

Western PA. HOME SCHOOLERS

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SPRING 1984-Newsletter #8

A Network for Sharing Local Information about Homeschooling.

I didn't expect to be putting out this issue of W.PA Homeschoolers until our June Homeschooling Weekend, but I just couldn't hold off sharing all of these wonderful letters and articles from parents. By June it would have become a book! I hope to get issue #9 together in early August, just in time for the beginning of the "school year". Thanks so much to all of you who were able to take (steal!) time to share with all of us. I know many more of you have probably written "mental" letters over the supper dishes that never quite made it to paper-- hope you, too, may be able to get down your thoughts about living and learning with your children. I've found that writing about our own children is not only a way to better see their progress and growing over time, but also a way of holding and remembering these special moments of their young lives. A sort of extended "baby book", something tangible to pass on to my children.

Do hope many of you in the greater Pittsburgh area were able to see the April 11th interview about homeschooling on the Pittsburgh 2-Day show (KDKA). I was on the show for about a half hour, and a lot of ground was covered. I was so pleased that a half dozen homeschooling families were able to be in the studio audience-- made me a lot less nervous to look out and see their supportive faces! Most had a chance to share something about their own experiences during the question time. It was also special to be asked to be on PGH 2-Day, as it was just ~~over~~ two years ago that John Holt appeared on the show and our whole support network was born!

Thanks also for the generous offers of typing help with the newsletter-- your help makes this work possible! It is so encouraging that so many are so willing to lend a hand.

Included in this newsletter is the information sheet and registration form for the June 15-16-17 Homeschooling Weekend at our farm. Do hope to see many of you there. As noted on the form, we are limiting registration to the first 65 families who sign-up, as space limitations probably don't allow us to handle more people than that, and still maintain a warm friendly atmosphere. You will receive a postcard confirming your registration. Again, please let me know if you will be able to help with leading a discussion group.

- Susan Richman, editor

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

APMSTRONG
FOX CHAPEL
KANE
JEFFERSON-MORGAN
MT. UNION
NORTH HILLS
PITTSBURGH
SHALER
SOUTH-WEST BUTLER
SLIPPERY ROCK
TITUSVILLE
TRINITY
WEST JEFFERSON HILLS
WOODLAND HILLS
YOUGH

Here is an encouraging thought if you run into a superintendent who feels threatened by the idea of your teaching your own children at home, and who tries to make it as difficult as possible for you to do so: you may be able to work through some other person in the school district's administration. One family found that the Director of Student Services was most helpful, ready to smoothe the waters and act as a go-between with the superintendent. She was willing to actually listen, explain, and discuss conditions of the proposed contract, rather than simply try to force the parents to comply. The family also found that the local principal was very cordial and ready to support them. Also it is probably good to remember, too, that once an agreement is made, a family most likely will never meet with the superintendent again, but rather deal with an assistant, the local principal, or perhaps a guidance counselor. Some few school districts have insisted upon rights to visit the home. One family who agreed to this wrote, "We were only in-home examined 1/2 day, in which they went over our materials, talked with the girls and myself, and ate cookies!" Again, this "visitor" would certainly not be the superintendent, but instead perhaps a curriculum supervisor, or student services director, someone who is possibly a bit intrigued with this homeschooling idea, someone who at least has no personal axe to grind in the whole affair. Best of luck!

Western PA. Homeschooler's
Masthead lettered by Jesse
Richman (age 6 1/2).

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