

## Letter from the Editor

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Dear Readers of PA Homeschoolers,

I hope you are all as delighted with the new look of our newsletter as we are! Our older daughter Molly is our new layout designer, and I've rarely been more grateful for the generous help of one of our kids. It indeed ranks right up there with my gratefulness to our older son Jesse, when he was 13 and got right to work with his younger brother Jacob digging out our septic tank to unblock the 'system' one March when 25 third graders were ready to arrive the next morning for testing here at our home, and Howard was away on a month-long evaluation trip! I've just returned from a week of evaluating away from home, and the newsletter was all completed and ready for me to add my thoughts here. You may notice that the front cover drawing looks similar to the cover on our *Guide to the PA Homeschool Law* -- Molly was indeed our "in-house artist" there, also. We love having her artwork all over our home, too!

As I was working with families this spring, a theme emerged -- the gratefulness that mothers felt towards their husbands for their often "unsung" help with the family's homeschooling. I also realized that we'd be taking this issue to our printer right around Father's Day, and the idea of asking families to write tributes to their husbands and fathers was born. What I've noticed is that mothers don't want husbands to be "replacement mothers." What they were appreciating was the unique energy and skills and involvements that the dad in their family brought to the homeschooling adventure. I knew we were on to something important here -- once asked, almost every mom immediately had countless stories to share. In fact, we've received so many wonderful responses to this idea that we're going to make this a regular feature of each future newsletter -- so do send on your thoughts on that important dad who gives in his own unique way to the success of your homeschool.

I'm also grateful to another family member -- my wonderful daughter-in-law Patricia, our son Jesse's wife, will now be writing a regular column on *First Steps* in homeschooling, geared towards those families with young children who are just starting out on this new adventure in learning and living. We've missed them since they moved to Norfolk, VA, but we're glad they can still be part of *PA Homeschoolers* in this way!

We've made the decision to no longer include the full Support Group listing in each issue. We'll try to make sure every active group is listed on our Internet website, [www.pahomeschoolers.com](http://www.pahomeschoolers.com) and we invite you to send on an email with full info on your group. As Patricia notes in her introductory article on finding needed support, using the Internet to find homeschool groups and e-lists and like-minded homeschool bloggers is the way to go today. We view our website as complementary to our print newsletter -- the two work together to give you the best possible help on your homeschooling path.

If you're worried that we've now dropped our very popular masthead competition, rest assured that it's still on-going. Even though your creative and whimsical designs will no longer appear on the front cover, they will be just inside in our new annotated Contents page. The winner will still receive a \$20 check, and several extra issues of the newsletter. We might even at times advertise a contest for the cover image!

We are looking ahead also to a very special 100th issue of *Pennsylvania Homeschoolers* for the start of the new school year. We've published continually, 4 issues every year, for 25 years -- hard to believe!! We'd like to make the 100th a retrospective issue, with maybe a couple of reprints of 'old favorite' articles from 'way back', some articles from longterm homeschoolers who've been long-term readers of *Pennsylvania Homeschoolers* reflecting on how homeschooling has impacted their lives over many years. And further we'd love to hear from any readers about articles in our newsletter (either read online on our website archive, or in print) that you've found really helpful, inspiring, and encouraging. Often something someone says can have a major impact on our lives -- and this is your chance to share about this. Just send on an email to us with your thoughts, either long or short, and we hope to have lots of varied perspectives shown. Thank you for taking part in this -- and know how much all of your wonderful writing has enriched my ways of thinking about how children can learn and grow into capable and good people. Hope to hear from you soon!

In closing, let me add my own thanks to my dear husband and co-editor, Howard, who's joined me not only in homeschooling all of our own four children, but who's made possible all our work with *Pennsylvania Homeschoolers*, from our newsletter, our online AP prep

classes, our fall testing service, legislative involvements, keeping all the computers running, and so much more. I'm starting to reflect quite a bit on the many ways we've been working together -- none of what I've done would have been possible without Howard's steadfast readiness to become a full partner in this adventure that's been our homeschooling life together. Thank you!

Sincerely,  
Susan Richman, Editor