

Susan Macias (00:04.054)

Hello, welcome to our THSC Convention Insiders webinar. We are so excited for people to get here. We're going to let people in and have an opportunity for people to join us and then we'll get started. We are recording this webinar, so if you want to go back and watch anything or share it with a friend if they want to know about convention, please feel free to do that. We'll get started first with our

sponsor, our title sponsor at convention is Letourneau University. They're a fabulous university up in East Texas. They're great supporters of homeschooling. They are a comprehensive institution of Christian higher education where educators engage learners to nurture Christian virtue, to develop competency and ingenuity in their professional fields and to integrate faith and work and serve the local and global community.

You know, we hear more and more about universities and the attacks on faith that our kids endure in different places. But this is a place that works to really promote the Christian faith. And so we're grateful for their support at THSC. OK, so we're ready to kick off our webinar. We want to give you the insider's guide to the convention. We're going to talk about everything that we have going on here. Please drop your name in the chat and where you are. And if you want to say something about coming to convention or

to thinking about it still, whatever, so we can know who's planning on already being there and who is still thinking about it. That would be fun. We are THSC, Texas Homeschool Coalition. And in 2026, we are celebrating our 40th anniversary. We've been around for 40 years supporting homeschooling, making sure that it is legal for everyone who wants to homeschool in the state of Texas. Our mission is to encourage, equip, and advocate homeschool families in their home education journey.

which is why we have these incredible value packed webinars. have one a month through the school year. This is our last one for this year, but we love to bring homeschoolers in Texas some encouragement. Some you can think about it as you know, teachers have to go to continuing education. This is your opportunity to get a little continuing education as a homeschool mom and to learn more about this incredible job that you're taking on. So.

Susan Macias (02:25.584)

On this entire call, our communication, I'm sorry, our communications, I'm sorry, customer relations team. They are CRT, but we get a little nervous about using that acronym, but the customer relations team is standing by to answer your questions. You can drop questions in the chat. They will answer them. This is our coaching team. If you are a member of THSC, you have free access to these incredible women who were, and some still are homeschooling moms.

They want to help homeschoolers get over those hurdles that appear in the road and help them keep going. And so that is what they are here for. You can ask questions in the chat and know that they will answer them. A copy of this webinar will be emailed to you, as I said, and after this presentation, we will have a Q &A. And so that is also available. Okay.

So we have a few things going on this spring. Spring is events time. We have eight graduations around the state this year, because we have two in San Antonio. If you're looking at that list going, Susan, that's seven. We have two in San Antonio. So we have eight graduations. Fort Worth occurs night after tomorrow, or tomorrow night actually. Yeah, it's Thursday. Tomorrow night, we have our first graduation.

And next week we have our second graduation in New Braunfels. But if you know a family that is graduating a homeschool student and they're not really sure about wanting to take on something like a graduation ceremony, we have a great opportunity for them. That QR code will lead you to that. If you are a THSC member, there are discounts for that as well. The other thing that is going on this weekend, our very first one is our leader summit on Saturday. So we're having two leader summit.

This is something we started last year. It is for any homeschool leaders. It is a co-op leader or sports or you're the one everybody comes and has questions to. And so you seem to be the one always planning the play dates and all that. You are a homeschool leader as well. We want to encourage the people who are encouraging and helping everybody else. And so we're having these great summits. They're very low priced because we've got great sponsors. We would love for you to join us if you want to drop everything and come day after tomorrow.

Susan Macias (04:43.916)

to Fort Worth, we would love to have you and see you there. If not, the day before convention starts on the 27th of May, we have the one in Houston. It is at the Woodlands. It's right where we are for convention. And we're super excited about Leaders Summit. It was so fabulous last year and we're excited to have it again this year. Okay, so, I mean, what's a webinar without a giveaway? So, Leaders Summit tickets, you, if you say,

I'm that person, I could go to Leader Summit. We're gonna give away Leader Summit tickets to Houston. So if you are interested in going to the Leader Summit in Houston, type leader in the chat. If that is somebody that you are or you know a person that in Houston or that is going and could go a day early, type leader in the chat, on the call at the end, you have to be on to win. And we are gonna give away a Leader Summit ticket. But this webinar is about convention.

So how could we not give away convention tickets, right? So we have giveaway instructions for our convention tickets as well. As you know, we have two kinds of tickets. We have an individual ticket and a family ticket. If you want to type convention in the chat, we know you are interested in winning a convention ticket for one. And so we'll have once again, we'll have the giveaway. It will be at the very end of this webinar. If you are interested in winning a family pass type

family convention and that way we know that's what you you want to enter into that. Do you want to enter into both? Why? Yes you can. This is the United States of America and you may enter into both but you can only win once. So if you win one type you can't win the other but if

you want to enter both we're good. All right we are on here to talk about the state convention in the Woodlands on May 28th through the 30th. We have been hosted by the Woodlands Marriott

for years and we will be there again. Okay, if you wanna go to the next slide, we have a picture of the hotel. It's a great location. It's tight. We use every single square inch we can in that place, but we love it because it's got this lovely outside area. Families can go walk along the river. And so they've been great hosts and we are there for the foreseeable future. May 28th through 30th is what our dates are. And as you can see this diagram,

Susan Macias (07:09.236)

you can go to that next diagram. this is parking, because parking is always a question wherever you go, right? We have free parking available for you. So do you see the parking lot that is circled in red? That parking lot is free. And from that parking lot, there is a bridge that walks right over straight into the hotel on the second floor, which is our workshop level. And so you will be able to have free parking in that lot. There is also parking at the hotel.

That's the one circled in green. It's circled in green because it takes money. It takes money to park in that parking lot. So that's the paid parking lot. And the red circle is the free parking lot. so that is right there on 6 Pines Drive. And you will go in and you park up on I think on the fourth level is where you want to be to get across on that bridge. OK, so.

This is your team and we are your hosts today. This is the events team for Texas Home School Coalition. I am the event director. My name is Susan. We have Anna Grace, Amanda and Ashlyn are all on this call. They're going to introduce themselves as well and talk about their specialty area. My first convention was in 1992 and I had my fourth child that was in a stroller. I was pushing her around. Now, last year at our convention, my daughter was there.

with her third child in a stroller at convention, because she's homeschooling as well. And it was a sweet, sweet thing. So we are big fans of convention around here, and we want to help you plan to have a successful convention. And this team here is the reason that our convention always gets such high praise. We're going to start with Amanda Hopper. She is our amazing exhibit hall director. She is also our senior.

manager for the events team. So she doesn't just do exhibit hall except at convention. She just does exhibit hall. So Amanda, take it away.

Amanda Hopper (09:11.521)

Hey everybody, I am super excited to talk to you about the exhibit hall. If you have been with us the last couple of years, you probably know that we are busting at the seams. So we did. We expanded outside of the exhibit hall this year. You can go and go to the next slide, please. We do have new hours this year. have 10 a.m. We're starting at 10 a.m. I believe we started at noon last year. So we're bumping it back a little bit. Our first day Thursday is 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

and then Friday 10 a.m. to 6 30 p.m. and then we are going to close a little early on Saturday for the pep rally. It's just you know lots of people are kind of done by 4 p.m. so we're gonna fit it all in from 10 to 4 on Saturday. Next slide please. This is a map a virtual map of the exhibit hall and the foyer which I'll talk about in a minute and the upstairs author row.

we are going to drop the live link for this map in the chat. And you can see that there are virtual booths. Those are exhibitors that are not joining us in person this year, but you can actually go ahead and click through this virtual marketplace. A lot of the exhibitors have set up virtual booths and you can actually see videos and click through curriculum or services that they provide. Some of them have discounts on those virtual booths.

but it will help you to kind of click through this ahead of time, start picking out. I think you can even heart different booths that you like so you can start making a plan. I would suggest having a plan when you come into the exhibit hall for the first time. Make sure that you kind of ahead of time and look through, where you want to go. It's also fun to just wander for those of you who like to do that and be surprised. But we have really focused on curriculum this year.

We do have quite a few providers, but we really tried very hard to focus on physical curriculum so that people could come in and just thumb through things and really get their hands on it and see if they like it. Next slide, please. So I did talk about some of the new things that we have. We do have some booths in the foyer this year. So you can see that there are the big entrance doors in front of the exhibit hall. We have some foyer booths. A lot of these are nonprofits and online.

Amanda Hopper (11:34.045)

curriculum providers. So we're excited. There is a music studio that is going to take up, I don't know if you remember where Trail Life was last year if you were there, but we have a music studio that is going to be there instead and they're going to allow people to kind of play around with different instruments. So they'll keep it quiet, it won't be too loud, but it should be really fun. It's a big space so it should be really enjoyable. Next slide. Alright so upstairs, this is brand new.

we are going to have an author row. These are smaller booths, they're not as big as the ones inside the exhibit hall, but we have lots of authors that want to come and they have a, you know, typically a few books, not, you know, a massive series. So we do have a lot of people that hang out in the hallways upstairs in between workshops. So we wanted to give them a place to browse. It's kind of, it's exciting. It was very popular. It sold out very fast. You can see the different vendors that are going to be

in those booths. We're very excited about it this year. Next slide.

Amanda Hopper (12:39.893)

Some of the new exhibitors that we have this year are kind of fun. We have a beast to blanket. She actually, I believe, has a spinning wheel that will be there in the exhibit hall. We have Channy's visual handwriting and math. They have all kinds of things that are great tools to use

for curriculum. We have a t-shirt booth that has been missing for the last couple of years. So we do have a homeschool t-shirt booth this time. I already talked about the music studio. Homestead education.

That's kind of a, you know, it's been going on in rural areas for a long time, but it is expanding into suburbia. So this particular booth will, they have curriculum on how to use homesteading tools in your curriculum. It's amazing. We have learned to sew kids. Picks Bricks is sort of like Legos, but different. And they usually have big tables set up and kids can go there and put together things. It's a lot of fun.

We have Simply, they will be on the main middle aisle. They do their music also. So they do all kinds of different trainings on different instruments. So that should be really fun. And then we also have Thinkwell joining us this year. Next slide. So if you need more information, if you want to click through the booths, the marketplace, you can use that QR code and it will take you to the floor plan and have fun and let us know what you're excited about.

Amanda Hopper (14:10.121)

I'm going to pass it off to our events project manager, Anna Grace, and she has some fun new things to talk to you about.

Anna Grace Ball (14:17.518)

Hello everyone. THSC is super excited to announce a brand new family zone for this year's convention. In years past, we've had the Kids Convention and we have absolutely loved that and we've had a great team that's always been able to run that. But we did realize that that was serving a very limited number of families and we want to serve all the families. And so we decided to do something a little different this year. And instead of the Kids Convention, we are going to have this family zone. Now, you might be wondering.

What in the world is a family zone? Okay, that's what we're here to tell you. So the family zone is going to be a contained area of space with games, interactive activities, and stage presentations, along with just free space for your kids to kind of get their wiggles out or just sit and chill. You know, can have your blanket, you can bring your blanket, set it on the floor, and just let the kid have their space and their time to just come have that self-regulating time.

So it's going to be open Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 1030 to 430 except on Saturday of course because we will close early for the pep rally because we all we all love to take advantage of that last final hurrah in that time of convention to kind of get that last bit of excitement all out there. We are going to have some wonderful sponsors inside the family zone with us and so Master Builder is going to be

be providing hands-on STEM projects designed to highlight the grand design or creator while giving kids the technical STEM challenge. And so that's gonna be really fun. We've been talking with Dr. Bell and he has all kinds of fun ideas on ways for kids to just be able to have that interactive and creative challenge. Unique athletes will have tumbling mats and they're gonna

run kids through different fun body movements and let the kids kind of explore what they can do and just have a safe, know, the mats will be down.

So the kids will be fine. If they fall over, they're little. They don't have very far to fall. So they're going to have their fun space to kind of just be able to get all their wiggles out and just try new things and be able to have people teach them, teach them things that maybe, maybe you're not wanting to teach your kids how to do a cartwheel. That's fine. They can practice on the tumbling mats. And then Global Sprouts is going to be there as well. They believe in combining world stories with hands-on crafts.

Anna Grace Ball (16:36.93)

that compliment the stories the kids will hear about from around the world. So that's gonna be really fun. It's basically what they're gonna do is they're gonna read a story and then they're going to read a story about a specific country and then have a craft associated with that country and with that story and just kind of pull all of the different learning styles where you've got the hearing and you've got the visual of the story and you've got the hands-on of doing the craft and combining that. And so we love to...

THSC loves it, you as homeschool moms definitely love it. We love to bring things together where it is fun and educational because why be one when you can have both? And so we are definitely going to have lots of things like that in that family zone. And then, I mean, we're gonna have these wonderful sponsors in there with us, but also we're just gonna have games and we're gonna have Giant Connect 4 and things that your kids can.

well, softballs for kids to throw and play and hang out with and just ways to have them just have a space where they can have fun. They can play with their siblings, they can play with other kids in there. And so that's gonna be a super fun time. On Thursday night, we are actually going to get to do a special event. So during the Made for Motherhood event, which Susan will tell you about in a little while, are going to have Brave Books is going to host a movie night.

So it's gonna be at 445. It's going to be during the exact same time as the Made for Motherhood event. So moms can go and get their encouragement and get all of their love and all of their calm, peacefulness without the kiddos. And dad or grandma or grandpa or whoever else can take the kids into the family zone where Brave Books is going to be playing a video with some of their content. And so we're just gonna have the kids be able to enjoy that.

And then moms can have their stress-free time knowing that their kids are fully occupied and doing something fun as well So one kind of last important thing about the family zone that we really want to make sure that we note is the family zone is for Families, okay, which means that this is not a drop-off area like kids convention wise This is a place where parents can be with their kids. And so if you are coming

Anna Grace Ball (18:54.44)

between your exhibit hall shopping or in between some of your sessions that you're wanting to listen to during the lunch hour. It's going to be open during the lunch hour and so you can come in during that and we just want to make sure that it is, it's all going to be there and it's always going to be available but we want to make sure that it is kind of enjoyed by the entire family. So kids must be accompanied and supervised by an adult the entire time that they're in the space.

And so we just ask that you enjoy the space together. You can come in and maybe you can show the kids, maybe you can do a cartwheel and you can show them your skills and impress every single child in there. And so we are so looking forward to having you at convention and being able to serve you with this space. And we can't wait to have you now.

it for the next thing. It is my pleasure to introduce to you Ashlyn McFarland. She is our person in charge of events marketing and communication, and she gets the added bonus today of getting to talk to you about the next special aspect of convention. It's all yours, Ashlyn.

Ashlynn McFarland (20:03.484)

Thank you, Anna Grace. Yeah, I am so pumped to talk to y'all about something brand new just like the family zone We are doing something brand new with our teen program. So we are partnering with drum roll Patriot Academy to put on the youth leadership summit at convention. It's gonna be all during during all the whole convention. So Thursday Friday Saturday you will So it's for kids for 13 to 18

And there's just to be such a cool, fun, interesting, informative, engaging time that your teenager is going to participate on a team and they're going to go through challenges. They're going to get practical volunteer opportunities to serve convention in very like meaningful, important ways. So they have a role and they get to practice leadership skills in those volunteer opportunities. And then they get to tie those back.

to different sessions that they will be in talking about leadership training, communication, critical thinking. It's just gonna be such a super, super fun way to get hands on real world training in how to be a leader in this culture and to lead others and to do it well. So we are super pumped that Patriot Academy is partnering with us.

and we're super super excited so we're gonna have that. So the hours are gonna be from 8 30. You're gonna check in at 8 30 and then you're gonna be able to pick up your teenager around 4 30 and then on Saturday we want to break early because we're gonna have something super special happening around the afternoon time. So it'll end a little bit earlier but yeah that's gonna be super fun. So we only have 20 spots left.

So we opened registration just about a month ago and we only have 20 left. So if this is something that you're interested in, scan that QR code, sign up, you'll be able to grab your ticket there. They're only \$50 per teenager. And then also, before I forget, tagging back onto what Amanda was talking about in the exhibit hall, we are going for the first time, we're offering a

exclusive Teen Punch card. And so any teenager can use that, not just kids in leadership summit.

Ashlynn McFarland (22:27.708)

But you can go around and visit different exhibitors who have asked to be put on this punch card so that you go around and visit them and mark them off for I think a special prize, but I think we're keeping that. Yeah, we're gonna keep that on the down low. That'll be a surprise that you'll find out later. But yeah, that'll be fun. Get time in the exhibit hall. Go explore all the things. So yeah, grab if you're interested in that. If you have a kiddo that would be interested in joining our youth leadership summit.

scan that QR code and it's gonna be a blast. I'm so looking forward to it. And with that, I'm going to pass it off back to Susan, who you've already heard from, but she's our events director and she's gonna talk you through all the fun and exciting surprises and speakers that we have going for convention.

Susan Macias (23:11.788)

Yeah. Can't wait. So Ashlyn, we aren't telling yes, we're not telling what the youth punch card is, but at the prize, we're just going to say that when they find out, they're going to want to do the punch card. So probably it's at least, it's not like a \$10 Chick-fil-A gift card. It's not that. yeah. Yes. But in this great events team, Amanda and I are both retired homeschool moms. Ashlyn and Anna Grace were both homeschool graduates.

Ashlynn McFarland (23:29.492)

But this is me.

Susan Macias (23:41.503)

And so we really have the heart of homeschoolers as we are here. I love going to convention as a homeschool mom. so for me, it's super fun to to cultivate a great lineup of speakers for you so you can get that refreshing that we talked about. So next slide, we're going to talk about the biggest thing. If you were at convention last year, you know that there were no escalators. And this year, there are escalators. And if you don't know what we're talking about,

You don't know the joy that we are experiencing, but they have replaced and we have brand new escalators in the Marriott Waterway. so up and down, just write them for fun because we're so grateful they're there. OK, so our speakers, our keynote speakers, we have Estee Smith, who wrote the Green Ember series, a fabulous set of books that he will be talking about imagination and how to

how to engage your kid's imagination, what kind of books should you have them reading. He also has a youth writing curriculum and he's gonna have all of his material there at the convention in the exhibit hall as well. Christy Faith is a great speaker and influencer in the homeschooling world. Currently, she is a current homeschool mom and so you'll love her enthusiasm. She will get you excited about homeschooling.

Rick Green has been teaching for years on the importance of our foundation of the United States of America. And as you know, not only is it the 40th anniversary of THSC this year, it is the 250th with a very long word that I'm not going to try to say, but the 250th anniversary of the United States of America. And so we're going to have a special night. We'll talk about that in a minute, but we are going to focus on that.

as well as other things here at convention. We want to celebrate having the freedom to homeschool. But not only Keynote, we also have featured speakers. So we have the TRIM Healthy Mamas. Serene and Pearl have not traveled and spoken in years and they are coming to our convention. We are super excited to have them. They're always so engaging. Amber Okoloa-Bube is a fabulous speaker.

Susan Macias (26:00.791)

has joined us before. She has great talks, not only she some special education talks, but she also has some mom, how to manage your own energy, how to organize that sort of thing. Mark Hancock is with Trail Life. He is going to be talking particularly to dads. The next one is Dr. Amy Moore. She works with LearningRx and she has incredible insight in teaching on learning styles, on how to help a

a struggling learner, a lot of valuable input. Andrew Poudewa is an amazing speaker, has been around the homeschool community for so long. He is going to be talking about writing, that's his specialty, but he also has a topic. One of the things is going to be the things, the mistakes he made as a homeschool dad. He wants to help those new homeschool dads on how they can be a better homeschool dad this time around from the lessons that he's learned.

And then we have Angela Dodd, she was with us on our last webinar. She has a lot of history teaching, she has science teaching, she has all kinds of things, great topics, identity of a mom, all kinds of things like that. So we're super excited to have her as well. Okay, next slide. We also, we're gonna have special tracks and we're gonna have ways that you can find these lists. It'll probably be a digital link that we'll have.

But on the first day on Thursday in our main keynote room, room four and five right there in the middle, we are gonna have a homeschooling 101. So if you know somebody that is just beginning to homeschool, let them know every session that day after the keynote, Estee Smith will start her day, but every session after that will be homeschool 101, how to get started, how to organize, how do you help your kids, all of those kinds of things. So we're super excited about that. We have quite a few

special learning, special need track speakers. And we are going to let you know which ones those are so you can easily find them if that's something you want. We have some mom focused sessions that will let you know this is great for if you just need that mom encouragement. have quite a few. Made sure there is some every morning and afternoon specifically for dad. And then we had, we ended up having this great kind of group of speakers.

Susan Macias (28:22.634)

that the Lord provided that we're all in that creative mindset, how to help your kids. So not only do we have SD Smith, who talks a lot about kids and writing, we have Karen LeLaglu, who has done writing for, but always with art. And so she talks about how to bring art in. We have Duane Walker, who also does art and how to bring that into your schooling. So if you have that creative kid, we've got some special things this year that will help you.

help them develop the gifts that God has given them wherever those gifts lie. Okay, we also have some special events because you know, it's, we want to make sure that we have something for everybody. So let's go over these. Next slide. Made for Motherhood. We did our first one of this last year and it was a big hit so we're doing it again. So Friday at 4.15,

I said Friday, I meant Thursday. Thursday at 4.15, while dad and the kids are enjoying the Brave Books thing in the family zone or the exhibit hall, which will still be open downstairs, we will have this special event. We have Christie Faith giving a 20 minute message. I'm very much in that idea of encouragement. We will have this group of amazing ladies, the Trim Healthy Mama, Pearl and Serene, and then Amber.

as well. we kind of have generational, we have people that are still homeschooling or have finished homeschooling, going to have a panel of them up there and ask some questions at the end. And of course we will have a game and after a game you have prizes. So we also have prizes. So this ought to be a great deal of fun. Then we will quickly leave that room because we have another event right after that. And that is S.D. Smith at seven o'clock. He is going to have a green ember live. If you are a fan of these books,

or you know friends that are fans of these books, this is gonna be awesome. They do some live reading, they do some music that's associated, we get to interview him, and so it's gonna be this very interactive, fun event. And if you love Rabbits with Swords like I do, you're gonna love Green Ember Live. Okay, and then our last one, as we talked about, we want to celebrate the 250th. So on Friday evening at 6.30, Rick Green will be in that keynote room.

Susan Macias (30:44.81)

and we are gonna have a red, white and blue hurrah. We're gonna have flags to wave. His family's probably gonna be singing. don't even, it's gonna be a great celebration because we want to be grateful and we want to learn how to protect the freedom that we have so that we can keep going with that. So those are our special events.

So you have now heard about all these things. We have had our speakers, our location, we've had the exhibit hall and those things, our family zone, our teen program, and we are ready to answer questions. And so some have already been submitted. You can still submit a question into the question box. We will get to as many as we can. We have 20 minutes, so we ought to be able to answer all kinds of questions.

So let's get started. If the ladies in the control room could put a question up, that would be great.

Are young children welcome to come to events or is it best to get childcare? I'm going to answer this as a homeschool mom and then I will answer it as a convention director. As a homeschool mom, it was very helpful for me to get childcare and to go and to be able to sit and listen and think as I was getting the information from the workshop or in the exhibit hall to not be influenced by the mom, mom, mom, I want this, want this.

cause maybe the best thing wasn't the most colorful or the thing that they would necessarily have chosen. Had they known every option, because it's a homeschool mom, that's what you do. So for me, it was important to come as, and not bring my kids with me. I was with my kids every day, all day long, every day of the year, I could come to this and get that for myself. And that was part of what I did. Having said that we are a family friendly environment. we do have the family zone.

Susan Macias (32:46.974)

and families bring their children. What we ask in the workshop room is that you realize if you have your kids in there, there are people there listening and learning. So if your kids are there, if they have any kind of electronic thing, they need to have headphones on. They need to know that they have to sit and be quiet while they're in there. Our exhibit hall, mean, our workshop rooms can get very full.

We ask that particularly if you have small children that you either bring them onto your lap or let them sit on the floor at your feet if people are standing around on the edges. We make it very accessible to families by offering the family ticket, which is great, but other people may have spent, know, gotten their own individual ticket and then they don't even have a seat to sit on. We want to make sure that the adults as much as possible get to sit in seats.

So we do just ask that you realize if you're bringing your kids there are courtesies that you need to implement in that workshop room. And then we do as much as we can to accommodate y'all and help you have a successful time. Sometimes people, parents will, you go listen to that workshop while I take the kids out for a run. And then you switch off if you have both parents there. There are lots of strollers at convention. So obviously lots of families come and we do all that we can to accommodate that.

But I also encourage you, if you have the opportunity to come and listen and get refreshed, that's a good thing as well. Okay. Do we have any other input from Amanda, Anna Grace or Ashlyn? want you all to feel free to answer as well. Any thing to add? Okay, we can do another question then. If grandparents come with us to basically babysit in the family zone, well, we need to purchase extra conference tickets for the grandparents. So I'm assuming you have a family ticket.

that is you, husband and grandkids and your kids, I would say you need to buy another family ticket for helping out, but please reach out to us at events at thsc.org. We can get you a

discount for that, a coupon or something if we will talk through. So we like, you we're not, it's too complicated to give ticket combos for every possible.

Susan Macias (35:02.804)

situation right but we we understand and we like to try to help people so contact us at events at thsc.org explain the situation and we will work with you they will need to buy tickets but we'll work with you

Okay, we got another question. All right, Anne Grace, this is for you at the Family Zone. Are you able to hear the lectures?

Anna Grace Ball (35:27.828)

Okay, okay. So if you're talking about in the family zone being able to hear the lectures that are going on outside No, that is this is definitely we're not gonna have the sound from waterway four and five from the keynote speakers We're not gonna have that pumping into the room It is going to be strictly in that room noise one thing about it being in the montgomery If you know where that is that is all the way at the end of the hall on the second floor So one great thing about that is there are no air walls

in between that and in between those lecture in between those workshop rooms and so it is a little bit separate so that hopefully the kids playing and stuff like that won't be disturbing the workshops and the workshops won't be disturbing that family zone so there will you can't unfortunately you can't do both at the same time

Susan Macias (36:14.462)

Yeah, and that would be great, but the reality is if we piped it in there, you wouldn't be able to hear it anyway because people would be screeching and running and doing, and that would create all kinds. So, sorry, I know. It would be great. It'd be great if we could give you headphones and you could walk around listening to whatever you want. We're not there yet. So, okay. Next question. Will there be any special education seminar assisting with verbal autistic students? So, if you...

That's a great question. I don't know that I have a specific answer. We have quite a few workshops that are, I don't know that they're that specific. But if you go on to our convention page, so thsc.org, go to events, it takes a minute, go to events and then events go to convention. And then at the very top of that convention page in kind of little letters, you will see speakers.

or workshops, I don't remember which one it says, but you push that and it will show you all of the workshops. And you'll be able to look through and see what there are. We have quite a few specialty in that area. And what you might find is that you get more help in the exhibit hall talking to somebody that could give you some directions with that. Amanda, do you have anything to add about what they can find in the exhibit hall?

Amanda Hopper (37:37.003)

We have several special needs exhibitors, service providers, curriculum providers inside the exhibit hall, LearningRx, Nectar group. There's several in there. So definitely if you have very specific questions, make sure that you visit the exhibit hall.

Susan Macias (37:53.12)

Yeah, that's great.

Ashlynn McFarland (37:55.71)

I'll also pop in real quick on, if you go to our website that Susan just mentioned, you can see our full workshop schedule and you can also filter that schedule through specific tags. So we have a special needs tag that you will be able to pop on and then you'll be able to see the list of all the people speaking and maybe find someone that aligns with your specific question. And we also have fantastic homeschool coaches that will be available at our THSC membership booth.

Susan Macias (38:06.582)

Mm-hmm.

Ashlynn McFarland (38:25.544)

that would love to talk to you, offer encouragement, any insight that you need. The same ladies who are working the chat will be there at convention. So there are a wealth of knowledge and resources if you need it.

Amanda Hopper (38:38.793)

Yeah, also for the exhibit hall live map, you can also look by tags on that as well to see vendors.

Susan Macias (38:46.028)

Great. Fabulous. Okay, do we have another question? Should we be worried about programs being at capacity for enrollment? I've been told it's best to sign up now than later. So for programs, really the only program you have to sign up for is the team. And yes, you want to sign up now because we are two thirds of the way to being sold out and we haven't even, we have not done any advertising.

or anything that we have talked about this yet. And I don't know that we're going to need to. So that's where we're at. So that program does need to get signed up for. Anything else like our special night programs, Family Zone, those don't require a special sign up.

So yeah, you can just come to those. I will say that yeah, we do have a, like I said, we're in that spot of overflowing our space, but there isn't another good space to go to. Like the next step is like a convention hall, which is downtown and yucky and very unhomie and too big. So we're either too small or too big. And so,

getting to your workshop room earlier rather than later is probably a good idea. We do max out the hotel. Yeah. OK, we have another question. Are there food vendors on site? Is packing

meals and snacks allowed? So I'm going to give you two answers. My first answer is the homeschool.

event director answer and that you are not allowed to bring in food and snacks. You're supposed to eat from them. they last year, I don't know if they'll do it again this year. Last year, they had a nice lunch special that they offered that might've been because of the escalators, but in their restaurant. Now I'm gonna be a homeschool mom. Everybody brings their own snacks and drinks and kind of sits around and eats a little bit. We don't.

Susan Macias (40:58.57)

advertise it. You're not supposed to set out your picnic in the middle of the deal. We have to buy all of the food that we provide from the Marriott to do anything. And that's why we don't provide food for you because you wouldn't want to pay what we have to pay for food at the Marriott. A lot of people will leave their stuff in their car, maybe go out, get it, eat it. Some people sit in the walkway to eat. We do not police food.

If somebody from the Marriott wants to come and say, I'm sorry, you can't eat that. We can't tell them not to say that because that's their rule for their location. That is as politically correct. Plus as much of an open door as I can give. Does anybody want to make more sense of what I said than I said?

Ashlynn McFarland (41:44.788)

Yes, there also are several restaurants within walking distance and grocery stores that you can pop in. They're like less than five minutes away from the hotel.

Susan Macias (41:55.841)

Yeah, yeah, there is a H-E-B in all kinds of fast food.

Ashlynn McFarland (42:00.754)

Yeah, super fun areas to be able to walk, eat outside if the weather's nice. lots of ways to get around the pesky rule.

Susan Macias (42:06.22)

Mm-hmm.

Susan Macias (42:10.592)

Yeah. And you will, and you know, I just, I don't want you to hear from me. You cannot bring food in here and then you're to be walking around going, everybody has food in here and they do, but we don't police it, but we don't also say, bring in your lunch, you know, because, because then that would not be being good guests of the Marriott either. So, we, try to, to, to, go that very narrow line of saying, we understand the realities and you're there to buy books, not an expensive sandwich.

So that's what we want to, that's what we do. That's my best answer. If anybody has a better answer, I'd love for you to get a better answer. Okay. Have another question. I didn't purchase the exhibit hall. Should I for my family? How much are tickets again? Okay. So you just buy a ticket to convention and then that gets you into exhibit hall. If you don't want to go to any workshops, if you don't want to go to the keynote,

or the special events at night, you can buy a ticket for the exhibit hall, a shopping pass. That only gets you into exhibit hall. But if you buy the convention ticket, then that gets you into everything for convention. If that does not answer your question, please ask a clarifying question in the question comment. So everybody in the family, if you have a family pass,

Everybody will get a lanyard and you have to wear it, but then you can go everywhere in convention. Everybody can. I hope that answers the question. Does anybody have clarification more than that?

Susan Macias (43:55.084)

Do have another question?

Some companies are having sales now, but I was going to wait until I see the exhibit hall. Do exhibitors usually have discounts during convention? Great question. You want to answer that Amanda?

Amanda Hopper (44:07.583)

Sure. Almost every single exhibitor has convention specials. We are going to put in the digital program, we're going to put a map with different stars with different exhibitors that have extra specials. We are collecting those right now. And some of them are actually offering even above their convention specials, specials for THSC members. So even higher discounts.

So we will provide that information for you, but even in general if you don't look for that information, can pretty much every single exhibitor has convention specials.

Susan Macias (44:46.796)

Yeah, it's usually a great place to pick up stuff. There are now more and more vendors, they don't always bring their books for you to take home with them, but even if they're going to ship them to you, they will offer that special. The shipping has gotten so high for them that they can't always bring enough stock for everybody to take their stuff home, but a lot of times they do. Okay, more questions?

Will strollers be allowed in the class we brought our stroller in in the first session or two they are, were allowed. at some point during the day we're told strollers are no longer allowed. Okay. Yeah, I know. so it's a problem. One, have you seen the strollers these days? They're like, they're like a station wagon, you know? And so, the problem becomes when the fire marshal is not a fan of every exit row being packed with strollers. So.

Amanda and our moms, you know, we get it. The baby's sleeping. The last thing you want to do is take them out of the stroller or the toddlers contained in the stroller. And the last thing you want to do is take them out of the stroller. The smaller the stroller, the more ability for them to go into a room. The big wagons are very difficult to bring in and the more crowded the room. So our first session is our keynote session. It's the only session going on. Everybody's going in and we always have this mass amount of strollers that are trying to get in.

And we just can't, we can't let every stroller in. There is, there's no room for anybody. If the fire marshal comes to us, if the marriott comes to us and says, you cannot have all these strollers in all the walkways, we have to enforce that. So we try to manage it. We have stroller parking, so you can leave your stroller and go in. If it's a very crowded room, then there's no room for strollers. And if it's not a crowded room, the stroller's fine.

And that's kind of where we end up trying to not be unilateral because we don't want to be unilateral and just say no strollers in any room because we get the pain of that. One of the things I'll tell you, if you're going in the keynote, you really want the big stroller. We are going to have the overflow into room one and two, which if you're staring at our keynote room, there are the rooms over on the left that will be more likely to get your stroller in that room, particularly if you go in early.

Susan Macias (47:14.954)

And so you can see what is happening in the keynote room, but you can have your stroller in there. Strollers come in when there gets to be too many, we start saying no more strollers. And if we get told by the hotel, you cannot have all these strollers blocking all the rows. Then we have to start enforcing. That's my summation.

Amanda Hopper (47:37.769)

I would definitely give you a convention tip also that you probably should put a luggage tag or something on your stroller for the mass stroller parking in case there's another one or another five just like yours.

Susan Macias (47:52.151)

That's a great idea. Yeah, that's a great idea. You know, and you'll want your stroller to get people in and out and to walk around exhibit hall. You want people to be contained and you know, that's, that's just a challenge. And if you recognize, okay, these are why it's hard. And then you can help us with that as well. Great questions. These are great questions.

Anna Grace Ball (48:13.068)

Yeah. Another thing I would say about that is we have a really amazing group of volunteers that come every year that help us without them. We could not do what we do. We are a team of there are four of us and we have two amazing interns in our event team and convention is massive. So we pull in all of THSC and still have lots of volunteers that help us run these conventions. And so just kind of know that some of them are some of them are adults, but we also have

the teens help out and stuff like that. And so if you've got young little 13 year old teenagers telling you to, you can't bring your shoulder in, we just ask that you be kind with them. They are, they're young, they're nervous. And so they're gonna be around to help and we love them and they are so amazing. But we just ask that y'all, that everyone kind of take it easy and give grace to some of our young volunteers.

Susan Macias (49:07.754)

Yeah. Yes, Particularly to our little sweet young volunteers. Okay, we got one more question and then we will do our giveaways.

If we had to miss to go to the family zone and miss a seminar we wanted to go to, we'd be able to get the audio sent to us after the convention. Yes. So if you have a situation where your child is crying in the middle of a webinar, you get up and leave and we have a place for you to ask for an audio of that particular workshop so you can get the audio to that workshop. We also always have a screaming deal on the entire audio selection.

And our hope also is that this year we're going to be able, you can just buy the ones you want particularly. But we try to make a great, great deal at convention on the whole audio series of the workshop so that even the ones you couldn't go to, whether it was because of a crying child or because you can't be in two places at the same time, you can still hear everything. So yeah, that's a great question. But if you have a crying child, don't feel like I have to stay in here to hear this.

Go ahead and take the crying child out and then go and ask. I want to say at the membership booth, we may have an upstairs area that has a place that you can request that audio, but for sure at the membership booth. Okay, so we're going to move on. I'm sorry we didn't get to answer every single question. Fabulous questions. Thank you for staying on. Now we're going to give away some tickets. Okay, but first we're going to talk about membership because THSC membership is

a fabulous, fabulous opportunity. And we have a great discount for you because you've been on this webinar and stayed on the whole time. So you have webinar 30. It gives you the 119 premium membership for a full year. It gets you all the legal help you need. If you had somebody come and knock at your door or somebody tell you that they want their, they want your school district calls you and tells you that they want the list of your books. And we're having this happen.

Susan Macias (51:16.364)

You can call up our people and they will direct you to do the right thing to get you the help you need to say, no, we actually don't have to do that. Also, you heard like things like there's a percentage off for the curriculum and some of the curriculums in the exhibit hall. But did you know there's this massive discount on convention tickets? So you can get this huge discount on convention tickets if you're a member and on anything else.

Next year we have capital days or if you have a graduate or if you have any those are all discounted for members. So if you are interested, this is the time and we will also have a link to this in the email that you get tomorrow. So membership is a great opportunity. We strive to make it as valuable as possible, but also just the peace of mind as a homeschool parent for me that was the most important thing. If you are a lifetime member and that is if you pay for the whole thing for the lifetime price,

then you get in free to the convention. But if you have a premium membership, you get a big discount. All right, now let's give away tickets. Leader Summit, wait, where did Leader Summit go? Go back, Leader Summit giveaway time. And the winner is Ashlyn. Do we have a Leader Summer winner?

Ashlynn McFarland (52:39.732)

I don't think anyone can make it for tomorrow, so we didn't have any takers for tomorrow. We didn't have any takers for Houston either. Everybody's here for convention. Everybody.

Susan Macias (52:44.18)  
or Houston?

Susan Macias (52:49.364)

I'm so sorry to you. Everybody's here for a convention. Well, let's give away convention tickets then. Okay. So do we have our individual ticket?

Ashlynn McFarland (53:00.712)

We sure do. Congratulations, Christine Michelson, if you're on.

Susan Macias (53:04.884)

Yay, Christine. Okay, so put your email address in the comments right now, Christine, and we will contact you on how to redeem that ticket. And if anybody already had a ticket and they win a ticket, they can give it to somebody or they can, you know, sell their ticket to somebody. I don't know how that works. Okay. So Ashlyn, we've got a family ticket.

Ashlynn McFarland (53:28.302)

And our family ticket winner is Paige Summers. Congratulations.

Susan Macias (53:31.36)

Paige Summers. Good job. Family ticket. Okay. So please Paige, put your email address into the comments. We want to get that to you and that way we'll get you a code. What happens is both of you, you will get a code and you will need to then go on. You'll redeem that code and your ticket will be free. Thank you so much. We had a big crowd. We're so grateful for you being here. We cannot wait. Come introduce yourself at convention. Say hi.

We would love to meet you. We are here for you. Thank you for being here.

Ashlynn McFarland (54:05.31)  
Thanks guys!