

PENNSYLVANIA HOMESCHOOLERS

masthead handlettered by Jacob Richman, age 14

A STATEWIDE NETWORK FOR SHARING INFORMATION ABOUT HOME EDUCATION

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Top Ed. Dept. Official Honors Homeschool Grads!

from Howard Richman

Homeschoolers in Pennsylvania were honored when Joseph Bard, the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary education of the Pennsylvania Department of Education, was the Commencement Speaker at the 4th annual Pennsylvania Homeschoolers graduation ceremony on July 9, 1994, at the Harrisburg West Holiday Inn. Previous commencement speakers have been state Representatives Joe Pitts, Ron Cowell, and Sam Rohrer.

Many homeschoolers know Commissioner Bard because of his strong role as head of the Advisory Services Office which handled homeschooling problems beginning just after the home education law passed in December, 1988. With consideration and imagination, he solved hundreds of problems that arose in those first years of the law.

He has since moved up the hierarchy at the Department of Education and now oversees all aspects of elementary and secondary education, public and private, in the state.

Mr. Bard began his commencement address by briefly referring to his experience with homeschoolers. He said:

The homeschooling law was a distinctly new experience for the Department of Education and all of the state departments and I am happy to say that I had some part in developing the attitude that it was an opportunity, not a problem, and I think that that is exactly how it has worked.

I am very proud of the association that my staff and I have had with homeschoolers and I am proud of the work that I have seen being done by homeschoolers across the state.

That isn't to say that there haven't been problems or there won't be any in the future, but if all of them work out as well as they have so far with the homeschoolers -- gee, I wouldn't have a job!

The commencement speech followed the opening prayer and the buffet lunch. Following the commencement speech was a combination of entertainment by homeschoolers and valedictory speeches by graduates. The entertainment included a skit, string quartets, and wonderful singing both in harmony and solo. The 14 valedictorians (out of 32 graduates) who spoke all showed tremendous poise and shared much wisdom. Listening to them was an education about homeschooling and an antidote to pessimism about America's future.

A grandfather at the ceremony made a 2 hour video tape which we are copying and making available. If your family participated and you want to hold on to the memories, or if you just want to see what the ceremony was like, we'll make you a copy. Just send \$15 (which includes sales tax) to PA Homeschoolers. ●

Homeschool Dad Running for State Rep

Chris Pfaff, homeschooling father from Danville, is running for the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. His district represents Montour County, the southern half of Northumberland County, a few townships (Franklin, Cleveland, Locust, and Conyngham) in Columbia County, and Centralia.

Some of you may remember his good efforts in Harrisburg and Washington door-knocking for homeschoolers on the compulsory school age and HR 6.

He is strongly in support of homeschooling, school choice tax vouchers, and pro-life. If he wins election he will be the second homeschool father in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives keeping an eye on issues that might affect homeschooling.

If you would like to contribute to his campaign you can send checks made out to Pfaff for the Family, PO Box 477, Danville PA 17821. If you have any questions, you can call him at 717-275-1855. ●