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The Island

I know where I am without ever opening my eyes. The sparrows and orioles and countless brown little birds are chirping their evening chorus. The smell of new mown grass, blended with duck marsh, with overtones of dairy farm, floats across the bay fields to meet me quietly at the end of a long day. Sounds and smells as much a part of the weave of my being as the colors splashed gaily across the flower beds I helped my mother to plant this week as we visited for her sixtieth birthday: flox, lupine, big purple balled alium, all standing proudly beneath the sumac in the center of the back slope. Her first clematis opened, frail and timid looking, as if peering out from behind the stick lattice my mothers hands braided together last summer to see if it really was warm enough to bloom. The poppies have fairly exploded in a riot of laughing red, spilling over the log that contains their bed on the south side of the house, beneath the arched eyebrow of the kindly lilac which oversees their growth: the dark purple lilac, not the one edged with white. That one grows on the other side of the house by the raised bed gardens which are already pregnant with summer produce, beginning to bulge with the promise of garlic and salads and red raspberries. Dad's faithful owls preside over the orderly rectangles with stoic vigilance, keeping the raiding birds at bay, birds not smart enough to know plastic painted owls from the real thing. I've trimmed the dead spots out of her lavender and put in dahlias and petunias and impatiens to fill in where her spring perennials will die back. Work that she did last year and hopes to do next year if her sore, swollen, post operative hands recover. She stood over me directing my

hands, younger, stronger versions of her own as we faded together our reflection found in cold dark earth and eager young plants.

My own eager young plants have rooted down deep and spent the week running the paths, bows meeting over their heads in verdant green tunnels, batting baseballs in a ferocious wind with their Gramps pitching and playing pioneers for long hours in the camper, which their imaginations have transformed into a covered wagon crossing the great plains of Canada. They've lashed their pirate flag to a long bamboo and disappeared into the canals in their white and blue rowboat with a most un-pirate-ish name: "Swan." They row for hours, finding uninhabited islands, exploring otter runs, imagining grand battles with white sailed ships laden with gold which they sink in the marsh with imaginary cannons. Ezra, at four, is the only one who cannot row. They have appointed him the "flag-cifer" like Pysen, the four year old flag officer in their most recent favorite book, The Peep Larsons Go Sailing. They imagine themselves in the fjords of Sweden alone at sea for a month, plugging the hole in their boat with putty and screwing on a cutting board over the patch. The Swan doesn't leak. Avid cyclists all, they've ridden the ten mile loop into the village to buy candy twice, bickering over who gets to ride on the back of Uncle Josh's bike and who "has" to ride on the back of Mom's. The Great Pan, Adventurer of Adventurers has swooped in from his Neverland of British Columbia to race his niece and nephews top speed down the driveway, roast marshmallows and fish. From the shine in their eyes, it is obvious that they are all bordering on the sin of idolatry, and loving it. He does nothing to dissuade them as he regales them with stories of rowing the coast of Alaska from Anchorage to Vancouver, BC last summer and tales of the orca and sea lions and seals that swim around his island home on the other side of the continent. Ezra says he's going home with Uncle Josh. Uncle Josh says he'll take him. I say, "No way, I've put in too much work on that kid up front... he's almost worth having. Get your own." Even I must admit that he cuts a fabulous figure: muscle from head to toe, slightly leathery skin from living outside all of last year, sleeping in a hammock as he built his little float house, that calculated casualness that comes from living a quiet life at sea for the five years he spent circumnavigating, sparkly eyes and a little boy smile that cause the boys to run screaming and giggling from the room when he cocks his head and raises one eyebrow in their direction. What's not to love and worship?

I spent this last, lilac scented, afternoon being rowed about the marsh by my four children. Hannah was the captain of the Swan on this particular voyage. Elisha was the head oarsman and Gabe, of course, was Smee. It was Ezra's particular charge to "care for the passengers." Which meant me. They row surprisingly well. Ezra pointed out the

little woven pouches of bird nests, carefully hung in the cattails and the carefully concealed holes in the bank where the otters have made their nests. We sipped shared sodas in their secret pirate cove and rowed just out to the edge of the bay which was declared, “too cold and windy,” for them to take Mother out upon. Yesterday they rowed Grammy clear across the bay and down the big canal on the other side, over a mile from home. As we approached the dock my tiny, fuzzy headed babies who’ve become master seamen docked with the grace of old salts while Ezra cupped his hand in front of his mouth, speaking into his mock microphone to ask the passenger to, “Please keep your hands and feet inside the boat until it has come to a full stop at the dock and the crew has gotten out.” With great pride they helped their “land-lubber” mother out of their Swan, oblivious to the fact that at eight she and their great Uncle Pan had had a boat of their own: Patita Mia (my little duck) which had been sailed up and down and all over canals and lakes and even oceans without the visible oversight of adults. I praised my capable sailors and left them to square away their ship as I ambled up to the house, past the four buttercups my father had quite intentionally not mowed down in the middle of the path, and further up the orange hawk-weed which had received the same deference.

Barn Dance!

Mark your calendars now for September 29th.

We’re hosting a Barn Dance (without the barn!) complete with old time fiddle band, food and fun. Hat’s off to the Wood Family for donating their nice flat yard to the cause. The Caravan Band will play the event, one member of which is Hannah’s fiddle teacher. Come and learn to square dance and have a GREAT time. Please let us know if you can join us and what you’ll be bringing to the pot luck meal!

Donations will be collected to help cover the cost of the band.

A Timely Gift

by Stephanie Payton

He handed me the gift, all wrapped in gold. His pleasure could be seen in his eyes, as a million twinkling stars. This, I knew, was good.

He spoke, “This is my precious gift to you. It was made just for you. For as long as you live, you will have all that you need of it. I give it to you to enjoy, and to use it to carry out the Father’s purposes for you. The only condition I give is that you must carry it with you always.”

I eagerly accepted the gift. Such a beautiful gift as this—who would not have wanted it for her own!

I took the gift home and opened it. Ah, what a beauty, this gift. I fell on my knees and thanked the Lord for this gift I’d been given. I vowed before the Lord to begin my days by thanking Him for this treasure I had received.

The days passed, however, and I soon forgot to give thanks for my gift. Carrying it became difficult at times. Some days it felt like a taskmaster. Some days I felt like I’d lost it. Instead of the precious gift that it was, it had become a horrible burden. My heart was torn. I wanted more! I wanted less! I wanted to give it back!

The days passed, and I couldn’t keep the glare from my eyes as I looked upon my gift. “Why are you doing this to me? Will you never be satisfied?” The sobs shook my body as the futility of my labors was realized. There was no answer, of course. Its silence sounded loudly in the stillness.

The sound of a ticking clock seeped into my consciousness, and as my eyes were drawn to it, I couldn’t help the movement of my hand. The clock went hurtling toward the gift, an official pronouncement of the depth of my anger.

He approached me in the quiet of an evening. His gaze piercing, I knew he knew how I felt about his gift. His voice was gentle when he spoke.

“You are not using the gift as I intended. It has become a burden. I could take it away, but then you would have to leave all that you love. It is not yet the day for that. Therefore, you must learn to live within the constraints it provides. It will continue to feel like the precious gift it is until you misuse it. Then, and only then, will it become the burden it is now.”

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He left me pondering his words. And I began my days anew.

With a roar greater than the crashing of mighty waves, and yet the subtlety of a rising sun, God made into being this magnificent gift of TIME! It is a treasure--rare and valuable. It is neither to be idolized nor lamented; but rather received, honored, and reveled in. It cannot be started, it cannot be stopped. It is neither lost nor gained. The only power we have in relation to it is how we exist within it.

God has seen fit to give this gift to us. It provides a rhythm, a flow, by which our human selves experience life.

What is your current perspective on time? Does it seem to be rushing by? Or, rather, does it seem to drag on? Do you find yourself out of time, or more often, just in the nick of time? Do you happen to know what time of day it is, or have you lost track of time? Do you have time to spare, or no time at all? If you have no time to spare, does that mean your “time has come?”

Your perspective of time reveals much about your perspective of God. If you see time as a relentless taskmaster, you are very likely to see God as harsh and unbending. If you find yourself constantly unable to meet the demands that time places on you, you probably view God as someone unable to be satisfied.

What would happen if you began to view time as an experience. If you understood time to be a gift, for your benefit, would your view of God not also change? Would you begin to see His love, for you, created child. If you lived within time’s boundaries, moving with its life flow, rather than constantly battling against it—would you better understand the unceasing mercy that He shows us?

It is a gift; it is a day—receive it as from and unto the Lord!

I rose the next morning, and fell to my knees. The gift sat before me, radiating. With understanding had come revelation. My prayer was simple.

“Thank you for this gift, dear Lord. Give me the courage to use it wisely, and the wisdom to know its purposes. This day, this moment--I receive this gift.”

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Recipe: Rustic Apricot Tart

This is one of our favorite summer desserts. It is VERY easy and would make a good addition to any child's recipe box as a beginning dessert to fix for company:

Ingredients:

One store bought pie crust (we like Pillsbury)

Apricot jam

About six large apricot

2 Tbsp. raw sugar (the big brown sandy kind)

Unroll the pie dough on a baking stone (or cookie sheet if you don't have a stone). Microwave the apricot jam until it is soupy and brush it onto the pie crust, clear out to the edges. Be generous. Cut each apricot in half and then slice it into thin slices. Arrange the slices of apricot in concentric circles on the pie crust, leaving about an inch or so of uncovered dough on the outer edge. I find it easiest to lay all of the apricots the same direction and work from the outside in. When all of the apricots are arranged, fold the outside edge of the crust up over the outer row of fruit. Brush the entire tart with another generous layer of jam and sprinkle with the raw sugar. Bake in a 400F oven for about twenty minutes. Watch it closely, you want the crust to be golden and the sugars caramelized, but no burned spots. Serve it warm with a scoop of good vanilla ice cream. Yum!

p.s. We also love this made with plums and grape jam, or apples and Marzetti's carmel dipping sauce instead of jam in the fall. Use your imagination for a simple dessert year round!

The Wilds of Creation

Going Moosin'

by Judy Daley

For several years my husband Brian and I enjoyed vacationing in the Great North Woods of New Hampshire.

There, near the Canadian border, we could get close to Moose and other wild animals in the areas surrounding route 3 that the locals call "Moose Alley".

June was our favorite month to vacation because baby animals of all types had been born already and most often could be seen following their moms.

We spent the days traveling the main roads and logging roads armed only with a camera.

We were driving around a bend in the road where we saw a dog-type animal crossing to the other side. I was not quick enough to get a picture of, what I believe to have been, a wolf but my husband insisted was a coyote. The animal was larger than any coyote I'd had ever seen before and strikingly beautiful. It was mostly silvery grey in color with a very long thin body with a bushy tail.

Just down the road, at a small man-made fire pond, were twin baby moose

chasing each other around the rim. They ran happily and carefree, unaware of our presence.

As we stood near the pond enjoying the show, we began wondering where their "mom" was. Just then momma moose lifted her huge head up out of the middle of the pond startling us! She had been completely submerged nibbling on aquatic plants. The pond did not seem to be deep enough for an adult moose! Not wanting to upset her, we remained perfectly quiet, in spite our knees knocking together from being startled, and so were able to watch and photograph the threesome without disturbing them.

Moose seemed to be everywhere. In the day light hours we saw females with their young mostly, plus some yearling males. Most of them stood at the roadside eating grasses in marshy areas that had been enhanced by tasty road salt. Some moose were a tad bit more wary of people. They would stand behind small trees peaking around the foliage as though they were completely hidden from view. When I stepped out of the

truck at one point to photograph one of them he pulled his head back behind the slim tree trunk. He seemed to be thinking that if he couldn't see me than I surely could not see him.

Come evening, if we were patient enough to wait him out, the huge bull-moose made his majestic appearance. He would slowly step up onto the main road, only pausing momentarily to sniff the wind. The only way to view him was to catch his silhouette in the headlights of an on coming vehicle. He was the boss, the feared one. All the other moose had left the area by dusk. Evening belonged to the bull-moose. He would graze wherever he wished. His antlers alone were enormous. He was the epitome of power. It was truly a phenomenal sight to see this 800-1000 pound moose face to face on his ground!

As evening went on we saw an adult fox, running down a logging road with a rodent in its mouth. After following her for about a quarter mile, she stopped and made several barking sounds toward the thick brush. To our amazement three young fox kits came out of the brush, scuffled for the deceased rodent, and then disappeared from whence they came. It was a mother fox bringing food to her litter.

That same night, rounding a bend on the rugged dirt logging road, our headlights caught the sight of a porcupine mom with her tiny baby trailing behind her. We slowly approached them, but momma porcupine disappeared into the woods. The baby porcupine became confused and began following our truck tire! Porcupines have terrible eyesight. This was clearly proof of that. So we stopped our truck, turned off the engine and waited quietly in the dark for momma porcupine to come collect her baby.

Our vacation was a collection of wonderful encounters with wildlife. We spent the entire week on a continual adrenaline high.

When we were too exhausted to go on, we returned to our cabin and fell asleep to the sound of loons calling to each other from across the lake.

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The Art of Childhood

My mother is an artist. If you were to ask her, "Do you consider yourself an artist?" she would shift uncomfortably and finally say something like, "Well, I don't know, what's an artist? No, not really." But she is; and not because she went back to school when Josh and I were nearly grown and got an art degree (although she did just that). She was born an artist, it's in her soul. When I was two she was painting flowers on bread paddles. When I was four she learned to do stained glass and has subsequently filled an entire church with windows and more. When I was about 13 she was dabbling in water colors and acrylics. Throughout my whole life she has sewn, and patched together a life of beauty no matter whether home was a log cabin with black tar slopped between the logs that got soft and warm in the summer and stuck to my fingers when I pressed on it, or an antique Ford van in the middle of a desert, or a tent compound surrounded by electric fencing, or camper and a chicken coop... yes, I lived in a chicken coop (no chickens, thankfully). She is an artist.

About ten years ago I was given a great book by a wise woman called *The Hidden Art of Homemaking*. It is all about the wonderful gift of life and how to weave art into life and craft a home and a family that celebrates the beauty of the Creator and his creation. It reminded me of my Mom. I reread it periodically for inspiration and to reground myself in my role of Home Artist. You should read it too.

I've been thinking lately about the Art of Life and the many gifts my mother gave me. Being the child of an artist has many benefits. Not only was I given pastels when many children got only colored pencils, I learned to sew, cut colored glass and piece it together (my daughter still has the glass jewelry box

that brought me to tears in the construction of it when I was ten.) I learned to love color, and texture and pattern. I learned to love to draw, even though I stink. I learned to decorate cakes well enough to sell them. I can weave wheat into lovely little baskets that hang nicely from a rearview mirror with a few flowers tucked inside. I never did learn to paint those flowers on bread paddles, though. But I can embroider, and she hates to do that.

These things have enriched my life. They make me handy to have around if you have a project to work on, or a kid getting married. But these are not the things I really appreciate learning. A book could have taught me many of these things. The lesson I really took away from the 18 year experience as the clay in my artist mother's hands is the art in crafting a childhood. In pressing wild flowers between the pages of old books and dying Easter eggs in artful ways, and stitching up doll clothes, and boiling onion skins to make dye, and trying hard not to be burned by the lye in soap making, and blistering my finger boiling sugar for home made lolly-pops, and gluing google eyes on nuts to make people I never realized that really, I was the art project.

My Mom is sneaky. You probably wouldn't notice it right up front. She seems so "June Cleaver" on the outside, but she has a sneaky side. Case in point: she never let on that what she was really doing was crafting a childhood in all the mess of glue and glitter. She never let on that she knew darn well that the whole idea was to give me roots and wings and some extra feathers to get me started on my own nest one day. She never breathed a word about how she wanted her grandchildren raised, but she was raising them, right along with raising me. She's sneaky.

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I've decided I'm going to be sneaky too. I don't know if I ever said, "When I grow up, I want to be just like you, Mom." But I've done pretty much that... only I'm louder and less covert in my sneakiness. Now I'm trying hard to grow into the kind of Mom she was and the kind of Grammy she is. No more sneakin' around. I'm watching her like a hawk.

The best part about being the unwitting victim of the art of childhood, is that until recently, I didn't even put two and two together. I just moved out, got married, had twice as many kids as my Mom and carried on with the art. She so successfully crafted my childhood that it was quite natural for me to do the same. I love that. It gives me hope for her great grandchildren, and mine.

Some of you are inspired by now. Some of you are in despair. Maybe your childhood was less than artfully constructed and rather than the blended colors of a masterpiece you feel like you've got shards of smashed tile... or maybe worse... beer bottles. Some of the best art comes out of tragedy. The same can be true in your life. Take the smashed tile and make a mosaic. The most beautiful blue sea glass on the ocean shore was once a horribly sharp piece broken wine bottle. The same beauty can come from the mess you were handed.

My Mom would tell you that art is not all gifting, it can be learned. She went to loads of art classes and even taught a few in our basement while Dad let Josh and I watch *Magnum P.I.* and munch popcorn, much to her horror. (*Magnum P.I.* is not art)

You can learn the art of crafting a childhood. In fact, there is a recipe: it takes one part vision, equal parts patience and perseverance, two parts creativity and one half part each of white glue and

construction paper. Prepare yourself, it's going to get messy.

Creating an artful childhood is found in waking up each morning and asking yourself, "What can I do this day that will impart wisdom and love to this generation, and hopefully the next? What can I do that will encourage a love of Truth and Beauty?" Then, do that thing. One thing, every day, or even three times a week if that is all you can manage to begin with, and before you know it your oldest child will be half grown and quite artsy herself. You need practical ideas, you say? Okay, here are some taken from my childhood, or my children's along with what they may paint into the portrait of your family:

Camping (family identity, the ability to start a one match fire and a love for burned hot dogs) Gardening (self sufficiency and a concrete number of rocks moved that represent the value of a dollar) Chopping wood (real work, the ability to keep a thumb out of the way of a sledge hammer) Nature drawing/ tree rubbing (an appreciation for the natural world, the difference between poison ivy and poison oak) Sewing (following directions, the ability to curtain an otherwise drab first kitchen for under five bucks) Bread making (an explanation of sin/leaven, the passing on of a family dinner bread recipe) Hand print painting (document growth, the uniqueness of the individual) daily table centerpieces (the ability to make something from nothing, the incorporation of art into daily life) the use of cloth napkins (waste not, want not, teaches ironing skills, transfers a sense of "you're worth it" to the children using them instead of paper each day) Asparagus planting (multi-generational heritage, reaping what we sow, delayed gratification) Cookie painting (creative expression, following a recipe, the joy of a job well done). I could go on and on. Almost any daily activity with a little forethought can be part of an artful

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childhood. The trick is to be intentional. To think ahead. To view your own life as an artwork in progress and your little child as both a canvas and a brush. Dip that kid in the ink of life and let him have at it. I'll tell you where art in childhood is NOT happening. In front of the T.V. or video games. Probably the best thing my parents did for us was to severely limit the first and outlaw the second. Certainly the thing most noted by strangers in our home about our family is the lack of the former and the presence of creativity, ingenuity and joy in the children and adults alike.

Summer is a great time for trying new things. Most of us are finished with formal schooling for the year

Summer Reading

Summer find our family spending many long days at the beach, and alternately, many long days in the car traveling to visit friends and family. As such, I have more time for reading than any other time of year. It try to read a few books for mental exercise and a few just for fun. If you're looking for some reading inspiration that is not directly kid or school oriented, may I suggest the following from my reading list so far this summer:

Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Vision to Promote Peace...One School At A Time by Greg Mortenson. This inspiring book chronicles the journey of one man from a failed attempt at the world's highest peak to building schools for girls in Pakistan's poorest, most neglected regions at the top of the world. In a time when the highest powers in the world are unable to bring peace to the middle east this book reminds me of what is possible when just one person has vision and purposes to change his little corner of the world in the way he can. Mr. Mortenson continues to be inspire us all to climb higher on the mountains in our lives and conquer new peaks. Peace through education. What a concept.

Don't Lets Go To the Dogs Tonight by Alexandra Fuller. This is an absorbing true story of the author's childhood in Africa. It was interesting to me in that it presents a reality completely foreign to my experience within the same historical time frame. This is not a cheerful book, nor is it a book I'd give a child under high school age as the topics and experiences of this girl growing up are very "real." If you'd like to see the world through different eyes, in a different culture you'll like this book.

Finding George Orwell in Burma by Emma Larkin. If you liked Orwell's books you'll find this a fascinating travel biography of the man behind the books. Miss Larkin travels modern day Burma (formerly part of British India) in search of "the prophet" as her Burmese friends call Orwell. In the process she finds herself inside a state which eerily mirrors his book, 1984. She paints a lovely picture of the Burmese people and a haunting portrait of a country with one of the worst human rights records of the current time. This book is a window into a world that few westerners get to experience, but with historical perspective.

and are embarking on a month or two of rest and diversion. Why not use this time to begin the process of changing how you look at childhood and intentionally developing the art of life within your home. There is no secret, no trick; it is just a difference in how you choose to think about life and the growth of a child and then the actions are a natural outgrowth of that thought process.

Next time we see my Mom. She'll have some wonderful piece of art to add to the lives of the children. In the form of ice cream rituals or canoe rides, or maybe rubber stamping with Hannah. She'll try to be sneaky, but I'll be watching.

Our Product List is Growing!
Check Out The Cool New Kits To Create With Your Kids!

Time for Twos (begin with 2-3 yr. olds)

Thinking with Threes (begin with 3-4 yr. olds)

Years One, through Seven (consecutively following TW3)

A Kaleidoscope of Days

(a collection of stories based on our family's experiences...fun!)

Growing in Grace

(articles on aspects of parenthood)

Table Talk

(a set of over 100 discussion starter cards)

Newsletter Volumes 1-5

(burned on CD)

Latin Quiz Program on CD (for use with Yr. 2+)

Home Organization System

A binder system & CD ROM to help you get it all in order!

Chore Cards Training System

Meal Rotation Cards and Life Skills Training for Kids

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Please Contact us for further information or a catalog.

Life is an Ed-venture

Summer has come, school books have been closed in favor of a few months of pure, unadulterated adventure... which we've taken to spelling ed-venture. Never were our children happier than May 24th when we pushed off on our bicycles for our first cycle trip of the summer: five days around mid-coast Maine. Major hills and light rain notwithstanding, we had a fabulous trip. We only cycled a hundred miles, but we had our anniversary dinner under a cathedral of pine trees and spent the same afternoon that we were married on 13 short years ago walking a tidal flat exploring tide pools and investigating the hundreds of horse shoe crabs that inhabited it. "This is great science!" hollered Ezra, who was crouched on his heels trying to pry one of the prehistoric looking creatures from the muddy bottom. So it was. Who knew we'd get this wide eyed little boy when we said, "I do."

We leave next Friday for another little adventure. We're going to cycle more like 400 miles over almost three weeks through Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia. We're reading Anne of Green Gables before we go visit that house. We're taking a book about the constellations to study after dark around our campfires. We'll attend the wedding of an old friend, see the Titanic exhibits in Halifax and go tidal bore rafting on the Bay of Fundy. Everyone is excited. It will be a real ed-venture, I'm sure.

Yesterday we had another grand ed-venture right after Hannah's fiddle lesson. We took a long walk through the boarding school to a little bridge, with Mr. Tompsen as our tour guide. We saw painted turtles and fish. The boys found an enormous bull frog with a lure stuck in his mouth and freed him of the lure. We wandered back through the tallest hemlock and red pines you've ever seen to climb on two Civil War era cannons. The boys pretended to fire away at the rebels, reenacting the stories we've read about that war this spring.

Everywhere we go adventure finds us. With just a little bit of forethought it can be turned into ed-venture as well. You don't need to travel nearly as much as we do... in fact, you don't need to travel at all. The world is full of ed-venture and children are born to experience... it is just we mothers who sometimes need a little nudge to look up from the diapers and daily grind enough to appreciate it for what it is.

One friend of mine never leaves her house unprepared. She carries a back pack with paper and pencils and her "golden guides" to wildlife and nature with her at all times. Her children have documented many a strange creature that I've never seen in their neighborhood on my visits. They have a thing for bugs and find interesting ones everywhere they go.

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Another family we know, took a trip to Arizona this spring. Their house was full of books and movies about the Grand Canyon and the history and wildlife of Arizona for weeks before they left. The night before their flight their Mama was in my kitchen borrowing the laminator for forty wildlife cards that they were packing along in hopes of seeing some unusual critters. The trip was a huge success, but it is far from their only ed-venture of the year. Currently they have about two dozen eight inch tall baby chicks in their basement, growing at an alarming rate. Just ask their five year old why they use a red heat lamp: “Because for some reason the red light makes them peck each other less.” “Does it help with children pecking each other too?” I want to know.

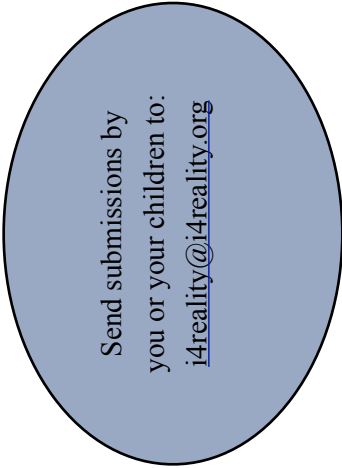
Another little girl I know made an ed-venture out of creating a seed collection for her third grade class at school last fall. It is beautifully presented and labeled on a board. Her mother can't bear to get rid of it! Who says home schoolers should have all the fun?

So what are some things you can do to encourage ed-venture with your family this summer: Stack the deck. Fill a basket with folded strips of paper and on each strip list an especially fun, inspiring activity. When the kids interest is running low or beach day has been rained out for the third straight week you can choose something from the basket. Read great books. Books related to places you are going, or about places you'd like to

go. Books about kids the same ages as yours. Books about other people's grand adventures. Get out! Leave the dirty dishes and laundry pile and get outside. Dedicate at least one whole day each week to being outdoors exploring, ed-venturing and enjoying. Take your “Golden Guides” with you. The book Wild Days: Creating Discovery Journals by Karen Skidmore-Rackcliffe might be an inspiration in this department. It was to me. Create Ed-venture notebooks: Cheap lined journals and pencil crayons are all you need. Have children draw and color what they see and write their thoughts on the lines next to their art. These are fabulous to return to twenty five years later... I still have mine from our travels in Mexico when I was only eight. Create a library ed-venture. Go to the library with a mission: each person must find a book about a predetermined topic. Or, do a library treasure hunt. Get permission ahead of time to hide a little treasure in a certain book and give your children clues to follow to track it down. Create a summer project. Decide as a family on an ed-venture that will last all summer. Get everyone involved and work together to weave every day into the project.

The point? Live ed-venturously. Find was to make the mundane fascinating. Look for opportunities to teach in the melieu of daily life and to brain wash your children to believe that they are having the most fabulous, thrilling adventures every day... because they are!

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