

WESTERN PA. HOMESCHOOLERS

A Network for Sharing local information about Homeschooling - Newsletter #4 - Winter 1983

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I'm so pleased that with each issue, our newsletter is becoming more and more a sharing among so many different families. I've enjoyed all the wonderful mail that comes our way, and am glad to be able to pass these many thoughts on to all of you. Again, feel comfortable sending on any anecdotes, family experiences, ideas, or questions you hope others will respond to. I like the feeling that our newsletter is a bit of a longdistance conversation that we are all taking part in. Our mailing list is up to 130, at least, and I hear from new people weekly. That's quite a network of interested people, especially as Western Pa. Homeschoolers has only been going for 10 months now!

We are already thinking ahead to our 2nd Homeschooling Weekend here at our farm. You might want to circle our planned dates-- the weekend of June 10, 11, and 12. If anyone has any thoughts on ideas for discussion groups they'd like to lead or be part of, do let me know. Also any help with planning fun options for the many children who will come would be a great help. I think it would be especially nice to have someone leading some large-group cooperative games perhaps. More de tails and registration information will be coming with our Spring Newsletter.

DONATIONS TO WESTERN PA HOMESCHOOLERS...

Thanks to all who have sent in your \$3.00 to cover costs for printing and mailing our newsletter. Again, if I receive no donation from a family after this newsletter I'll assume they must no longer be interested, and drop their name from our mailing list. The \$3 will cover costs for one full year, hopefully 4 issues, one each season. Checks should be made out to Susan Richman. Thanks so much for your continuing support!

WESTERN PA SCHOOL DISTRICTS THAT HAVE COOPERATED WITH HOMESCHOOLING FAMILIES...

FOX CHAPEL
WEST JEFFERSON HILLS
NORTH HILLS
SOUTH WEST BUTLER
PITTSBURGH PUBLIC SCHOOLS
TITUSVILLE
WOODLAND HILLS
ARMSTRONG
JEFFERSON-MORGAN
SHALER
KISKI

This list is not meant to be exhaustive-- there are probably several more districts cooperating also. Do let me know if your district can be listed here. It has been a real help to many families in letting their superintendents know that homeschooling is already happening in many parts of Western PA.

It has been heartening to hear from several new families about their good success with getting approval for homeschooling plans. A few other families have had very rough going with their districts. It is indeed frustrating that so much seems dependent upon the personality of particular superintendents. Some feel very threatened by homeschooling, seem to feel it is their duty and inalienable right to refuse such requests categorically. I would urge parents having a not so easy time to continue to present, in writing, the details of their educational for their children, continue requesting how their plan needs to be changed so that it will be acceptable, continue keeping as cool and cooperative a mind as possible, and continue READING sources such as Growing Without Schooling (729 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116) to keep up on the latest courtcases across the country. Several important court cases have been ruled on recently, strongly in favor of the homeschooling option. Janet Williams, of the PA Unschooler's Network (RD 2 Box 181, Yorksprings, PA 17372) is also wondering if anyone is interested in supporting (with \$\$\$-- perhaps \$10.00 per family) a PA legal brief dealing with homeschooling, drawn up by lawyer Bob Raines. He is a professor of educational law at Dickinson Law School, near Harrisburg, and seems quite sympathetic to homeschooling. Let Janet know if you are interested. It could be a real help to families.

(Western PA Homeschooler's masthead hand-lettered by Tessa Richman, age 5)