daddy” suggested the unconditional love my mother reserved only for her stories about her daddy. Whatever the psychological reason, for the first seven years of Vivian's life, I thought of myself as realizing my ideal concept of a “Daddy.”

But I found that I had failed. When Vivian entered first grade, she started replacing “Daddy” with “Dad.” Neither my wife nor I used that title. Her classmates, it turned out, disapproved of “Daddy”; it was “too babyish.”

I, on the other hand, didn't like “Dad”; for some reason, it connoted for me a passer-by, seen only on weekends before tee time, who promised large stuffed animals to insufficiently make up for his absence. I fought a determined rear-guard action. “Dad?” _ Silence. _ “Dad! Come here!” _ Silence. “Daaaaad!” _ Silence. _ Silence. _ “Daddy?” She'd finally give in. “Yes, dear?”, I would answer as though I had just then heard her. But her fear of being a “baby” proved stronger than my willingness to ignore “Dad.” After just a few months, even though I would continue to consistently refer to myself as “Daddy,” my daughter officially demoted me to “Dad.”

In September 2008, for her fourth grade year, we started to educate Vivian outside of school. Similar to what many other homeschoolers have reported, Vivian's social and family relationships bloomed. We became a cooperatively learning family, and her friends were now from a set of children with similarly close family relationships. Her memory of the values of the schoolyard peer group diminished rapidly.

Four months into homeschooling, right around Christmas-

time, Vivian started calling me “Daddy” again. She never announced the change. It took me a long time to realize a significant change had occurred. “Daddy” has returned.

Dennis Pratt homeschools in Westwood, MA. In a previous life, he designed businesses in emerging high tech areas, which turns out to have required the type of full-time learning that he is trying to teach to his daughter. His psychology of learning degree helps him motivate his daughter, his graduate work in computer science helps him explain esoteric science and math, and his business degree helps him teach his daughter how she can create wealth by following her passions.

Yo Jo! . . .

Practical Language Arts Suggestions for a Newbie

By Joanne Casiello

A reader wrote that her kinesthetic learning style son was really resistant to studying Language Arts. She didn’t want to frustrate him as homeschooling was a new adventure for them, but felt the need to work on this area where his abilities were way behind his other skills.

All four of my adult sons write. Right-brained, left-brained, visual, auditory, kinesthetic learners — they all write. Most recently my third son was amazed at the As he was receiving on hastily written college papers, which he felt could have used a rewrite, in a class where students did receive Fs on the same assignment. The following suggestions are some things that worked for my sons.

Personal Journals

Each son wrote for a minimum of fifteen minutes a day in a personal journal on anything that came into their heads. We never checked spelling, punctuation, or grammar, and indeed I never read the books unless invited to do so. The first goal was to get them writing spontaneously and consistently. Initially entries were often about how much they hated to write and had nothing to say, went on to a sort of grocery list of activities for the day, evolved into descriptions, grew into emotional essays, and morphed into poetry that became lyrics to songs they had written. They now enjoy rereading their old journals with me to see how they have grown.

Conversational Journals

Each son wrote a paragraph a day on his choice of topic, or started a story. After he went to bed, I read the paragraph and responded with one of my own, or continued the story. A favorite starting exercise would be the unluckily/luckily story. One person starts an adventure story and at a crucial moment ends their section leaving the hero hanging. The next storyteller starts their paragraph with, “But luckily,” or “But unluckily” and gets the hero out of the predicament or into more trouble. In my paragraph I would use words that were misspelled in the son’s paragraph, spelled correctly. I would correct grammar or punctuation errors by using a similar construction correctly. That way the visual kids saw the errors corrected gently.

Correction Journals

I would write a paragraph from one of their textbooks into their journal with spelling, punctuation, capitalization, or grammar errors. They would rewrite the paragraph correcting the errors, then check their work by reading the paragraph in their textbook and highlighting the correct parts of the paragraph. This meant they had read the material from the textbook that they needed to learn three times, had used muscle memory in rewriting the information, and had a good visual of the correct information correctly written and highlighted in their visual memory.

Computer Story Journals

Each son kept a file with his original stories on our computer to be worked on in his free time. I didn’t read the stories unless invited to do so. The computer automatically points out errors in grammar and spelling so his work was corrected painlessly with an immediate visual key. Of course, homonyms present difficulties, but the idea was to keep the kids writing.

Homeschool, Trade Journals, and Other Publications

We started a Family News Publication that came out every Friday and was mailed to family and friends. Each member of the family contributed. A homeschooled teen group published a Monthly News for the members of the group. Our sons wrote articles for biking magazines and soccer news groups.

Finished articles for publication had to be a true finished piece with everything correctly done. Rough drafts were edited in several ways. Friends edited them online. The editors for the month suggested corrections. I read articles aloud to the authors so they could hear their errors. We sat together and looked at articles on computer and made corrections together (the most painful method). One highly successful method was for me to read the article on computer. When the kids were younger and tender to criticism I highlighted everything that was correct leaving the parts that needed work un-highlighted. Frustrated writers could then see that most of their piece was great, with some rewrite necessary. As they got older and recognized that most work (certainly including mine) needs to be rewritten, I could highlight the errors or weak parts and they could correct them.

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

Around AHEM . . .

AHEM Field Trips

Info regarding all AHEM trips:

If you sign up for a field trip or event, please do your best to attend. Remember:

- When you sign up, you are reserving a spot that then cannot be given to someone else.
- It is disrespectful of our host and reflects poorly on all homeschoolers when we reserve space, and a large part of our group doesn’t attend the event.

- If you sign up and do not show up, AHEM reserves the right to no longer treat your reservation request on a first come, first served basis for future AHEM events, only assigning you a spot should there be room after the deadline has been met.

Field trip participants will be added to the Friends of AHEM list unless they specifically opt out.

Museum of Fine Arts: Secrets of Tomb 10A <http://www.mfa.org/tomb/>

Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts is planning a self-guided tour of the Secrets of Tomb 10A at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston on **Tuesday, January 12th, 2010**. Meet at 11:00 AM in the lobby on the Fenway side.

Unlock the secrets of Tomb 10A and experience the afterlife as imagined by ancient Egyptians. Journey through the largest Middle Kingdom burial assemblage ever discovered to see painted coffins, models of daily life, and a mummified head. These prized possessions of the MFA's remarkable Egyptian collection are together for the first time in 4,000 years.

Cost: Admission for adults is \$18; \$6 for children ages 7 - 17; children 6 and under are free. Admission tickets will allow access to all of the open galleries after touring the Tomb 10A exhibit.

This self-guided tour of Tomb 10A includes complimentary audio guides for paying children 7 - 17. If adults or children ages 6 and under wish to have audio guides, or if children wish to bring the guides outside of the Tomb 10A exhibit, they will need to be paid for. Cost \$6 adult/\$4 child, to be paid for at the audio guide rental desk at the museum.

If you want to go: Mail a check or money order for total admission cost (\$18 adult/\$6 7 - 17) made out to *Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts* to AHEM, PO Box 1307, Arlington, MA 02474. Please include:

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

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

Checks must be postmarked by December 29th. No refunds after December 29th. Email FieldTrips@AHEM.info for more information or call 781-641-0566.

Directions:

The museum is located at 465 Huntington Ave. in Boston, MA. Information and directions at <http://www.mfa.org/visit/index.asp?key=4>.

American Textile Museum

<http://www.athm.org/index.htm>

Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts is planning a visit to the American Textile Museum and programs for grades 3-12 on **Friday, February 5th, 2010**. The museum is

located at 491 Dutton Street, Lowell, MA. (Meet at 10:15 AM in the main lobby.)

The new and improved museum reopened last June after an extensive renovation. The museum's ongoing exhibits include "Textile Revolution: An Exploration through Space and Time," where visitors are invited to spin, weave, recycle, and design their way through textile history. Simulate parachuting from a real single-engine plane, throw the shuttle on an authentic handloom, and design your own clothing line on a computer. See how textiles are changing your world, from protective clothing for firefighters and soldiers to revolutionary "shark skin" suits for our gold-medal Olympic swimmers — and so much more. You'll never look at the fascinating world of textiles the same way again.

Choose ONE of the following programs as part of your visit. Your visit will include a 1 hr. 15 min. classroom activity followed by a 1 hr. 15 min. tour of the "Textile Revolution" exhibit. Fee is \$6 per student.

One adult/teacher per family may attend the program for free. Additional adults attending the program pay \$6. All adults who intend to attend the program must register. Admission to museum is included with program fee.

For Grades 3-10: Junk to Jackets, 10:30 AM – 1:00 PM, (MEET AT 10:15 AM in Lobby)

Learn how recycling is used in the textile industry to make cloth, and consider its ecological impacts. As a colorful and educational keepsake, students will fill "ecological containers" with layers of materials showing the steps of the scientific process invented to convert plastic soda bottles into knitted fleece fabric. Students will do experiments revealing material characteristics and illustrating advances from nanotechnology research used to make modern fabrics even better!

For Grades 6-12: Technical Tools, 10:30 AM – 1:00 PM, (MEET AT 10:15 AM in Lobby)

In a hands-on lab setting, work in teams to problem-solve how to overcome the technical difficulties experienced by the early US cotton industry, and experience the challenge of inventing that transformed the US during the early Industrial Revolution. Figure out Eli Whitney's inventors' success secrets as you engineer your own solutions. A world events timeline provides an international perspective.

Lunch: There is a café that will be open for those who want to purchase lunch. Classroom space will be available for participants who choose to bring lunch.

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 number of children and adults,
- ages of children,
- which program for each person
- 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 January 8th.**

No refunds after January 8th. Email FieldTrips@AHEM.info for more information or call 781-648-5579.

Directions: The museum is located at 491 Dutton St. in Lowell, Massachusetts and is easily accessible via Route I-495 North or South to exit 35C (the Lowell Connector). Follow the Connector to exit 5B Thorndike Street. Go through four traffic signals and look for the Museum immediately on the left. Turn left into the Museum parking lot. Free parking is available in the Museum's lot. The Museum is accessible by commuter rail (Lowell Line) from Boston's North Station. Contact the MBTA at 1 800-392-6100, or www.mbta.com for schedules and fares.

AHEM presents A Morning Matinee at the Theater: MacBeth

Monday, April 5, 2010 at 10:00 AM

"Blood has been shed ere now, i' the olden time...and since, too, murders have been perform'd." -Macbeth

War and the struggle for power in a modern age.

Shakespeare's Scottish tragedy of one man's rise to power, leaving a trail of blood and bodies in his wake, has spanned the centuries. In New Rep On Tour's contemporary version, the play's backdrop is the recent Bosnian War, where the warriors and weapons resemble an action movie instead of the middle ages. Macbeth's bloodthirsty tale of power, revenge, and ultimate downfall, when placed in this modern context, heightens our awareness of what it is to live in a warlike state.

New Repertory Theatre is an award-winning company in the Boston area. This production is a 90-minute adaptation designed for school audiences. More information at www.newrep.org.

No food or drink is allowed in the theater – snacks may be consumed in the building but not in the theater itself. Panera Bread is next door to the theater, and will be open serving soup, sandwiches, bagels, pastries, and drinks all day.

Cost: \$13.00 per seat for adults or children. Homeschoolers ages six and up are welcome – no children under six allowed in the theater.

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

- your name
- the 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 March 12.** No refunds after March 12. Email FieldTrips@ahem.info for more information or call 781-648-5579.

Directions

New Repertory Theatre is located at the Arsenal Center for

the Arts, 321 Arsenal St., Watertown. For directions see <http://www.newrep.org/directions.php>.

Parking

After turning into the Arsenal on the Charles Complex, take a right after the stop sign and an immediate left into the six story FREE parking garage.

Surrounded by Microbes: Staying Healthy in a World of Bacteria and Viruses

Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts has reserved space for ages 14 - 18 at this Museum of Science High School Science Lecture on **Friday, April 30, 2010**. The lecture lasts 45 minutes and you can enjoy the museum exhibit halls until closing. (MEET AT 9:15 AM in Lobby; we will enter the lecture as a group.)

Nancy Goodyear Ph.D., MT (ASCP), CLS (NCA), from UMass Lowell's Department of Lab and Nutritional Sciences, discusses her research as a clinical microbiologist. Learn about the molecular characterization of clinically significant pathogens and how antimicrobial resistance affects our everyday lives. Students are also invited to visit the Suit/Cabot Lab to participate in hands-on activities related to the chemistry of foods. For more details, see http://www.mos.org/educators/field_trip_resources/field_trip_activities/high_school_science_series.

Cost is \$5/person (teen and adult) to reserve your spot; the full price will be refunded to you at the museum, making your visit FREE. If you don't show up, your money will be donated to support the non-profit mission of AHEM.

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 number of teens and adults,
- name of responsible adult*
- ages of teens,
- your address, and
- email or phone number.

*Teens need an adult to be responsible for them – either a parent, or another adult with whom the parent has made prior arrangements.

Space is limited and spots are allotted in the order checks are received; **checks must be postmarked by April 2nd**. No refunds after April 2nd except those made to attendees at the museum on April 30th. Those with email will receive confirmation about a week before the visit.

You can purchase lunch at the cafés, or bring your own to be eaten outside.

Email FieldTrips@AHEM.info for more information or call 781-641-0566.

Directions: See http://www.mos.org/visitor_info/maps_and_directions.

Parking: With a chaperone sticker, parking is \$3 per car payable at the box office in the main lobby before you exit.

AHEM presents A Morning Matinee at the Theater: "Hot Mikado"

Thursday, May 20, 2010 at 10:00 AM

In the mythical village Titi-Pu, where flirting is illegal, a young rocker on the run from his over-eager fiancée is searching for the woman who stole his heart. Unfortunately, she has already been promised to her much older guardian. A series of seemingly foolproof plans are hatched, only to be foiled by the merciless Mikado. This snappy adaptation of a classic musical by Gilbert and Sullivan has tunes and styles ranging from jazz and swing to gospel and blues. In this zany world full of colorful characters, flash, and fun, there is no telling what a wink will get you and who will ultimately steal your heart.

"Hot Mikado is all out fun with Gilbert and Sullivan. This clever adaptation adds swing dance and sizzling jazz to a beautiful tale about duty and love." - Kate Warner, Artistic Director

New Repertory Theatre is an award-winning company in the Boston area. This production is a full-length theatrical presentation, and part of the company's mainstage season. It runs approximately 2 hours and 30 minutes. AHEM leaves it to parents to decide if a production is suitable for their child. More information at <http://www.newrep.org/>.

No food or drink is allowed in the theater - snacks may be consumed in the building but not in the theater itself. Panera Bread is next door to the theater, and will be open serving soup, salads, sandwiches, bagels, pastries, and drinks all day.

Cost: \$13.00 per seat for adults or children. Homeschoolers ages six and up are welcome - no children under six allowed in the theater.

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:

- your name
- the 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 26.** No refunds after April 26. Email FieldTrips@AHEM.info for more information or call 781-648-5579.

Directions: New Repertory Theatre is located at the Arsenal Center for the Arts, 321 Arsenal St., Watertown. For directions see <http://www.newrep.org/directions.php>.

Parking: After turning into the Arsenal on the Charles Complex, take a right after the stop sign and an immediate left into the six story FREE parking garage.

Become a Friend of AHEM

Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts, Inc. (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. 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.

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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If you don't wish to receive this newsletter, please take a moment to let us know and we will stop sending it. Either email info@ahem.info, call 781-641-0566, or drop us a line at AHEM, PO Box 1307, Arlington, MA 02474. Thanks!
