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2016 Central Vermont Homeschool Conference

May 21, 2016

9:00 Arrival, registration, and swap set-up

9:45 Welcome

10:00 “Wildhood: The Connection Between Children, Learning, and the Land,” keynote talk by Ben Hewitt

11:00 Workshops I

12:00 Lunch

12:45 Curriculum and materials swap

1:15 Workshops II

2:15 Discussion groups

3:00 Curriculum and materials swap

3:30 Swap clean-up

Keynote Talk: “Wildhood: The Connection Between Children, Learning, and the Land” – **Ben Hewitt** is the author of *Home Grown: Adventures in Parenting Off the Beaten Path*, *Unschooling*, and *Reconnecting with the Natural World* and several other books. He and his family live, farm, and unschool in the Northeast Kingdom.

Curriculum and Materials Swap – Feel free to browse throughout the day, as well as during the specified shopping times. If you want to buy something but the seller is not at the table, take a post-it note and write your name on it and stick it on the item. Then you can return to the table when the seller is there and settle up.

Lunch – Lunch is on your own. You can bring food and eat it at Pacem or outside on the Green, or you can head downtown and buy something (we can give you recommendations). Feel free to take a longer lunch break and skip shopping at the

swap, or to eat quickly and get more browsing time. Here are some optional discussion questions for those who want to continue exchanging ideas at lunchtime:

- What has been most challenging for you this year about homeschooling?
- What has been the best part of it for you?
- What's your current favorite resource?
- How do you take care of yourself?
- What has helped your kids thrive?
- What do you want to do differently in the future?
- What have you learned this year (about yourself, your kids, homeschooling)?

Workshops I

“What to Expect Your First Year” with Rebecca Yahm – You've decided to homeschool...now what? This workshop will address common questions and concerns for new homeschoolers, including the basics of filling out the state paperwork, homeschooling styles and curriculum options, community resources and opportunities, the socialization question, the deschooling period, and more. Rebecca Yahm has been working as a homeschool consultant since starting Open Path Homeschooling Resources in 2003 and has supported many new homeschooling families to get started and weather the ups and downs of the first year.

“Lab Science in Your Kitchen (and Backyard)” with Lexi Shear – You don't need a fancy lab to conduct good science experiments. Join us for some ideas about using every day materials and equipment to help children discover scientific principals at all ages. Our focus will be middle and high school level "lab science". Lexi Shear is Pacem's director and high school science teacher, and she has been teaching high school science on a shoestring budget for many years.

“It's Not All About College! Exploring the Path, Believing in the Journey” with Amy Brooks Thornton – A workshop on cultivating and believing in the rich experience of the high school years of homeschooling and why public high school may not be the best choice for motivated homeschoolers. Including both practical advice on college transcripts and portfolios and the story of the path of three very different homeschoolers who are now attending or just graduated from the musical theater conservatory Collaborative Arts Project 21, Barnard College-Columbia University, and Rhode Island School of Design. Amy Brooks Thornton is Pacem's founder and homeschooled her three children (now young adults) into the high school years; she is currently studying lifestyle medicine at Harvard University.

Workshops II

“Portfolios Aren't Terrifying” with Elizabeth Curran – Portfolios don't need to be terrifying. In this workshop you will see the ins and outs of portfolio creation and learn the answers to the most common questions asked when putting a portfolio together. Elizabeth Curran is a homeschooling mother of 10, she has personally sent in nearly 60 portfolios for her family and helps between 20-25 other families each year create their portfolios; come glean from her experience.

“Creating a Homeschool Community and Learning Cooperative” with Rebecca Dragon – Rebecca Dragon of Meetinghouse Farm in Pownal, VT will share with participants her journey in creating what is now a flourishing and full homeschool cooperative on her family farm. She will also discuss her philosophical and practical assumptions that guide life at Meetinghouse Farm CSE (Community Supported Education). As a group, Rebecca will guide exploration into personal goals and ideal visions of cooperatives and communities that participants would like to facilitate and

create. Most importantly, we will learn how to use "what we have and who we are" to open our homes and lives to shared cultural and educational experiences with other homeschooling families.

Discussion groups

- Homeschooling Multiple Children of Different Ages
- Supporting Child-led Learning (Unschooling, Project-Based Homeschooling, Learning through Play, Emergent Curriculum, etc.)
- Homeschooling Young Children/Early Childhood
- Favorite Resources and Curricula