



Current State Scene . . .

Not-Back-to-School Time

If you are a support group leader or otherwise homeschool outreach person, this time of year you're experiencing a flood of inquiries regarding getting started homeschooling. In the interest of helping both local support networks and potential new homeschoolers, we at Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts have a couple of ideas:

Not-Back-to-School Event listing

A treat that we homeschoolers experience during the "Back-to-School" season is the feeling of heading off to a beach or park on a glorious September day when the rest of the world has settled back into closeting themselves indoors at school again. If your group hosts a "Not-Back-to-School" event at which you'd welcome newcomers, we invite you to send details about it to list on our special page of such events <http://www.ahem.info/Not-Back-to-SchoolEvents.htm>.

It is fun and inspirational to see the myriad of events that take place across Massachusetts at this time of year, from Cape Cod homeschoolers heading to the beach to Western Mass. homeschoolers atop of mountains, (or go ahead — break the stereotype!) and everything in between. We hope you will send us your listing.



AHEM brochures

We appreciate that sometimes the role of support person is thrust upon otherwise busy homeschoolers, and we hope that by partnering with you we can help to make that role, whether warmly embraced or not, a bit easier. If you would find it helpful, AHEM would be happy to provide you with copies of our brochure that introduces AHEM and has information on how to get started homeschooling in Massachusetts (pdf version here: <http://www.ahem.info/Trifold03.pdf>).

While we are not in the business of recruiting people to homeschooling, it is in all of our best interests that those who choose this path are well informed about Massachusetts homeschool guidelines. These brochures would be appropriate to hand out at informal gatherings like picnic or park days, at support meetings, information nights, or mailed to indi-

viduals who contact you looking for more information. The pamphlet format allows for a few to be stashed in a glove compartment or backpack so that they're on hand when you need them.

If you'd like some, send us your name, address, and number of pamphlets desired and we'll get them right out to you.

Legislative Update

The 186th legislative session is now underway. We are in the first year of a two year legislative cycle. AHEM is now tracking several bills that have been referred to the Joint Commission 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.
- **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.
- **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."
- **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."
- **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

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MCAS exam. The cost of administering the exam to such students will be borne by the students.

AHEM had 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 increase in the compulsory attendance statute. The commission was due to release its report in May of 2009. We are currently in the process of securing a copy of that report.

Discounted MBTA Fares for Homeschooled Students

Junior high and high school students ride the T for 50% off the price of standard T fares and are eligible for a \$20/month Student T-Pass good for unlimited travel on Bus, Subway, Express Bus, and Commuter Rail Zones 1A, 1 and 2 until 8 PM on school days. Discounted rides or passes require a Student CharlieCard or CharlieTicket.¹

The MBTA issues student fare media to homeschoolers for use on the MBTA system. In August, they will be issuing magnetic plastic CharlieCards for the 2007-2008 Academic School Year.

Please complete the order request form [<http://www.ahem.info/StudentCharlieCardSchoolLetterOrderForm.pdf>] with your best estimates for the session.

Simply self-certify that you are a homeschooler – no further ID is required.

Up to two children 11 and under ride for free when accompanied by a paying adult. No ID required.

Homeschool parents who wish to make additional requests or seek general information about MBTA student services should contact Will Kingkade in the Automated Fare Collection (AFC) Department at (617) 222-4545.

¹ From http://www.mbta.com/fares_and_passes/reduced_fare_programs/

State House Day Report

State House Day was big success. Over 200 Massachusetts homeschoolers gathered at the State House on the morning of Monday, April 27, 2009. We handed out packets highlighting the diversity, academic success, and community involvement of Massachusetts homeschoolers to all 200 legislators, as well as to Governor Patrick. People enjoyed tours of our beautiful State House, as well as a talk with Rep. Sean Garballey. Many people, young and old, completed a scavenger hunt that was both fun and educational.

There was a lot besides our gathering taking place at the State House that Day, including the beginning of debate on whether or not to raise the state's sales tax. The building was abuzz with activity and it was a great day to see democracy in action, and to be a part of it.

Luckily, even with so much going on, and so many participants, everything seemed to go very smoothly and we saw a lot of smiling faces, including those in the photo with Rep. Garballey that you can see here: <http://www.ahem.info/StateHouseDayPhoto.htm>

Thanks to all for coming and contributing to making it such a success. We hope to do it again in a couple of years when a new batch of legislators takes office.

Meet Massachusetts Homeschoolers . . .

Centering by Mentoring

By Milva McDonald

On Wednesdays, my kids and I – all eight of them – get together for fun and learning. They're not all my biological children, but no matter. Once a week, when we all get together to write and play, they're mine.

I've been facilitating creative writing groups for homeschoolers for a long time – since my now 24-year-old daughter was about 12. Along the way, I've encouraged other homeschooling parents to give it a try. It's easy, it's fun, and it's a great way to build relationships with your kids and their peers.

Why is that a good idea? Well, there's the obvious – that getting to know your kids' friends is an important way to stay connected to their lives. There's another reason, and it has to do with enriching your own life.

One common misperception of homeschooling is that it's isolating – that we're sitting around the dining room table all day doing schoolwork with our kids instead of experiencing the great wide world. For the vast majority of homeschoolers, it's just the opposite. Especially in a culturally rich city like Boston, the opportunities are infinite.

We can join scads of support groups, visit museums, and sign up for workshops, field trips, and classes until our schedules are so full we're pulling our hair out looking for down time. Pretty soon, the role of homeschooling parent becomes personal secretary and chauffeur. When my oldest kids were heavily involved with sports teams, music lessons, and other activities, I remember joking with other parents that we were in the "taxi driver" stage of homeschooling.

In these crazy times, while we provide opportunity after opportunity for our kids, burnout can loom over us like a dark cloud. Sure, there are ways to unwind – yoga classes, nights out with friends or your partner, a relaxing massage. Those kinds of things are important to our well-being, of course. But here's an idea some homeschooling parents may not have considered: sharing what you love with kids other than your own is nurturing in a whole different kind of way.

When I get together every week with "my kids," we joke, laugh, and learn. I develop relationships with them beyond just being Claire and Abby's mom. I watch their ideas and writing skills blossom. I see their growth and their struggles as they cope with issues in the world, their family situations, and more.

That's exciting and rewarding, but working with kids goes even deeper than that. It allows me to connect to my own childhood, remembering my own youth and what it was like to be 10 or 12 or 14. It helps me hang onto that younger part of myself, which helps me relate to my own kids better. It gives my life a sense of flow and fullness that I wouldn't have otherwise.

I've seen how this kind of connection with young people excites grown-ups. I think it's actually a kind of longing we all have. When my son was a teenager, his varied interests turned him into a magnet for adults who adored the fact that someone out there wanted to soak up their knowledge. One visit to the local bird club, and he had adult birding companions inviting him on all their weekend excursions. Then he was given a digital camera by his birding mentor. Then he was invited to join the local adult digital photography club. It went on.

These adults were generously offering their help, support, and teaching to my son, but I know it wasn't a completely selfless act. I know because I've felt it, too – the satisfaction that comes from connecting with the younger generation. Schoolteachers may also enjoy this, but as homeschooling parents, we're luckier. We can do it without having to grade or judge kids and teens. We can do it as one human being to another, with the implicit truth of the relationship an unspoken given – that one person is an adult whose experience and knowledge the other person respects and seeks to acquire.

It's been that way throughout history. It's human nature, and it's important. So figure out what you love, and/or what you have to offer, find some young people with whom you can

share it, and get in on the fun.

Milva McDonald has been a homeschooling mom for 18 years. Her children are 24, 22, 12, and 10. During that time, she's been active in her local support group, led book groups, and facilitated writing groups for area homeschoolers. She is also a founding member of AHM.

Yo Jo! . . .

Lessons to be Learned

By Joanne Casiello

Someone asked me if there was a lesson to be learned that I could share about my son's serious car accident. Drinking and driving? Teenage capering with loud music and friends? Excessive speed accompanied by young male bravado? No, none of these scenarios apply. The only lesson we can come up with is that even though you are a good, responsible kid, who doesn't drink, run a bible study on your college campus, study and work hard, and drive carefully after a quiet afternoon with your family, on a dark night really bad things can happen to you that you will have to overcome.

It's a tremendous lesson to learn, the ability to overcome the challenges we are presented with in life. To handle pain and suffering with cheerfulness, to struggle to relearn tasks that were simple once, to recognize that you are not the person you were before, and to discover the person you are today are all lessons that, if successfully learned, lead to a resilient human who will live a full life. I have never met a human who has not faced obstacles to overcome in life. In our house we say, "Everyone has something, so deal with yours and get on with it."

Of all the learning we have done as homeschoolers the ability to overcome obstacles, to be knocked down and not only get up again, but to laugh, sing, dance, and be strong again, has been the most used and most useful. The flexibility of homeschooling is eminently suitable to switching tracks and powering forward when life throws a glitch in the plans your way. To set goals, accept realities, and set new goals is a goal we have achieved.

When my first son was a boy he wanted to be an astronaut. He had the brains, the drive, the athletic ability, the courage. Unfortunately he also had my 20-200 vision and grew too tall. So he broadened his passion for space to science and math and eventually settled happily into software engineering. My second son worked passionately for years volunteering, studying, interning, and then almost days away from completion he saw the dream crumble through no fault of his own. He had to get up, turn around, and use the skills he had developed over those years on a different career path.

My own personality, at these set-backs, would prompt me to cover my head in my comfy quilt, preferably with a good book, chocolate, and a glass of wine and not come out again. As a parent and as a homeschooling parent responsible for facilitating the education of my offspring, I had to recognize that often the way I thought things would work, didn't, in large and small situations.

Learning to read, which came as naturally as breathing to my first three sons, would require effort from my fourth son and special intervention from me. My all or nothing method of attacking a subject was highly successful with two of my sons, but my right-brained boys needed a consistent structure of small, daily, time blocks of study to learn.

So, life teaches us over and over that goals and plans may need to be adjusted; homeschooling allows us the flexibility to do so.

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 . . .

Fruitlands Museum www.fruitlands.org

Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts is planning a visit to the Fruitlands Museum and programs for ages 8-18 on **Friday, October 16th, 2009**. The museum is located at 102 Prospect Hill Rd. in Harvard, MA. (Meet at 9:45 AM in the Reception Center.)

Discover our heritage at three renowned galleries of Native American, Shaker and American Art, and an original site of the Transcendentalist Movement. Stroll nature trails and enjoy Fruitlands Museum's spectacular views of the breathtaking central Massachusetts landscape.

The 3.5-hour program includes museum tours, activities, admission, and a lunch break. BYO lunch. Choose from one of the following:

For Ages 8-13: Changes in the Land, 10:00 AM – 1:30 PM, (MEET AT 9:45 AM in the Reception Center)

Understanding history through archaeology and exploration. This program will focus on comparing and contrasting the ways in which the Native people and the colonists used and changed the landscape. Program includes a mock archaeological "dig" during which students will discover artifacts from Native people and colonists.

For Ages 13-18: Shakers & Transcendentalists - Comparing and Contrasting Two Utopian Communities, 10:00 AM – 1:30 PM, (MEET AT 9:45 AM in the Reception Center)

This program will compare and contrast the ways of life of the Shakers and the Transcendentalists. Students will learn about the primary sources that teach us about these two communities and then participate in an activity in which they will use what they have learned.

Cost: Program admission for adults and children is \$6. Admission for parent/guardians and children not participating in the program is also \$6. Please pay fee for each person visiting the museum that day.

Lunch: BYO lunch for lunch break.

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 or no program
- 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 September 18th**. No refunds after September 18th. For more information or call 781-648-5579 or email FieldTrips@AHem.info.

IMPORTANT: 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.

Directions: The museum is located at 102 Prospect Hill Rd. in Harvard, MA. Information and directions at <http://www.fruitlands.org/visitor-information>.

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

National Chemistry Week Celebration 2009

Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts has reserved space for ages 14 - 18 at this Museum of Science High School Science Lecture. The lecture lasts 45 minutes and you can enjoy the museum exhibit halls until closing. (MEET AT 10:45 AM in Lobby; we will enter the lecture as a group.)

Thursday, October 22, 2009

(checks must be postmarked by September 24)

National Chemistry Week Celebration 2009

The theme for this year is "elements." Scientists from the field share research and a Museum educator demonstrates principles of chemistry. Following the presentation, students can take part in hands-on activities throughout the Museum and in the Suit/Cabot Lab. 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. Those with email will receive confirmation about a week before the visit.

Space is limited and spots are allotted in the order checks are received; **checks must be postmarked by September 25th**, but mailing by that date does not guarantee a spot. No refunds after September 25th except those made to attendees at the museum on October 22nd.

IMPORTANT: If you sign up for this field trip, please do your best to attend. Remember:

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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

Parking is \$3 per car payable to the museum at the box office in the main lobby before you exit.

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

Animal Farm by George Orwell

adapted by Nelson Bond, directed by Stefanie Sertich

Monday, November 2 at 10:00 AM

Justice, honor, and a political experiment gone awry.

"Comrades, the answer to all of our problems lies in a single word... Man!" –Major, the boar

The animals of Manor Farm revolt against their human masters to take control of the farm and their own fate in order to create a society where "the community" is supreme and an individual's existence is forsaken to serve the greater good. George Orwell's biting satire about the rise of Communism shows the Great Russian Experiment as an idealist's dream converted by realists into a nightmare.

New Repertory Theatre is an award-winning company in the Boston area. For more info see: <http://www.newrep.org/>.

This production is a 60 – 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 September 14th**. No refunds after September 14th. Email FieldTrips@AHEM.info for more information or call 781-648-5579.

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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.

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

New England Economic Adventure

<http://www.economicadventure.org/>

Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts is planning a program for ages 6 and up at New England Economic Adventure on Tuesday, November 10th, 2009, at 10:00 AM at the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, 600 Atlantic Avenue, Boston, MA. (MEET AT 9:45 AM in Lobby)

Tuesday, November 10, 2009
(checks must be postmarked by October 20)

A class journey through the Adventure takes about two hours. Students first see how standards of living in New England have improved over the past 200 hundred years; displays of household possessions and images and information on health and education tell the story. Students then play a series of investment games that illustrate how the gains in our standard of living are the result of technology, investment, and personal initiative.

Teachers can use many of the materials at <http://www.economicadventure.org/> to help set the stage for a successful Adventure visit. Your class may wish to go over some of the materials on a preliminary basis before the visit and again, more thoroughly and with greater understanding, afterwards. A useful starting point is Spotlight on Standard of Living, the Winter 2003 issue of *The Ledger*, the Bank's economic education newsletter. Spotlight on Standard of Living is an excellent introduction to the multiple facets of this concept. To make the most of the investment game experience, we suggest that teachers review with their class the concept of the time value of money and the glossary of investment-game terms provided at <http://www.economicadventure.org/>.

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 AHM.

If you want to go: Mail a check made out to Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts to AHM, 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 and spots are allotted in the order checks are received; **checks must be postmarked by October 20th**, but mailing by that date does not guarantee a spot. No refunds after October 20th except those made to attendees at the museum on November 10th.

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

Directions:

<http://www.economicadventure.org/directions.cfm>

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

Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol

Wednesday, December 23 at 10:00 AM

Presented by New Repertory Theatre, Arsenal Center for the Arts, 321 Arsenal St., Watertown, MA.

New Repertory Theatre, in collaboration with ArsenalArts and Watertown Children's Theatre, revives its popular adaptation of Dickens' classic holiday story, which has all the trimmings of a lavish Victorian Christmas. The production offers a feast for the senses, ranging from a pre-show caroling concert to luxurious period costumes, from singing and dancing – the performers accompany themselves on over a dozen different instruments – to ghosts that fly through the air and evaporate into the London fog. *Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol*, now in its fifth year, is the perfect holiday celebration.

"All wonderful... but what really lingers here is the wholeness of Lombardo's vision: He treats the familiar story with respect but makes it unmistakably his own"

- *The Boston Globe*

New Repertory Theatre is an award-winning company in the Boston area. For more info see: <http://www.newrep.org/>. This presentation is a professional, full-length theatrical production. Expect it to last approximately 2 hours, including intermission.

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 AHM, 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 September 14th**. No refunds after September 14th. Email FieldTrips@AHM.info for more information or call 781-648-5579.

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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.

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

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.

IMPORTANT: 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.

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.

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

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.

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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 to the museum at the box office in the main lobby before you exit.

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

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!

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. We really appreciate your help in keeping our lists current.
