

WESTERN PA. HOMESCHOOLERS

A Network for Sharing Local Information about Homeschooling-Newsletter #3-Fall '8

What a busy summer it has been-- busy with so many parents meeting with local superintendents to set up home-education programs, so many parents writing to find information and support for homeschooling, so many families getting in touch with each other and beginning new friendships. I'm realizing more and more that W.P.A. Homeschooler's main function is as a local support group for families. It is indeed easier to follow the lead of our instincts, heart (and children!), if we know that others out there, not too far away as PA distances go, feel the same way. Several families have also had a chance to attend summer conferences and festivals that dealt in part with homeschooling, and share their experiences in our newsletter. I've appreciated all the good letters from all of you -- getting the mail is a high point of our day! Anytime you have a thought, question, anecdote you'd like to share, a resource you feel someone else might be interested in please do write. I'll print as many items as there's room for. Let me know, also if it's O.K. to print your name with any piece you write.

DONATIONS TO WESTERN PA HOMESCHOOLERS. . .

A special thanks to everyone who has sent in donations for our newsletter. Again, \$3.00 per family will cover postage and printing costs. Several families have donated much more, and their extra help will let us broaden our work. If I receive no contribution from a family after two newsletters, I'll guess they're no longer interested, and drop their name from the mailing list. Any checks should be made out to Susan Richman. Thanks so much!

W.P.A 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

Superintendents do indeed seem relieved to know they are not the first to decide on homeschooling in PA. Just as we gain strength from mutual support, superintendents need to know that they are not alone, either.

Shaley
I've received lots of phone calls and letters from families actively involved in working through homeschooling agreements with their districts. Many of these families have not had the chance to get back to me with details of the final "O.K.", and so I'm not able to list their districts as cooperating. I do know that at least a half-dozen other districts were approached about home-teaching over the summer. Hopefully by our mid-winter newsletter we'll have updated information. Many families have also taken the step of simply not enrolling their child in school at all if he or she is under the age of 8. Other have enrolled their children in long-distance private schools. I'd be interested in hearing from any families about the details of their agreements: what was required as far as curriculum write-ups; what, if any, evaluation procedures are expected; if children are using school facilities part time or using any school resources, etc. Especially want to know about use of standardized tests: are they being required, for what stated purposed, administered by whom, and where? Copies of correspondence with school districts are very welcome; many families have been helped by seeing what others have written.