

## 2nd Annual PebbleTec Golf Tournament to Benefit A Stepping Stone Foundation is October 22nd!



A Stepping Stone Foundation is pleased to announce that the Ted Purdy Foundation and Pebbletec will once again hold a golf tournament to benefit the Stepping Stone programs on October 22nd at the Grayhawk Golf Club.

Thanks to the hard work and vision of Ted Purdy and his Board, this event last year not only raised

over \$80,000 for A Stepping Stone Foundation, it was also a fun-filled exciting tournament.

The Ted Purdy Foundation is dedicated to helping families help themselves through golf and funds organizations that seek to help people help themselves through education. A Stepping Stone Foundation has received great financial support from them with funds generated from the past two golf tournaments. Ted's Foundation also donated to the St. Jude's and Arnold Palmer's children's hospitals with proceeds from the 2006 tournament.

Ted appreciates the commitment of PebbleTec as title sponsor and for their support of his foundation and A Stepping Stone Foundation.

Because Ted's foundation has no overhead, 100% of the proceeds generated are donated to charity.

This year's tournament promises to be as enjoyable as last year's with many gifts for the golfers, a silent auction and the opportunity to play on the great golf courses Grayhawk has to offer.

If you are interested in playing in the tournament or participating as a sponsor, please go to:

[www.asteppingstone.org](http://www.asteppingstone.org)  
and click on the PebbleTec Charity Golf Tournament. Cost to play in the tournament is \$1,000 per person.

If you would like more information or **would like to volunteer** at the tournament, please call the Stepping Stone office at (602) 843-8281.

### Stepping Into College 2007

On Saturday, September 8th, the Stepping Stone Scholarship Committee will host former SSF preschoolers who are now in high school and their parents at a lunch and informational meeting about college, scholarship and financial aid opportunities. The seniors will also be given applications for the Billie Gannaway Scholarship which is awarded to seniors who are planning to attend college in the fall.

A special thank you to Shadow Rock Church for donating space on their busy campus for this event.

### Support A Stepping Stone Foundation through the Tax Credit for the Working Poor

Do you itemize on your Arizona Tax return? If so, you may be eligible for the Welfare Tax Reform Credit program. This is a dollar-for-dollar credit on your Arizona tax liability when you donate to a self-certified nonprofit. A Stepping Stone is one of those self-certified nonprofit organizations that serve the working poor in Arizona. We are so grateful to those of you who qualified and contributed through this program last year. Almost

\$30,000 was raised for A Stepping Stone Foundation in 2006!

This year, married couples filing jointly may donate up to \$400 and the limit is \$200 for individuals.

**This Tax Credit is separate from the School Tax Credit, so you can take full advantage of both.**

It costs you nothing and makes a huge difference in our community.

*see Tax Credit, page 3*

## President's Corner, by Charlie Adornetto, President

### Executive Board

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Charlie Adornetto

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501(c)(3) Tax ID 74-2567068

*This month, the former Vice-President of the board, Marilyn Rampley has written this article for me as she retires from the board. ~ Charlie*

In 1991 Rev. Bill Smith asked Eileen Hoard and me if we would help him with a non-profit he was beginning. After asking a few questions, we replied that we would love to be a part of A Stepping Stone Foundation. Since that day my work with the mission of providing high quality preschool to as many Arizona children as possible has brought blessings to me. As I resign from the Board, I know that these will continue.

Eileen and I served for 10 years as Co-Directors of the Foundation. We met and worked with the most fascinating, hard-working folks: Board members and officers, educators, Stepping Stone families, volunteers, school district employees, and supporters. Each brought a distinctive flavor to the enterprise. Just thinking back on the cast of characters brings me happiness. There was Teacher Carmen, gracious and kind, always standing up for her students and their families. She understood them and appreciated their journeys. Cindy Amos, who rose from mom volunteer to college graduate and Isaac teacher, with her ready laugh and ever-present music, she is still working with children. Janice Milks and Charlotte Garrett, who pioneered at Alhambra, their assistant teachers, Rayne in the print office, superintendents Dr. Carol Peck and Herman Moya, Leslie Gerdes, the list goes on and on.

*In the beginning  
we had a dream.*

*It lives on.*

Greg Casadei, Maurice Portley, JoAnne Hilde, Phil Talley, Mike Gattorna, Mike Hensley, Carlos Torrella, Jack Kucera, Charlie Adornetto, Judy Brengi—these are busy professionals who dare to believe that they can empower a vision of a better world through their efforts, talent, and hard work. What each of these people shares is a strong belief in education and its ability to strengthen individuals and our society. Their work is a gift of love to the community.

In the beginning we never had enough money for an entire year, but we raised it. Today we have a savings account.

In the beginning we had one classroom with 20 students; now we have five and some years even six.

In the beginning we took notes on a yellow legal pad; now Margie uses a tape recorder and a computer.

In the beginning we shared a phone with Shadow Rock Church; now Cindy carries her cell phone with her all day, never out of touch with constituents.

In the beginning we saw only four-year-olds; now we still have young children, but also are so proud of our college students.

In the beginning we were inspired by Rev. Bill Smith. We still are.

In the beginning we had a dream. It lives on. ~Marilyn Rampley

*Many thanks to Marilyn for her hard work and dedication during her 16 years of service to A Stepping Stone Foundation. Her wisdom, enthusiasm, dedication and spirit have played a major role in the success of the Stepping Stone preschool programs. As Marilyn retires from the board, A Stepping Stone Foundation would like to express their gratitude and heartfelt thanks for a job extremely well done!*



Director's Footnotes  
by Cynthia Gattorna, Executive Director

Dearest Friends of A Stepping Stone Foundation,  
I urge you to read this issue of the *Footprints* carefully! There is rich treasure to be found. This issue centers on the new school year and the new fundraising cycle. Be sure to read our classroom teachers' articles on the opening of their year. Also, our Board President, Charlie Adornetto, has yielded his space to outgoing member, Marilyn Rampley, who has written a warm retrospective piece that grounds us in our labors of love of the past and encourages us onward in our mission with her kind words.

Our overreaching goals this year beyond the ever-present mission of providing quality preschool education with mandatory adult participation, are to seek funding for and hire a Program Director and to focus on developing sustaining funding sources with the guidance of a fundraising professional.

I welcome your continued support on all levels! Tell new friends about us, call for a classroom tour, and please continue to share your resources with us as your unique ability allows.  
On behalf of our children, their families and the board,  
Thank you, thank you, thank you! ~ Cindy

FBR Birdies for Charity Giving Opportunity

The Thunderbirds' *Birdies for Charity* Program has invited Arizona 501(c)(3) organizations to involve the community in a pledge drive program based on the total number of birdies made during the 2008 FBR Open. A Stepping Stone Foundation is registered for this program. Anyone can fill out a pledge form and pledge one cent or more per birdie to be a part of the program. Donor incentives include the Grand Prize of a new Buick and 100 other great prizes - all awarded through a random drawing of contributors. Last year the Foundation received nearly \$1,058 as 110% comes back to A Stepping Stone Foundation. This year, we would love to double that amount! No funds will be collected by the Foundation. Following the 2008 Open, The Thunderbirds will invoice those who filled out pledge forms, collect all monies and send the Foundation the total of donations plus 10%. The Thunderbirds are a 501(c)(3) organization, therefore all donations are tax deductible as the law permits. See the brochure inserted into this newsletter and pledge today!.

For more details, got to:  
<http://www.phoenixopen.com/BFC.asp>.

*Tax Credit, from page 1*  
If you would like to donate, please complete the form below and send it along with your donation to the Stepping Stone office. If you have any questions, call the Stepping Stone office at (602) 843-8281. We hope you will join us in supporting literacy and strengthening families and communities in Arizona!

Welfare Reform Tax Credit  
Donation Form



Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Donation Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Cash/Check    Visa    MC    AMEX  
Credit Card No: \_\_\_\_\_  
Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send me more information  
I would like to visit a classroom  
Please send me volunteer and  
Board Member Information  
Please mail your donation  
before December 31, 2007 to:  
A Stepping Stone Foundation  
P.O. Box 84318  
Phoenix, AZ 85071  
(602) 843-8281 [www.asteppingstone.org](http://www.asteppingstone.org)

Give yourself a (tax)  
break...while helping the  
Stepping Stone Kids  
and their families!



## Classroom Notes

**Westwood Primary**

*Welcome Fran Smith, Stepping Stone's New Teacher*

My name is Fran Smith. I'm excited to be part of the Stepping Stone organization. This is the start of my 13th year with the Alhambra School District, where I have been teaching in the *Success by Six* Preschool program. I have my Associates degree in Early Childhood, and will complete my Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education in the Spring of 2008.

My husband and I have lived in Phoenix for the last 25 years and have raised our two sons here.

My oldest son, Ryan, and his wife Amanda, are the

proud parents of a nine-month-old son, which makes me a very proud Grandma! My youngest son is in the Marine Corps. Stationed in Washington DC for two years, he will soon deploy to Iraq. We are very proud of our Marine too!

I'm looking forward to a very exciting new school year working at Westwood and helping the families in our program.

*Welcome Neida Asencio, the new assistant teacher in this classroom. She is a former Stepping Stone parent!*

**Meet the 2007/2008 Teachers!**

*Through hard work and dedication to the Stepping Stones program, these are the people that make the difference in the children's lives. Their love of their job and the children is so apparent in the classrooms they've created.*

**Granada Primary**

Janice Milks, Lead Teacher

Veronica Flores, Assistant Teacher

**Isaac Preschool**

Belinda Valenzuela, Lead Teacher

Angela Rodriguez, Assistant Teacher

**Westwood Elementary**

Janet Casteñada, Lead Teacher

Betty Chavez, Assistant Teacher

Fran Smith, Lead Teacher

Neida Asencio, Assistant Teacher

*Best of luck to you all as you enrich the lives of another class of four-year-olds.*

**Isaac Preschool**

*Belinda Valenzuela and Angela Rodriguez*

We began our year and the children are super excited, learning class rules and how to recognize their first names. The first week we had a few children who cried, but soon they were all ready to allow mommies to start their own classes. The school day has been extended to 6.5 hours a day and that is a long day for some of the children. The Get Ready To Read assessments have been administered and we have a good idea what level each child is at. Our parents attended Orientation and are being tested to be placed at the right level. They were more nervous than the children and couldn't wait. We are off to a great start and are looking forward to a great year here at Isaac Preschool Stepping Stone Class.

*Welcome to Angela Rodriguez, the new Teacher's Assistant in this classroom.*

**From A Stepping Stone Foundation Scholar**

*The following is an essay written by Maritza Hernandez, A Stepping Stone Scholar (who is now a member of the board) as part of her application for the Billie Gannaway Memorial Scholarship. She is a senior at ASU majoring in Graphic Design.*

Going to college full-time and working part-time has been the greatest challenge in my pursuit of higher education. Maintaining a 3.0 GPA and higher is extra challenging in addition to being an exceptional employee at work. Time for homework and studying is difficult to find. I have to be organized, efficient and prioritize what is more important in my educational studies.

My job is important to me as well as my education. I take my position very seriously given that I process background investigations for pre-employment security. Working for the federal government has given me many benefits while attending school. They work around my schedule and understand the importance of education to their employees.

Although both are important to me, my priority has always been my education. School comes first and if that means taking a day off work to study for a final, then that is what I'll do. Maintaining a good GPA and being in a position of such high sensitivity level has been a challenge in my pursuit of a degree.



**Westwood Primary***Ms. Janet Castaneda and Ms. Betty Chavez*

We have been busy getting ready for our students' first day which was on August 20th. As we do every year, we visited all our students before they came to school. Many of students have never been separated from their mothers and leaving their moms for the first time can be a difficult transition for both the child and the mom. Through the years, we have seen how our visits build trust with our families and help ease any concerns they may have. Each child draws a picture for their classroom and we take a photo of the family. We create a bulletin board of their pictures and family photos to help our students feel welcome.

This year, two of the 3rd grade teachers here at Westwood decided to go on home visits themselves to see how it impacted the families. Both teachers shared how positive the experience was and noticed a dramatic increase in the number of families who attended open house in their classroom. This truly shows what a positive impact we have on families when we reach out.

We are looking forward to the coming year and are anxious to start working with the families. We would like to thank everyone for their support and generosity. I want you all to know that you are making a difference in the lives of our families and their children.

God Bless!

*~ Janet and Betty*



*It's getting to be that time of year!  
The Christmas Angels will  
be flying again soon!  
Look for Christmas Angel  
information in the next  
newsletter. If you would  
like additional information before that  
time, please call the Stepping Stone  
office at (602) 843-8281*

**Welcome to new board members****Diane Cooper****Maritza Hernandez**

*Thank you to all the returning board members  
as well. 2007/2008 looks to be a great year  
for the foundation with the dedication of the  
fine members of the board!*

**Granada Primary***Ms. Janice Milks and Ms. Veronica Flores*

We are ready, very ready for the start of a new  
adventure in learning.

The classroom has been carefully arranged.

Nametags are done and each child has a  
cubbie of their own.

Lesson plans are written.

Books are selected and waiting to be read.

**WE ARE READY!**

We have visited with each child and mom while they  
checked out the classroom,  
getting acquainted with what will become their special  
place for the next few months.

**WE ARE READY!**

The children are anxious to stay and "play,"  
but we know better.

They will be learning many new things by exploring,  
manipulating, observing, and doing.

**WE ARE READY!**

The moms first concern is for their child.

They want them to be happy and safe.

They want them to like school and to learn  
what they need to.

**WE ARE READY!**

But the moms are more tentative about what  
lies ahead for themselves.

They each come to the program with their  
own personal goals.

One mom is here to learn English in memory of her son.

She hopes this will help her heal so that she can  
become a better mother to her girls.

Another needs to keep busy. She needs to find friends of  
her own that might help her not be so depressed.

Another just wants to learn the ways of her  
new country so that she is not so afraid.

**WE ARE READY!**

Our returning moms know first hand how the program has  
had a positive effect on the lives of their family.

They want more for their next child and themselves.

**WE ARE READY!**

We are ready, because we know this program  
is needed and because this program works.

We look forward to what lies ahead.

We thank you all, once again, for all you do  
to make this program possible.

We invite you to stop by our classroom to see  
first hand how much this opportunity means to  
the children and to their families.

Sincerely,

*Janice and Veronica*



P.O. Box 84318  
Phoenix, AZ 85071

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## **A STEPPING STONE FOUNDATION**

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Phoenix, AZ 85071

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10802 North 23rd Avenue  
Phoenix, AZ 85029

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### **DATES TO REMEMBER!**

October 22, 2007: Second Annual Pebbletec Golf  
Tournament, hosted by the Ted Purdy Foundation to  
benefit A Stepping Stone Foundation

November: Christmas Angels Fly!

**2008 *Entertainment Books* will be on sale September 7th!**  
**A Stepping Stone Foundation will have a limited number for sale.**  
**To ensure you get a copy, please**  
**call the office at (602) 843-8281 with your order.**

## Calling All Stepping Stone Angels!



The Christmas Angels are flying again! For the 17th year, A Stepping Stone Foundation is proudly sponsoring the Christmas Angel Tree program for the preschool children and their families. The excitement these children will feel as they receive their presents at Christmas will be amazing and donors will rejoice knowing how good it feels to bring smiles to those who otherwise might not have presents. This year, there

are 80 families (many who are in great financial need with two to five children) who will receive gifts from this program.

The Angel Tree will be up at Shadow Rock Church, 12861 N. 8th Ave from November 18th - December 2nd with tags for each child. All gifts should be turned in at Shadow Rock by December 6th.

The children's "wish list" are on the tags and by taking a tag and buying

gifts for the child, YOU are making a difference in their lives.

Every child should receive a toy, a book and an article of clothing and we ask that all donors limit spending to \$50 per child to ensure that all of the children's gifts are fairly equal.

The Angel Tree will also hold "stars." Taking a star means you wish to donate dollars to the project which will be used

to buy gifts if a child's tag is not chosen or for food coupons for the family to spend at local grocery stores to ease their holiday meal shopping. If you would like to purchase a star, please make your check payable to: A Stepping Stone Foundation and either take it to the church office or mail it to: P.O. Box 84318, Phoenix, AZ 85071.

All of the information about wrapping and delivering the presents is on the Angel tag.

*see Angels, page 2*



### Support A Stepping Stone Foundation through the Tax Credit for the Working Poor

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The Foundation is so grateful to those of you who qualified and contributed through this program last year. Almost \$30,000 was raised for A Stepping Stone Foundation in 2006 and the goal is to double that amount this year! Married couples filing jointly may donate up to \$400 and the limit is \$200 for individuals.

*see Tax Credit, page 3*

### FBR Birdies for Charity Giving Opportunity

The Thunderbirds' *Birdies for Charity* Program has invited Arizona 501(c)(3) organizations to involve the community in a pledge drive program based on the total number of birdies made during the 2008 FBR Open.

A Stepping Stone Foundation is registered for this program. Anyone can fill out a pledge form and pledge one cent or more per birdie to be a part of the program. Donor incentives include the Grand Prize of a new Buick and 100 other great prizes - all awarded through a random drawing of contributors.

Last year the Foundation received nearly \$1,058 as 110% comes back to A Stepping Stone Foundation. This year, we would love to double that amount!

*see Birdies for Charity, page 5*



## President's Corner, by Charlie Adornetto, President

## What does the future hold?

When I began as President of A Stepping Stone Foundation, I had only my cats for companionship. While I loved children, it seemed I would be denied that blessing. Then Dina came into my life. She is a fabulous, vibrant and talented woman who enriched my life in ways too many too imagine. Much to my excitement, she became my wife in July.

One of the truly unexpected ways she enriched my life is that ... I am now a grandfather! Yes, I have skipped the daddy stage and gone right into grandfatherhood. What an absolute joy it is to watch my little Hannah Victoria, only five months old, growing up! When I look at this precious baby, I am thrilled at all the potential that she holds and I hope that the adults around her will continue to present her with a community that is safe, caring, and environmentally sound.

We have recently had several parent nights at our preschool classrooms and our second Stepping into College event. At one of the parent nights, we met up with Josie Gutierrez, who is well-known to regular readers of our newsletter. She is a mother who obtained her GED because her youngest child was in A Stepping Stone Foundation preschool. Josie has graduated college and is now a 1st grade teacher! Josie's grandchild is now in preschool and her oldest daughter is now obtaining her GED. This family is a living example of propagating the value of education!

At Stepping into College, we met with several of our former preschoolers who

are now in high school and contemplating college. The most exciting part of this event was watching the translator, Marlette Espinoza, a former Stepping Stone preschooler (who is now a freshman attending college with a scholarship from A Stepping Stone Foundation's Gannaway Scholarship Fund), translating for the event, showing a tremendous amount of poise and maturity. Marlette definitely has an exciting future ahead of her and it will be a joy watching her.

*What surprises  
the future  
holds for us!*

Another former preschooler who is now a college scholarship recipient is Maritza Hernandez, who has agreed to give back to the Foundation by joining our volunteer Board of Directors. Together with Board member Jessica Sanchez, the daughter of Mrs. Carmen Sanchez, our first preschool teacher, the two bring an exciting amount of diversity, history and legacy to our Board.

My last exciting example is a former preschool mother, Neida Ascencio. She is now a teacher's aide in one of our Stepping Stone preschools. She is in the process of getting her GED/college degree and is contemplating becoming a teacher. Once again, A Stepping Stone Foundation is propagating the value of education.

While we are never sure of what the future holds, the above examples show how A Stepping Stone Foundation is changing the lives of the children and their parents and it is improving our community.

**It is a model to be proud of!**

**Executive Board****President**

Charlie Adornetto

**Vice President**

Craig Hansen

**Secretary**

Marie Dils

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Judy Brengi

**Past Presidents**

Mike Hensley

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Con Englehorn

Maritza Hernandez

Eileen Hoard

Nancy Ireland

Linda Pape

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Jack Kucera

Vianne Kucera

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*Angels, from page 1*

If you would like to know more about the program or have any questions, please call the Stepping Stone office at (602) 843-8281 or Nancy Ireland, project chair, at (480) 488-2688.

**Thank You to All the Stepping Stone Angels!**





Director's Footnotes  
by Cynthia Gattorna, Executive Director

Focusing on the Future

A few weeks ago, A Stepping Stone Foundation Board members convened on a Friday evening and all day Saturday to revisit our strategic plan and set goals for the year. Out of that meeting, the members present consented that top priority should be given to:

- \* Hire a Program Director.
- \* Ensure at least one person affiliated with A Stepping Stone Foundation Sits on one of the Proposition 203 Regional Councils.
- \* Perform more in depth program evaluation.
- \* Work on an expansion class (Fowler District plans are already underway).

As the Board and I focus in on these four goals, we need your help. Please don't forget to tell your friends about us! Your word of mouth referrals are our best way to educate people about the need for quality interventions for families in need of English and/or literacy education and to make new friends. Because we are funded 100% with charitable dollars, our biggest need continues to be monetary donations. There are many opportunities at a wide variety of giving levels available. From a \$15 donation pledge through Birdies for Charity (Thunderbirds will match 10%) to supporting a family for a year at \$5,000. Don't forget to send us your tax credit donation - up to \$400 for qualifying folks filing jointly. Additionally, we are always looking for people that have the resources to contribute to our Billie Gannaway Memorial Scholarship or Classroom Endowment funds. As always, thank you so much for all of your support.

Cindy



Board President , Charlie Adornetto (right), participates in the all day Strategic Planning meeting with Board Members Linda Pape (left) and Carolyn Keagle.

Tax Credit, from page 1

This Tax Credit is separate from the School Tax Credit, so you can take full advantage of both. It costs you nothing and makes a huge difference in our community.

If you would like to donate, please complete the form below and send it along with your donation to the Stepping Stone office.

Arizona State Tax Credit for the  
Working Poor  
Donation Form



Name:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Phone:

Donation Amount: \$

Cash/Check    Visa    MC    AMEX

Credit Card No:

Expiration Date:

Signature:

Please send me more information  
I would like to visit a classroom  
Please send me volunteer and  
Board Member Information  
Please mail your donation  
before December 31, 2007 to:  
A Stepping Stone Foundation  
P.O. Box 84318

We hope you will join us in supporting preschool and literacy which strengthens families and communities in Arizona!

If you have any questions, please call the Stepping Stone office at (602) 843-8281.

## Classroom Notes

**Westwood Primary***Fran Smith and Neida Ascencio*

Our first month of school has been so rewarding. We have made many new friends with the families we serve, and it's wonderful to see how much each family appreciates what A Stepping Stone Foundation is providing for them. Attendance in GED & English classes are nearly 100%, as is their participation in volunteering in the classroom and childcare.

Our preschoolers have learned their new friends' names, how to take turns by sharing and MANY new songs and dances - *Going on A Bear Hunt* has become a favorite! We have read many books together and our students are becoming great listeners and active participants in recalling what the story was about. They enjoyed the story of *Corduroy*, who has since become a "real" friend in the classroom. Students colored their own bears, painted buttons for him, and we wrote a story about what each of them would put in Corduroy's pocket.

We will be starting our Sharing Library next week which will enable each student to take a book home from our class library, and share it with their family at home. Parents must sign the note attached to the book verifying that the book was read. Once a student returns their book, they are encouraged to check out another. This is a great opportunity to not only to promote literacy, but it is also a great way to make a home/school connection and introduce preschoolers to "homework."

Thanks to all the supporters of A Stepping Stone Foundation for making a difference in the lives of so many. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

*Fran & Neida***ET Books  
for Sale**

There are still a few

Entertainment Books for sale.

A Stepping Stone Foundation receives a percentage of each book sold.

Help A Stepping Stone Foundation and receive discounts to restaurants, hotels and more!

If you would like to purchase one, please call the office at: (602) 843-8281.

**Isaac Preschool***Belinda Valenzuela and Angela Rodriguez*

We so enjoyed attending the Pebbletec Golf Tournament at Grayhawk and practiced hard for our singing performance there.

All of the children in our class have learned the first letter of their names and can tell you how many syllables in their name.

We started our lending library in a more creative way: In order to get books into the homes, the teachers send baggies with books home daily at the family's request.

Our parents are very motivated and are learning English and studying for their GEDs. We have some great success stories from former parents. Graciela Herrera has passed her GED and is a strong member of our Parent Committee. Ramona Bojorquez completed her GED, passed the State Paraprofessional exam and has been hired as a Full Time Teacher Assistant here at the Isaac Preschool. Teresa De La Cruz has completed her GED and has been hired in our Child Enrichment Room also at the Isaac Preschool. We make a difference in many lives.

Thank you for your support! *Belinda & Angela*

**In Memory of Jerry Landis**

*A longtime member of A Stepping Stone Foundation's Advisory Board.*

*Jerry passed away on October 8th after a long illness. His love for the Stepping Stone Programs and leadership will be greatly missed. Many thanks to all of you who donated to A Stepping Stone Foundation in fond celebration of this wonderful man.*



**Westwood Primary***Ms. Janet Castaneda and Ms. Betty Chavez*

Our class has been very busy learning about one another. Students have enjoyed hearing one another's stories about their families. We learned that some have new baby brothers and sisters, or others have large extended families such as aunts, uncles, grandmas and grandpas and that the family pet is also a part of the family. Through group discussions the children not only learn about one another but they learn how to share their ideas. It is important for children to learn how to listen to each other. I always find the children are very accepting and want to please their classmates.

I observe many acts of kindness from my students and I always feel we help create a strong classroom community by working together. The social skills the children learn while in school are life skills that will help them throughout their lives.

At this time of year we begin our "Star Student" celebrations. The students are selected randomly each week to be the "Star." When they are selected they take home a poster to decorate with their family and they bring it back to class the following Monday to be displayed all week. The parents are always so creative and many include special photos of their children. I really enjoy listening to the students share stories about their poster with their classmates. One important aspect of having weekly "Star Students" is that every single student is recognized and no one is left out. I feel every child is unique and special and deserves to be recognized as such.

I want to take the time and recognize all the kind and generous individuals that make this program a reality. Your giving creates life long opportunities for Stepping Stone families. You are all "Shining Stars" and I thank you for your support.

*God Bless! Janet and Betty**Birdies for Charity, from page 1*

No funds will be collected by the Foundation. Following the 2008 Open, The Thunderbirds will invoice those who filled out pledge forms, collect all monies and send the Foundation the total of donations **plus 10%**. The Thunderbirds are a 501(c)(3) organization, therefore all donations are tax deductible as the law permits.

For more details, go to:

<http://www.phoenixopen.com/BFC.asp>

**Granada Primary***Ms. Janice Milks and Ms. Veronica Flores*

The children are all settling in well and making great progress. They enjoy singing, finger play and books and are all picking up English extremely well.

We have gone on two field trips: one to the Desert Botanical Gardens where we learned about desert plants and saw the butterflies and then to the Arizona State Fair with the two classes from Westwood. What a wonderful time the children had seeing all there is to see at the fair!

The mothers participating in the program are all coming together as a group. They are all learning English and are enjoying their studies as well. They are such a help in the classroom and the children love it when their mom is helping out.

At least three parents from last year's program have come back to the ESL classes to expand their English skills and still participate in the program.

The Stepping Stone Board of Directors came to Granada one evening for an ice cream social to meet the children and their families. Both the families and the board members found it very meaningful to get to know each other. As this was an evening event, this was also a wonderful way to let the children show other members of their family who are not able to be at Granada during the day to see the classroom.

Our thanks again to the Foundation for all of the hard work and support you give us to help these precious children and their families.

*Janice and Veronica***Bashas' Thanks A Million**

**Bashas' is once again including A Stepping Stone Foundation in their Thanks A Million Program.**

**To participate, simply give the number at the bottom of this article to the cashier next time you use your Bashas' card and each time you shop there until March 31, 2008, Bashas' will donate a percentage of the sale to A Stepping Stone Foundation. It's easy and costs you nothing!**

**Number: 24536**



## A Stepping Stone Foundation Scrapbook



*Jack Kucera receives a plaque to be placed in the classroom thanking him and his wife, Vianne, for their continued support of the Stepping Stone Programs. A Stepping Stone Foundation gave a Thank You Lunch to all of the employees at Jack's company, Climatec, for their kindness in donating office space to the Foundation. Pictured (from left): Board Members Beverly Carroll and Carolyn Keagle; Executive Director Cindy Gattorna; Jack Kucera; and Board Members Linda Pape and Craig Hansen.*



*A Stepping Stone child enjoys her ice cream at the Ice Cream Social at Westwood on October 16th.*



*Former preschoolers who are now in high school attended the Stepping Into College event in September.*



*Many thanks to the Sandoval Family for preparing and serving a traditional hispanic celebration meal, called a mole, for the entire board. Many of the Sandoval children have participated in the Stepping Stone preschool program. Pictured above (from left) are some of the Sandoval children, Roque and Concepción Sandoval and Stepping Stone Board President, Charlie Adornetto.*



## PLANNED GIVING OR GIFT PLANNING?

Last year in our newsletter we began a series of articles related to multi-year pledges and estate planning gifts to A Stepping Stone Foundation. This month, please read the following additional information regarding gift planning. Please let us know if you are considering a multi-year gift, and/or have included A Stepping Stone Foundation in your estate planning.

As A Stepping Stone Foundation enters into our 17th year of providing preschool with mandatory adult and parenting education, sustaining our funding is more important than ever before. In the early years, we began our preschool year with not enough funds in the bank to finish the year and no reserves in hand. While I am happy to report that we had just enough money in the bank in August to complete this preschool year, we must begin all over

again to raise the funds for the following year. Our classroom endowment fund has a modest \$25,000 fund balance - not enough money yet to significantly contribute to the annual budget. One of the most stable ways to sustain and expand our budget, and therefore our service, is to urge our supporters to plan their giving.

Planned giving is a "buzz-word" that is touted in the charitable world as the best fund development opportunity to come along in many years. In reality it isn't new; it's simply being more widely discussed. Many small and intermediate-sized charitable organizations like A Stepping Stone Foundation realize they can share in some of the major resource development opportunities enjoyed by larger organizations.

The terms "deferred giving," "gift planning," and "planned

giving" are often used interchangeably and, for most purposes, have the same meaning. However, we'd like to encourage you to substitute the term "gift planning" in place of the term "planned giving." The concept of gift planning shifts us to an active stance from the passive and focuses on the best interests of the donor and not on "selling" planned giving techniques or products. It frees us to better do our jobs, as executives and/or volunteers and to motivate and excite our constituencies to be creative in assisting and supporting our respective missions.

We are so grateful for your support however that manifests itself!

*Significant portions of this article were taken from the National Committee on Planned Giving Website:*  
[www.ncpg.org](http://www.ncpg.org)

### *2nd Annual PebbleTec Golf Tournament Benefits A Stepping Stone Foundation*



Volunteers are always appreciated at A Stepping Stone Foundation to help with mailings, classroom projects and other events. If you are able to help, you are always welcome! Please call Margie in the office at: (602) 843-8281

Many thanks to the Ted Purdy Foundation and Pebbletec for sponsoring a golf tournament to benefit A Stepping Stone Foundation and other local charities on October 22nd. The Ted Purdy Foundation is dedicated to helping families help themselves through education and Ted and his wife, Arlene, are longtime, enthusiastic supporters of the Stepping Stone programs. The golf tournament was a great success and this year, two courses at Grayhawk were used to facilitate the large number of participants.

Many thanks to all of the Stepping Stone volunteers who helped at the tournament and to all those at the Ted Purdy Foundation for their hard work and dedication to make the tournament a successful event.

A Stepping Stone Foundation applied for two grants from the Diamondbacks Foundation: the General Program Grant for \$5,000 and the Grand Slam Grant for \$105,000. Recipients of these grants will be announced in early 2008.



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[www.asteppingstone.org](http://www.asteppingstone.org)

**Give yourself a (tax)  
break...while helping  
the Stepping  
Stone Kids  
and their families!**



**See Page 1 for details on the  
Arizona State Tax Credit for  
the Working Poor**

### **IN THIS ISSUE:**

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### **DATES TO REMEMBER!**

**November: Christmas Angels Fly!**

**January: Bill and Billie's Dinner to honor the  
Stepping Stone Scholars and to Benefit the  
Billie Gannaway Memorial Scholarsip Fund**





## Happy New Year!

*Thank you for making 2007 a wonderful year for the Stepping Stone kids and their families!*

### **Bill and Billie's Kids: Making a Difference to Each One Annual Dinner is January 29th**

*An old man walked up a shore littered with thousands of starfish, beached and dying after a storm. A young man was picking them up and flinging them back into the ocean. "Why do you bother?" the old man scoffed. "You're not saving enough to make a difference." The young man picked up another starfish and sent it spinning back to the water. "Makes a difference to that one," he said.*

A Stepping Stone Foundation is dedicated to helping families through early childhood education for four-year-old children with limited opportunities and literacy programs for their families. The Foundation's goal is to help break the cycles of illiteracy and lower the high school dropout rate in Arizona, one child at a time.

On January 29th, A Stepping Stone Foundation will host their annual Bill and Billie's Kids Go to College Dinner at 6:30 p.m. at Cross Roads United Methodist Church located at 7901 N Central Ave. The dinner honors students who are "graduates" of A Stepping Stone Foundation preschools and are presently attending college and those beginning college in the 2008/09 school year. Each student honored at the dinner will receive a monetary award from the Billie Gannaway Memorial Scholarship Fund for college. *See Bill & Billie's pg. 3*



### **FBR Open is February 4th**

Help A Stepping Stone Foundation through the Thunderbird's Birdies for Charity Program

The Thunderbirds' Birdies for Charity Program has invited Arizona 501(c)(3) organizations to involve the community in a pledge drive program based on the total number of birdies made during the 2008 FBR Open.

A Stepping Stone Foundation is registered for this program. Anyone can fill out a pledge form and pledge one cent or more per birdie to be a part of the program. Donor incentives include the Grand Prize of a new Buick and 100 other great prizes - all awarded through a random drawing of contributors.

Last year the Foundation received over \$1,000 as 110% comes back to A Stepping Stone Foundation. This year, it would be wonderful to double that amount!

No funds will be collected by the Foundation. Following the FBR Open, The Thunderbirds will invoice those who completed pledge forms, collect all monies and send the Foundation the total of all SSF donations **plus 10%.**

*If you would like to pledge, complete the form on page 7 and send it to the Stepping Stone office or go to:*

[www.FBROPEN.com](http://www.FBROPEN.com)

### **Christmas Angels Bring Christmas to Stepping Stone Families!**



Thank you to all the Angels who provided gifts to the families! The response was amazing! Special thanks to Chair Nancy Ireland and Co-chair Beverly Carroll. Page 6 contains pictures of the Stepping Stone Angels preparing gifts for delivery.

## President's Corner, by Charlie Adornetto, President

I have previously written of the surprising places you can find inspiration. I have been led to recall the novel *The Stand* by Stephen King. If you don't want to be spoiled about the ending of this 1200 page book, skip down five paragraphs!

The novel begins with a super-virus that eliminates more than 99% of the world's population. The remaining "bad" people in the U.S. are drawn to Las Vegas by a demon. The bad people start to accumulate nuclear weapons to destroy the few remaining good people who have all been drawn to Boulder, Colorado.

What this 1200 page book all boils down to is this: Four people must leave right now and walk 800 miles from Boulder to Las Vegas to be tortured and almost certainly killed. All they know is that this is what God has asked of them.

And so four ordinary people: a factory worker from Texas, a rock singer from NYC, a retired professor from New Hampshire and a farmer from the Heartland make that sacrifice. Three of them make it to Las Vegas. As the final two are making their Stand against the demon, the hand of God appears and ignites a nuclear bomb, incinerating the evil and rescuing the good people in Boulder.

Many people hated the ending. I loved the ending - I loved that what seemed to be building to something so gigantic all culminated in something so simple - if four ordinary people would make the ultimate sacrifice to save their community, God would save humanity.

King wrote the novel in 1978 and it almost seems quaint now. Listen to the rhetoric that emanates from talk radio and sometimes from our Legislature. Could we find four people today who would make that sacrifice to save their neighbors?

Politicians are not the answer. Ordinary people are the answer. We heard that mes-

sage again when Nadine Basha addressed the Stepping Stone Advisory Board. Proposition 203 and *First Things First* are a wonderful beginning for preschool for Arizona's children. But they are only a beginning. They require a philanthropic commitment.

That means us. Ordinary people.

When the Board has our strategic planning sessions, I like to comment that our ultimate goal is to hope that we are put out of business - that the Legislature will understand the importance of preschool ed-

### Who Will Take A Stand?

ucation and family literacy and fully commit and fund quality preschools with family literacy programs. We are far from being put out of business. A Stepping

Stone Foundation is looking forward to possibly partnering with Proposition 203 and *First Things First*, but we will continue to need ordinary people - you, the good people who support the Foundation and read this newsletter - to continue to generously contribute as we continue to make a difference in the lives of at-risk children and their families.

Make your Stand. There are many ways to make your stand and help a Stepping Stone Foundation. Read this newsletter and see all the opportunities, attend fundundraising events, consider donating your time or money - the list goes on and on. One way to donate without costing you is through the Tax Credit for the Working Poor which is a dollar for dollar Arizona State tax credit when you donate up to \$200 for individuals and \$400 for persons filing jointly. Many thanks to all who donated in 2007 and I hope you will consider donating for 2008. I want to wish all a Happy New Year and I have a special thank you to those who contributed in so many ways to our Christmas Angel program. Many of our children experienced a wonderful Christmas because of your continuing hard work and generosity.

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Dana George

Gerald George

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Jim Wilson

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## Director's Footnotes

by Cynthia Gattorna, Executive Director

So many wonderful things are happening at A Stepping Stone Foundation! A month ago the Advisory Group gathered at the home of Dana and Jerry George to hear from Nadine Basha talk of recent developments in early childhood development in Arizona. After a wonderful supper, thanks to Dana and Carolyn Keagle, the group brainstormed next steps and strategies. See these notes in a related article on page 5. This January, as this newsletter goes to print, I should have hired a Program Director. Look for the new Director's profile in the next Newsletter! We cannot function without all of you: from the folks that have given once and can watch to see how your good money will be invested in the future; and to those of you that have not only given steadily over the past decade and a half, but donate your valuable time to help with Christmas Angels, serve on the Board or deliver a piece of furniture to a family in need.

**Thank you all and Happy New Year!**

*Cindy*

### *Bill & Billie's from page 1*

Cost of the dinner is \$25 per person and will include a traditional Mexican buffet, generously donated by Don and Christine Stamper of Valle Luna Restaurants and entertainment by A Stepping Stone Foundation's "Beach Boys (and Girls)." Also included in the evening's events will be raffles for items including a beautiful handmade quilt made by Vera Bettencourt, Billie Gannaway's sister and a Sea World vacation package.

Tickets are available through: A Stepping Stone's office at (602) 843-8281, [www.astepplingstone.org](http://www.astepplingstone.org) and at Cross Roads United Methodist Church at (602) 944-1524. Enjoy an evening of honoring these students who have worked so hard to achieve success, all beginning with preschool provided by A Stepping Stone Foundation.

Like the child putting the starfish back in the ocean one at a time, A Stepping Stone Foundation is helping these families with limited opportunities better themselves through preschool, literacy programs and college scholarships, one family at a time.

*Please join in celebrating A Stepping Stone Foundation's own starfish.*



**January 29, 2008**

**6:30 p.m.**

**Cross Roads United Methodist Church**

## Upcoming Fundraisers for A Stepping Stone Foundation

Please join "El Grupo," new friends of a Stepping Stone led by longtime supporter Tio Tachias as they sponsor two events to benefit A Stepping Stone Foundation in 2008. These events will not only raise needed funds for the preschool classrooms but will also provide wonderful, traditional cultural experiences.

"La Tarjeada" will take place on February 10, 2008, at the VFW Post in downtown Phoenix. "La Tarjeada" is a traditional Hispanic Sunday afternoon get together. In years past, people would gather after church for food and entertainment and families would spend the entire Sunday afternoon together. Chaired by El Grupo member, Alberto Chamberlain, the Stepping Stone Tarjeada is a family event and will be very modest in cost. It will be a great afternoon of making new friends, good food and a rich cultural experience. Watch the website at [www.astepplingstone.org](http://www.astepplingstone.org) for more details as the event draws nearer.

Friday, April 18, 2008, El Grupo will also sponsor "Cena y Serenata," a more formal event at the El Zaribah Shrine Auditorium in Phoenix. Cena y Serenata means Supper and Serenade. Those of us that are familiar with a serenade know that this is a particularly romantic tradition of a small musical ensemble singing love songs to couples. This promises to be a very romantic evening complete with a silent auction and dancing! Tickets will be \$100 per person. Watch the website and the next edition of the Footprint News for more details or call the office at (602) 843-8281.

A special thanks at this time to Thunderbird Lodge 15 for paying the security deposit at El Zaribah Shrine Auditorium for this event. Please join us for these culturally rich events while raising funds for the Stepping Stone kids!

Thank you to  
The Arizona Region of the Classic Car  
Club of America for their donation of 35  
new books for the Stepping Stone  
classrooms.

## Classroom Notes

**Westwood Primary***Fran Smith and Neida Ascencio*

Our classroom has developed into a nice little community of friends and helpers. Our students now lead in saying the Pledge of Allegiance, take turns introducing the calendar everyday and help with many other "jobs" in our classroom.

Our special project for November was about sharing. Each family was given a paper turkey to decorate at home. All families participated and showed how creative and talented they are. From painted macaroni to real chicken feathers, we had quite a variety. Our students loved sharing and talking about what they did. We also had a delightful time on our family project - decorating a gingerbread girl or boy!

We have been very fortunate to go on two field trips already this year thanks to the generosity of the friends of A Stepping Stone Foundation. Our first field trip was to the State Fair where we discovered a petting zoo. Our students were so very excited to get up close and personal with a mommy pig and her piglets and a baby giraffe. We also walked and shopped in a farmers market set up just right for our size. We even milked a cow - it wasn't real but it was fun! Our second field trip was to Tolmachoff Farms where we picked fresh vegetables and walked through a corn maze. We all made it out safely, and enjoyed a picnic lunch and ice cream.

*Happy New Year!*  
*Fran and Neida*

**Westwood Primary***Ms. Janet Castaneda and Ms. Betty Chavez*

In anticipation of the holidays our class has been reading the story "The Gingerbread Man" and learning about the adventures of this special cookie. As a family project we sent home large gingerbread people to decorate for the class. The parents are always so creative and it is wonderful to see how proud the children feel that they worked on something together with their families.

The children are really enjoying the story and have learned the famous lines "Run, run as fast as you can, you can't catch me, I'm the gingerbread man." Some of the children have brought the story into their play on the playground. They pretend they are the gingerbread man and their friends are trying to catch them. This year Ms. Fran's class shared the story of the Gingerbread Girl and the class quickly learned the new phrase, "I'll run and I'll run with a leap and a twirl, you can't catch me I'm the gingerbread girl." The girl in the story is the sister of the gingerbread boy and has a special surprise ending with everyone eating gingerbread cookies at the gingerbread girl's house.

As a whole class we created a large gingerbread house to display all the students artwork. The students have made a real connection between the story and the gingerbread house. It is wonderful to see all the rich language a story can awaken in a child's imagination.

We wish everyone a Happy New Year!

*Thanks for all your continued support.*  
*Ms. Janet Castaneda & Ms. Betty Chavez*

**Granada Primary***Ms. Janice Milks and Ms. Veronica Flores*

The children are progressing well and parent participation is excellent. All but three parents have achieved the goal of 85% attendance and above for the first semester.

The parents watched a movie called "Victor" about a Hispanic 5th grade boy who feels he doesn't belong in Mexico or the United States. The movie is from his perspective and explores his feelings about his mother who won't learn English or

will not go to the classroom to meet his teacher. He then tells that his mother took an ESL class and began to come to his classroom and how good it felt for him. The parents who watched this movie were very moved and really understood what Victor was saying. It was inspiring to each and every one of them!

The children have been studying triangles and made reindeer using the triangle shapes - this was fun for

the children as well as educational in seeing what shapes are used in making their crafts.

Finally, we had a celebration of the end of the calendar year in the park where the children ate pizza and the parents had pot luck.

We would like to wish you all a very Happy New Year and thank you for your continued support.

*Jan and Veronica*



**Isaac Preschool**

*Belinda Valenzuela and Angela Rodriguez*

The children attended a wonderful all campus fair on Friday December 14th. Every classroom was open to parents and children so they could paint, make a book, a collage or other fun learning activities.

The children enjoyed the Pebbletec Golf tournament (see picture on page 6) and were very polite golf spectators. The mothers who accompanied the children were very interested in the game and enjoyed learning how it's played.

Santa visited the classroom before the children were let out for winter break and they all enjoyed reading and singing with him.

See the picture at the bottom of this page and the thank you for all the books donated to the Isaac Preschool campus.

*Happy New Year!*  
*Belinda and Angela*

A big thank you to all of the Stepping Stone friends of Ted Purdy and the Levy Family who collected books for the kids and their families. Picutred below: Kenny Levy helps deliver 1 500 gently used donated books given to the children on the Isaac preschool campus. Every family took home several books. A wonderful gift for families that often have none at home.



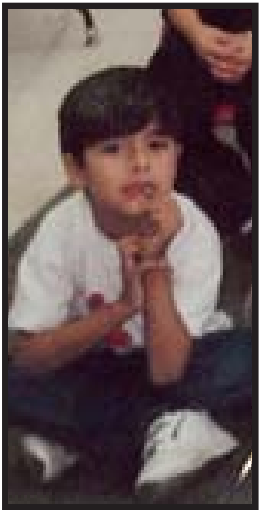
**Stepping Stone  
Advisory Group Meeting Notes**

Members of A Stepping Stone Advisory group met on November 29th at the home of Jerry and Dana George. The group included: Carolyn Keagle (Board Liaison), Dana and Gerry George, Con Englehorn, Charlie Adornetto, Bill Smith, Tio Tachias, Jack Bobo, Gwen and Durrell Hillis, Nadine and Eddie Basha, Mike Hensley, Jim Wilson, Craig Hansen, Gary Tooker and Cindy Gattorna. After a light supper, Nandine Basha of *First Things First* spoke about the passing of proposition 203 and what it means to early childhood education. The group agreed that the Foundation should be involved with *First Things First* to perhaps receive some funding from proposition 203 money which will be distributed throughout the state for early childhood education.

The Advisory group also discussed goals and strategies they feel are important to sustain and grow A Stepping Stone Foundation including: ensure there is money to sustain staff and education; continue annual strategic planning; involve more people in a more active way; create a sustaining interest in the Speaker's Bureau; continue to partner in the community; replicate the classroom model; continue to pursue money from Susie Buffet's foundation; increase visibility; produce a documentary; quickly address preschool at risk funding from the Arizona Department of Education; re-engage the business community; and pursue the Pew Charitable Trusts

The Advisory group was left with a challenge for each member to think of one idea to achieve the above goals. See upcoming editions of this newsletter for more news from the Advisory Group and their ideas.

*Then and Now:  
Former  
preschool  
student, Ivan  
Carrena as a  
student at Isaac  
(left) and now, a  
high school  
senior applying  
for a Billie  
Gannaway  
Memorial  
Scholarship for  
college.*





## A Stepping Stone Foundation Scrapbook



*Pebbletece Golf Tournament participants enjoyed a beautiful day of golf on both courses at the Grayhawk Golf Club. Pictured left: Sponsor and PGA Pro Ted Purdy, Arizona Diamondback pitcher, Brandon Webb and Sponsor Terry Jirovsky of Pebbletec.*

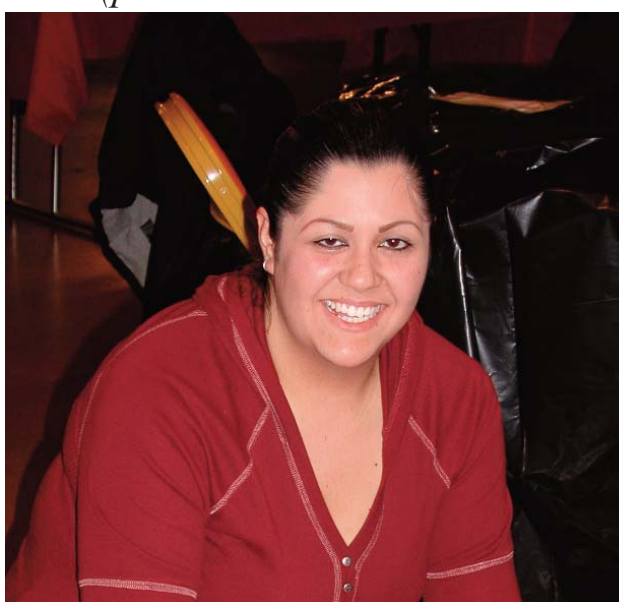
*Pictured right: The children from Ms. Valenzuela's class at Isaac enjoyed their lunch with Stepping Stone Founder, Bill Smith. The children sang a song for the golfers and presented them with a thank you banner.*



*Many thanks to Jamie Purdy (left) and Robbie Petty (right) for all of their hard work in coordinating the tournament (pictured here with a tournament volunteer).*



*Thank you to SSF Treasurer Judy Brengi (left) and President Charlie Adornetto and his wife, Dina, for their help at the tournament.*



*Santa's helpers gathered on December 10th at Shadow Rock to sort the presents for all of the Stepping Stone Families. Over 75 families received gifts and the families most in need received household goods such as furniture, baby items and food certificates for local grocery stores. Pictured from left: former preschooler and board member Martiza Hernandez; board members Tom Pynn and Linda Pape; and board members Wendy Blair and Jackie Smith..*





Santa Visits the Classrooms!

Many thanks to Santa Mo as he delights the children for the 17th year, bringing them gifts and reading special Christmas stories with them.



Thank you to all of you who donated to  
A Stepping Stone Foundation  
in memory of Jerry Landis.

Over \$5,500 was donated in celebration of the life  
of Stepping Stone's good friend Jerry.

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James Murphy  
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Carolyn Gentle  
Thomas & Ruth Ann  
Hornaday



PLEDGE form



I pledge and promise to donate for every birdie made during the 2008 FBR Open to the Birdies for Charity Program.

\$

Per Birdie Pledge  
1¢ minimum



One time donation of \$  
(\$20 min.)  
Check Number:

Make checks payable to:  
THUNDERBIRDS CHARITIES



PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

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Company Name (only if using company address)

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Pledge Form must be returned to charity inviting your pledge

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A Stepping Stone Foundation  
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Phoenix, AZ 85071-4318

BFC NUMBER  
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To Pledge to Birdies for Charity, simply  
complete the above form and mail it to the  
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P.O. Box 84318  
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Thanks for Your Support!





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### **DATES TO REMEMBER!**

January 29th: Bill and Billie's Dinner to honor the  
Stepping Stone Scholars and to Benefit the  
Billie Gannaway Memorial Scholarsip Fund

February 10: La Tarjeada

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***Save the Date! April 18, 2008 at  
El Zaribah Shrine Auditorium***

## Cena y Serenata Dinner & Serenade

***April 18, 2008, 6:30 p.m.***  
***at El Zaribah Shrine Auditorium***



*Many thanks to Tio Tachias (pictured above) and El Grupo for presenting this wonderful evening to benefit A Stepping Stone Foundation*

*Eleven former preschoolers who will be attending college in the 2008/2009 school year were awarded scholarships from the Billie Gannaway Memorial Scholarship Fund at the Bill and Billie's Kids Go To College Annual Dinner on January 29th. Pictured right are some of the scholars at the event. See the article on page 3 for a list of the awardees and highlights of the starfish themed dinner*

## ***El Grupo Presents: Cena y Serenata***

***A Traditional Romantic  
Evening of Dinner and Serenade  
to Benefit A Stepping Stone Foundation***

Please join "El Grupo," new Stepping Stone friends of led by longtime supporter Tio Tachias, as they sponsor *Cena y Serenata* to benefit A Stepping Stone Foundation. This event will not only raise needed funds for the preschool classrooms but will also provide a romantic, traditional cultural experience.

Translated as "Dinner and Serenade," guests will enjoy a delicious meal as trios of musicians serenade tables with traditional serenades. A Potentate Choir will also perform and following dinner, guests can dance to a live orchestra. There will also be a silent auction with all proceeds going to A Stepping Stone Foundation.

The semi-formal event will be held on April 18th at the El Zaribah Shrine Auditorium beginning at 6:00 p.m. with a no host bar. Save the Date cards were sent in late February and invitations will arrive in homes soon. If you haven't received an invitation, please call the Stepping Stone office - all are welcome at this event!

Tickets are \$100 per person. A big thanks goes to our generous sponsors including BCBS, SCFAZ, the Arizona Lottery and Gary and Diane Tooker.

*Join us and experience a romantic eveing  
of dinner and serenades!*





## President's Corner, by Charlie Adornetto, President

Have you completed your taxes yet? How did you do?

Did you take advantage of A Stepping Stone Foundation's tax credit? This is the Tax Credit for the Working Poor and does not conflict in any way with the school or scholarship tax credits, which you can also take advantage of at the same time.

The computation is a little tricky and we cannot guarantee that you qualify for the full \$400 married tax credit (it is based on your previous charitable contributions). Please see [www.azdor.gov](http://www.azdor.gov) to see if you qualify and for more information. If you do qualify, you get a full \$400 tax credit on your state tax return (\$200 for qualified single filers). This means that, in effect, \$400 of your state taxes goes directly to A Stepping Stone Foundation. It does not cost you a penny!

And it gets even better - you still get to take the contribution as a deduction to your income for your federal taxes. For example, if your income for your federal taxes is \$50,000 and you are in the 30% tax bracket, your federal tax liability is \$15,000. If you contribute \$400 to A Stepping Stone Foundation, your federal income is reduced to \$49,600 and your federal tax liability is reduced to \$14,880. In effect, you have saved \$120.

Let's review: Assuming you qualify for the full \$400 tax credit for the working poor contribution to A Stepping Stone Foundation, it will not cost you a penny on your state tax computation and will reduce your income on your federal return, saving you money. It is a great deal.

The best part is that the money goes to our preschool children and their families, helping to ensure that they can succeed in our society.

Here are a few other tips: You don't have to wait until December to contribute your tax credit! You can do it now, when the pain of a heavy tax burden or the joy

of a nice refund is on your mind!

Or you can use your federal tax rebate! What a great way to show how much you greatly value preschool education and family literacy!

Here is another tip: While you can only qualify up to \$400 for the credit, please don't think that A Stepping Stone Foundation would not happily accept more. Any contribution over that amount still qualifies as a deduction to your federal and state income.

With teacher certification requirements going into effect for preschool teachers, SSF's expenses are going to rise substantially. With a downturn in the economy, it is harder for charitable organizations to meet their budget requirements. A Stepping Stone Foundation's budget for four classes next year is over \$400,000 and a large portion of that budget depends on donations from you and your neighbors.

At A Stepping Stone Foundation, we do understand that you have worked hard for your money and we don't take requests for contributions lightly. But chances are, if you have received this newsletter and have read this far into the President's Corner, you do passionately care about quality preschool and family literacy. A Stepping Stone Foundation remains committed to both.

Finally, I am excited to announce a new fundraising opportunity, *Cena y Seranata* (Dinner and Serenade), on Friday, April 18 (*see page 1*). This is an exciting, semi-formal event and an opportunity to make new friends and associates. The event will take place at El Zaribah Shrine, 552 North 40th Street and will include table serenades, a live orchestra for dancing, and a potentate choir. For more information, please call the Stepping Stone office at 602-843-8281.

Hope to see you there!

-Charlie

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## Director's Footnotes

by Cynthia Gattorna, Executive Director

Dear A Stepping Stone Foundation supporters,

Please take the time to read through this *Footprints News*. You will see reports from the classroom teachers as well as an article Ann Smith sent us about the eye-opening and well written book, *Three Cups of Tea* about an American charity that funds elementary schools and health care for children in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Additionally, I hope you will take the time to read about Dolores Retana (pictured right), who has contracted to do program evaluation and development for A Stepping Stone Foundation.

I would like to take this opportunity to apologize to our Spanish speaking readers for the silly typo in our last newsletter talking about the Tardeada event (a traditional Sunday afternoon gathering in the Hispanic community). As it turns out, the event has been postponed, but we had spelled it wrong in the last newsletter, so: "lo siento mucho, mis amigos (I am very sorry, my friends)!"

I am very excited about our program development and evaluation. At a recent meeting of A Stepping Stone's Advisory group, Dana George asked me what was the one thing I thought we needed to take our Foundation to a new level. I answered, "Meaningful evaluation!" It continues to amaze me that when one is brave enough to say out loud to a group of people what that one thing is that you need – how quickly it comes to pass! Please watch the next newsletter for articles about the focus groups that Dolores is convening with key stakeholders that receive the benefit of our services (parents, children, teachers, Principals and Superintendents).

Finally, please join us at *Cena y Serenata* (Dinner and Serenade) April 18th for a romantic and fun-filled evening at El Zaribah Shrine to benefit the preschool programs at A Stepping Stone Foundation (see the article on page 1).

As always, thank you all who support A Stepping Stone Foundation with your good resources, thoughtful input, word of mouth and kind hearts!

-Cindy



## Welcome Dolores Retana!



*Please help us welcome Dolores Retana, who has contracted to perform program evaluation and development for SSF. With a Bachelor's in Social Work and an M.A. in Education and Counseling, Dolores has worked as an independent Human Services Consultant for 13 years, last serving as Assistant Director for the Governor's Office for Children. She has also served as the Principal Investigator on federally-funded, multi-year funded program. Dolores brings a wealth of experience in the area of evaluation, early childhood and program development. Dolores is the mother of two delightful sons, Emilio and Néstor.*

## Bill and Billie's Kids:

### Making a Difference to Each One

#### **Dinner Honors Eleven Scholarship Awardees**

On January 29th, A Stepping Stone Foundation hosted the annual *Bill and Billie's Kids Go to College Dinner* where eleven former preschoolers who will attend college in 2008/2009 were awarded scholarships from the Bilie Gannaway Memorial Scholarship Fund. Many thanks to event chair, Linda Pape, for all her hard work, creativity and enthusiasm for the "starfish themed" dinner and to her team of Bev Carroll, Diane Cooper, Craig Hansen, Eileen Hoard, Carolyn Keagle and Marilyn Sensney.

Honored at the dinner were students Laura Arias, Linda Calixtro, Ivan Carreno, Alejandro Espinoza, Marlette Espinoza, Maritza Hernandez, Efren Martinez, Blanca Pereda, Britanni Roberts, Paola Rodriguez and Vannessa Tang.

At press time, additional applications were in process and new awardees will be announced in the next edition of the *Footprint News*.

*Congratulations to all scholarship recipients!*



## Classroom Notes

**Granada Primary***Ms. Janice Milks and Ms. Veronica Flores*

It is hard to believe we are in the final stretch of our school year already. So many things are left to be done and looking back so much has been accomplished. The children came in with little English, lots of energy and not knowing what school was all about. Now each morning they find their names on the carpet like pros and settle in, hoping to be the first to say what day it is or what number goes with it.

They choose jobs because they like them and beg for just a few minutes more to "read" the book they have borrowed from the school library. There is lots of activity all day long and so much learning is taking place. The parents also, have grown and the group is very close. They have worked hard in English classes and have been very faithful in fulfilling their responsibilities to the program.

They readily fill in when someone is sick or unable to come because a sibling is sick. They have become friends and confidants, forming their own support system outside of their family grouping. They encourage each other and console each other selflessly. Through the confidence they have gained this year, they will now take a more active role in their child's education and are more willing to volunteer time at school as they understand the importance of what

they're doing.

The little ones in childcare have grown too, with thirteen children of varying ages it has been a challenge. The children who have come on a regular basis have grown more comfortable with separation from mom, taken their first steps, said their first words and have grown into very social little beings. Those who will be old enough for preschool next year are especially excited!

This program is so very important. Each of the families enrolled are permanently impacted in so many ways. Sometimes we don't really realize this until years later when someone will return for a visit filling us in on all the good things going on in their lives. They themselves say it is because of their experiences in the program.

I know that it takes many to make this program possible and that it is not easy work. Money is tight and it is a constant struggle to find it.

Please be assured it is worth it. The families that have benefitted from being in the program are grateful for the experience and will move on successfully because of what they've learned. I send their thanks along with mine for caring so much and working so hard to make this possible.

-Janice

**Westwood Primary***Ms. Janet Castaneda and Ms. Betty Chavez*

The families send many thanks to all the Stepping Stone elves that helped make their holidays brighter. It was wonderful to hear the children's stories about how Santa Claus left them presents outside their door. Every year I am amazed at how well organized and efficient things run. As teachers we feel blessed to pass on your gifts to our families.

When the children returned to school after the holidays we started our exploration of dinosaurs. We learned about the difference between meat eaters and plant eaters. I was surprised how much the children knew just from their observations. Some children talked about how the volcano had hot fire and killed all the dinosaurs. We added extinction to our list of vocabulary words. The children are always anxious to share their ideas and I love to see how they learn. Young children make connections to what they learn all the time to things in their own lives.

I will be out of my classroom for the next six weeks so I can fulfill the last requirements of my teaching certificate. I chose to student teach in first grade to gain a better understanding of what lies ahead for my students. It was very difficult saying good-bye but I know they are good hands with my assistant Betty Chavez. I know the time will pass quickly and I am looking forward to ending the school year back in my own classroom.

Wish me luck!

-Janet



**Isaac Preschool***Belinda Valenzuela and Angela Rodriguez*

After the holidays, the children returned taller, energetic and more eager to learn. They have all learned to recognize their own last name and are even recognizing each other's. All children have a journal and are showing improvement in drawing, printing, letter recognition, language and creative imaginations. We began a new curriculum called "Growing Literacy" which works on cognitive skills, socialization, math history, science, reading and writing by using the children's literature.

Recently, the class used the book, "Math Count," and the children were given ten play mice and a play snake to act out the story in the book. Seventeen of the children were able to count to ten while placing the mice in the jar, pretending to be the snake. They loved that the mice figured out how to work together to trick the greedy snake and tip the jar to escape.

Everyday we have a "Morning Message." For example, this week it was "We use polite words in our classroom like Please and Thank You." We have heard more polite words during their play and parents are noticing the difference at home as well.

Parents are given a copy of our weekly lesson during Parent Time to help reinforce what the children are taught in the classroom. Recently, we began to work on the AB pattern and one day when Emily was drawing, she exclaimed, "Look, teacher, I made a pattern!" She had drawn a boy, girl, boy, girl, boy, girl and recognized it as a pattern. It is so exciting to see the children put together concepts they have learned from earlier lessons.

The children are little sponges and are absorbing everything we teach. Our attendance is very high because the children do not want to miss school! Sadly, sometimes a parent will bring them in although they are ill because they didn't want to miss and we have to send them home.

As teachers, Angela and I are totally exhausted at the end of a 6 ½ hour day but it is wonderful to be able to be a part of helping our children become lifelong learners.

Thank you for this great opportunity you give us and the children.

- Belinda

**Westwood Primary***Fran Smith and Neida Ascencio*

Thank you to all of you for your generosity in adopting our families at Christmas. You are truly our Christmas Angels! Our families were surprised at the many gifts and so appreciative of all your help and hard work! I just returned back to class after student teaching in a kindergarten class for the last six weeks. Ms. Neida held down the fort while I was away and she did a WONDERFUL job. She is a great example of going the extra mile to help out and I truly appreciate her dedication.

February has been rewarding as our students learn more about the helpers in our community. Our family project this month has turned out beautiful! Each family member was given a large puzzle piece to decorate anyway they wanted to. When all pieces were returned, Ms. Neida put it together up on our wall and like magic - our puzzle pieces came together to make a giant heart. Students loved seeing how their piece fit with the others, and my message to them is, "Look what we can do when we work together."

I'm very proud of how far our students have come so far, and so grateful to everyone supporting our program.

Thank you!

- Fran

**Three Cups of Tea**  
*by Ann Smith*

A Stepping Stone Foundation in Arizona and the Central Asian Institute in Pakistan and Afghanistan are a globe apart. Yet, they are both dedicated to educate young girls and boys who would otherwise have little (or no) hope for a productive future. Both organizations began in the early 1990s, although, as you can imagine, our own path has been quite smooth compared to the challenges this American has encountered. Greg Mortenson was trying to climb a mountain in the Karakoram Range of Pakistan, and he ended up building schools there. It's an unbelievable story and is still unfolding.

There are copies of Mr. Mortenson's book *Three Cups of Tea* available at the Stepping Stone Office. They are free as gifts from Bill and I. Please set aside some time to read this intriguing story.



# The Spirit of Giving

by Sally Putnam

Philanthropy is a cornerstone of the American culture. The reasons for giving are as diverse as the organizations to which donations can be made, but the one common motivator among philanthropists is a strong spirit of altruism.

It is this selfless, individual generosity that keeps charities thriving, with charitable giving up to a whopping \$200 billion annually<sup>1</sup>, up 3% since 2004. And that's quite significant considering individuals account for over 75% of charitable contributions. These dollars help provide care and services to millions of people every year. Without them, either the government would have to finance these services - and raise taxes to afford to do so - or they would disappear entirely.

## **The Government Says Thank You**

Recognizing that every dollar donated by an individual is a dollar less that the government needs to kick in, tax breaks are offered for those who give. This incentive should not be the main reason for benefaction, but it shouldn't be ignored either. Making every dollar work hardest – both for the charity and donor – is a smart part of an overall financial plan.

## **Many Ways to Give**

Supporting a charitable organization you identify with is as important as choosing the best vehicle for your generosity. Depending on the size of your gift and how its conveyance fits into your financial big

picture, there are a variety of ways to make charitable donations. Cash contributions and outright gifts are popular ways to give to charity. But, there are ways to structure planned gifts which may make it possible for you to give even more during your lifetime and after your death, while still meeting your current financial needs and leaving a legacy to heirs.

True, charities may be named in a donor's will or as beneficiaries to a life insurance policy or retirement plan. And, a Pooled Income Fund allows multiple people to combine contributions and donate them together in return for interest income over a specified term. But, for donors interested in making a substantial gift to charity while maintaining an income stream for life, an annuity option might be worth a closer look.

## **Annuities as Vehicles for Charitable Donations**

Charitable Gift Annuities can be used to make a sizeable donation to a charity while guaranteeing a fixed income for one or two lives. Donors can choose to use a Current Charitable Gift Annuity which would begin paying out annuity payments as soon as it is established, or a Deferred Charitable Gift Annuity which begins making annuity payments at some specified future time, often to coincide with retirement. Certain age and donation requirements usually apply but vary by organization.

With Charitable Gift Annuities, assets in the form of cash, marketable securities, real estate or other valuables such as art collections, are transferred to the charity of choice in return for a fixed annuity payment for life. This arrangement is irrevocable. Most charities pay out at rates set by the American Council on Gift Annuities and the recipient(s) of the annuity payments is called the annuitant(s). Upon the annuitant(s) death, annuity payments cease and the charity retains the remaining value of the asset.

Charitable Gift Annuities are not quid pro quo. In other words, the total of the annuity payments received by the annuitant(s) is not equal the value of the asset(s) donated: that is where the "gift" part comes into play. However, for philanthropists interested in making a substantial donation, a gift annuity benefits both giver and receiver. Besides the satisfaction of knowing your generosity has helped a charity further its cause, a charitable gift annuity provides donors with a significant tax deduction in the year it is established. The fair market value of the transferred asset(s) minus the present value of the total annuity payments can be written off, subject to the usual limitations on charitable deductions. Plus, a portion of the annual annuity payments is tax-free, thereby giving the annuitant a fixed income stream at a reduced tax rate.

Charitable Gift Annuities are easy  
*see Spirit of Giving, page 7*

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<sup>1</sup> "Why We Give: National Philanthropy Day, Nov 15", Times Community Newspapers – Faquier Times- Democrat/ The Faquier Citizen, 11/14/2006.

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*The Spirit of Giving, continues from page 6*

to establish – often they consist of just a simple two-page legal document. And, if you think a Charitable Gift Annuity is out of your reach, think again. The majority of donors are retired females over 70 years of age and of moderate means<sup>2</sup>. These altruists are interested in supporting charities that they believe in, but don't want to lose the income generated by their assets. When they learn how a Charitable Gift Annuity can grant assistance to the charity while providing an income for the donor, they are interested in learning more.

### **Gift Annuities and Endowments**

Charitable Gift Annuities can even be used to fund endowments. In these situations, a donor can transfer their asset(s) into a Charitable Gift Annuity which stipulates that the remainder of the gift (that which is left after all annuity obligations are met) be placed into an endowment fund – where the principal remains in-tact – thereby benefiting the charitable organization in perpetuity. Using this method to fund an endowment has some advantages: first, it gives the organization immediate access to a larger sum than it would have access to if the funds were donated over several years. Second, that larger sum can go to work for the endowment, maintaining its principal value while earning interest to be re-invested into the endowment so it can continue to grow and achieve the

donor's wishes.

### **Charitable Annuity Trusts**

Charitable Lead Annuity Trusts and Charitable Remainder Annuity Trusts can also be used to donate to charity. With the Charitable Lead Annuity Trust, assets transferred into this trust are used to create an annuity payment to the charitable organization of choice. At the time of the donor's death (or end of specified term), the assets of the trust transfer back to a non-charity beneficiary designated by the donor. This arrangement makes it possible for donors to give a charity the benefit of the assets for a period of time while still keeping ownership of the assets "in the family".

Charitable Remainder Annuity Trust – Assets transferred into this trust are used to create annuity payment to the donor. At the donor's death (or end of specified term), the assets in trust transfer to the charity.

This type of trust helps create a fixed income stream for the donor during their lifetime, while giving the charity ownership of the asset at a later date.

Whether it's moral obligation, family tradition, or in response to an event or illness that has had a profound, personal impact, Americans are spreading the wealth through charitable giving. Speak to your financial and legal advisors to determine how planned giving may fit into your retirement or estate plans. Making the most of your generosity

by choosing an appropriate gift-giving vehicle will help your goodwill reach even further.

For more information about charitable giving, visit:

**[www.acga-web.org](http://www.acga-web.org)**

or

**[www.charitynavigator.com](http://www.charitynavigator.com)**.

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<sup>2</sup> "Charitable Gift Annuities: When You Can Give and Receive", [www.aarp.org/money/financial\\_planning/sessionseven/charitable\\_gift\\_annuities.html](http://www.aarp.org/money/financial_planning/sessionseven/charitable_gift_annuities.html), November 11, 2006.

*Hi! - My name is Mary Hernandez and I'm Ezequiel's mom. He is in Stepping Stone Program. The reason of this card is because my family and me are very thankful for the presents you sent to my children. They like them very much and we want to thank you. Thank you again! God Bless You!*

*- Mary Hernandez P.S. I'm studying English in that program and this is one of my first letters.*





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### DATE TO REMEMBER!

April 18th - Cena y  
Serenata 6:00 p.m.  
at the El Zaribah  
Shrine Auditorium  
For details, see the  
article on page 1 or  
call the Stepping Stone  
office at (602) 843-8281

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## 22nd Annual Ladybug Classic Golf Tournament is May 5th!

*Proceeds to Benefit  
A Stepping Stone Foundation  
and the Boys & Girls Clubs*

Join the fun for the annual Ladybug Golf Tournament at the Camelback Golf Club on May 5th. This event has raised over \$450,000 for charities in the valley over the past 21 years and since 1999, A Stepping Stone Foundation has been selected as a beneficiary. 40% of the proceeds will be given to SSF! The entry fee is \$200 and includes all golf fees, continental breakfast, lunch, silent auction and boutique. Please call the Stepping Stone office at (602) 843-8281 for more information.

This group of 20 dedicated women have raised more than \$132,00 for SSF over the past eleven years.

**Thank you  
Ladybugs!**

