

## Support A Stepping Stone Foundation through the Arizona 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 Foundation is a self-certified nonprofit organization that serves the working poor in Arizona. We are so grateful to those of you who qualified and contributed through this program last year. Over \$30,000 was raised for the Foundation in 2007! 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*

**Welcome new board members  
Jennifer Sanchez  
Evelyn Shapiro**

**Thank you to all the returning board members as well. 2008/2009 looks to be a great year for the Foundation with the dedication of the fine members of the board! Board member Jessica Sanchez will be taking a year off the board and return in 2009/2010. You will be missed, Jessica!**

## Golf Tournament is November 24th

*Shine up those clubs, clean off those spikes and join the fun at Moon Valley Country Club while benefitting the Stepping Stone Kids*

A Stepping Stone Foundation will host its 12th Annual Golf Tournament on November 24, 2008 at the Moon Valley golf course. This year's event will include an 11:00 a.m. shotgun start in a scramble format followed by an awards reception at 5:00 p.m. which will include a band and a silent auction.

Cost for the event is \$250 per person and includes green fees and lunch on the course.

Join PGA professional Ted Purdy for a great day of golf to benefit the Stepping Stone Foundation classrooms.

Tournament activities include a hole-in-one contest with a new car

as the prize, a turkey shoot (take a golf shot at turkey-costumed Jamie Purdy on the driving range!) and many more fun-filled events.

At this time, auction items are needed. If you have an item to donate or know of a business or individual who might wish to donate an item, please call the Stepping Stone office at (602) 843-8281.

**Slots are filling quickly!  
Register today!**

If you would like information or **would like to volunteer** at the tournament, please call the office at (602) 843-8281 or go to:

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

## Introducing A Stepping Stone Foundation's Program Coordinator

Please welcome Paulette Harshberger



Paulette joined A Stepping Stone Foundation in August and is responsible to bring all of the Stepping Stone programs to a general consistency while monitoring and making recommendations for classrooms, childcare and adult education funded by the Foundation. She holds a Bachelors degree in Child Development and Family Relations from North Dakota State University and has 25 years of preschool experience including teaching at and directing an accredited preschool and also teaching preschool in Washington Elementary School District. Since retiring from teaching two years ago, she has worked for the Phoenix Public Library Department presenting parent workshops on the topic of "Raising A Reader." Paulette recently said of her career: "Being a part of the first educational experiences for hundreds of children and their families has been a joy. I look forward to working with the wonderful supporters, staff and families of A Stepping Stone Foundation."

## President's Corner, by Craig Hansen, President

### Charting a Course for Success...

#### *Or what can a new president bring to A Stepping Stone Foundation?*

Charlie Adornetto, reported in his last President's Corner column that a new President is at the helm of A Stepping Stone Foundation. With all the successes of our past leadership you may appropriately wonder why a new President? A newly elected President can sail in with new possibilities or drag along like a tethered anchor as the Foundation sails to the future. It is my intent to continue to embrace the strong traditions of our past and initiate positive changes for our future, and with it bring promise and opportunity to Stepping Stone families. Like a compass, I have four points of direction to chart our course for success.

First is to remember the past. The vision of our founder, Bill Smith, of providing high quality education for preschoolers and their parents; providing care for younger siblings while parents attend classes; and providing scholarships to Stepping Stone students when they enter college is as important to our community now as it was when the Foundation first began. This vision turned to reality is available for families who would not normally be offered these opportunities. Is this far reaching vision not the model every community should implement in their schools and every Arizonan should support?

My second compass point for success is to continue growing public knowledge of A Stepping Stone Foundation and our

programs that lead to successful community members. We must continue to remind all we come in contact with to "imagine the possibilities" and realize how our communities can benefit from A Stepping Stone Foundation education and scholarship programs.

In heading to the future our greatest challenge will be securing financial stability - point three. The need and opportunity for implementing our programs will always be great. We are working with a deficit budget already this year. Our ability to finance the vision is dependent on all types of people stepping on board with needed resources. So my third course is to continue finding ways to bring in support to fully fund our programs and increase our scholarship fund.

My fourth direction for success is to work with our strengths and expand on them where possible. Our strengths already include a strong team of enthusiastic teachers, knowledgeable staff, a dedicated board, devoted volunteers and committed donors. However, we can strengthen the Foundation by bringing more people and their resources on board.

Thank you to all of you for placing your confidence in me to lead A Stepping Stone Foundation for the next few years. I view this as an opportunity to make a difference and leave A Stepping Stone Foundation and our community a little better.



### Stepping Into College 2008

On Saturday, September 6th, the Stepping Stone Scholarship Committee hosted former Stepping Stone 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 were given applications for the Billie Gannaway Scholarship which will be awarded to graduating seniors who are planning to attend college in the 2009/10 school year. A special thank you to Shadow Rock Church for donating space on their busy campus for this event.

#### Executive Board

##### President

Craig Hansen

##### Vice President

Con Englehorn

##### Secretary

Marie Dils

##### Treasurer

Judy Brengi

##### Past Presidents

Charlie Adornetto

Mike Hensley

Carolyn Keagle

##### Founder

Bill Smith

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Wendy Blair

Beverly Carroll

Maritza Hernandez

Eileen Hoard

Nancy Ireland

Linda Pape

Tom Pynn

Jennifer Sanchez

Marilyn Sensney

Evelyn Shapiro

Jackie Smith

#### Advisory Group

Carolyn Keagle

Board Liaison

Jack Bobo

Con Englehorn

Dana George

Gerald George

Jack Kucera

Vianne Kucera

Gary Tooker

Jim Wilson

Ed Van Brunt

Bill Smith, Founder

#### Staff

##### Executive Director

Cynthia Gattorna

Cindy@astepingstone.org

(602) 670-0599 (cell)

##### Program Coordinator

Paulette Harshberger

##### Administrative Assistant and

##### Newsletter Editor

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**Phone:** (602) 843-8281

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**www.astepingstone.org**

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



Director's Footnotes  
by Cynthia Gattorna, Executive Director

It's All About Opportunity

I have a couple supporters that like to remind me with great passion that all children in the United States are born with the same opportunities as everyone else. These good folks love A Stepping Stone Foundation because we motivate our children and families to take advantage of those opportunities. After having walked in the real world of living breathing human beings, not abstract concepts written in research journals, history books, or editorial columns; after having walked in that real world, I can say that in my heart of hearts, "It just ain't true."

Perhaps it is truer than anywhere else on the planet (a discussion I'll hold for another time), or perhaps we are quibbling semantics, but I see no proof whatsoever that most of the children enrolled in our programs have the same opportunities as my own children born to well educated parents in a middle-class somewhat affluent neighborhood. The general quality of public schools in low and very low socioeconomic neighborhoods that I have come into personal contact with, either as a public teacher or as a non-profit executive, simply do not have the same opportunity menu as other public schools, or as most private or charter schools. I believe this is largely due to the fact that most of the neighborhood kids enter that school far below their same aged peers in neighborhoods that have families with well educated parents. Please let me be clear: I am NOT faulting the public school system in general, nor is this a discreet plug for school vouchers, charter schools or other possibilities. I am simply saying that children born to parents of low or no literacy, numeracy or sense of critical thinking are born already lacking in opportunity. Additionally, when growing up in disadvantaged neighborhoods, there are very few environmental alternatives until public school, at which time, studies tell us, children are already woefully behind in literacy and other basic skills. In short, these kids begin school at a disadvantage to their same aged peers, whose parents have a high degree of education and have had either training in or exposure to nurturing parental skills.

There's no finger pointing here just observable, documentable fact. One of the many motivational factors that keeps me with A Stepping Stone Foundation is the fact that we prepare our kids and families to seek out and link them with opportunities that do exist for them by opening  
*see Director's Footnote, page5*

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, 2008 to:  
A Stepping Stone Foundation**

**P.O. Box 84318  
Phoenix, AZ 85071**

**(602) 843-8281 [www.astepplingstone.org](http://www.astepplingstone.org)**

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



# Can You Help Us?

by **Cindy Gattorna, Executive Director**

When given the choice to buy a new pair of shoes or a used pair of shoes for the same price, or a new home as opposed to a similar 2nd or 3rd owner home for the same price, most of us are likely to buy the new over the used. Most of us (I know it's not all of you out there!) prefer the new - it's shiny or alluring by virtue of its newness. So it is with some of our funders. You will notice in the article on page five that we have a very generous grant to begin a new classroom in the Fowler School District. We are VERY grateful! What we must now concentrate on, are ways to keep the doors open to our existing classrooms. Our giving trend is down just now and if the trend continues we will be clos-

ing two of our existing four classrooms in the fall of 2009. We hope not to have to do so and are getting the news out now, so no one will be blindsided when our appeals reach a feverish pitch in November. If we do not have pledged money in place for the fall by January, we will begin the heart wrenching process of deciding which classrooms to close by the end of the 08-09 school year.

Between what we fund directly and what our amazing community partners provide for us, it now costs us roughly \$90,000 to keep one classroom open for a year. We are confident that we could continue with two classrooms with our current giving base and have a multi-year commitment

from Marley Foundation to fund the classroom at Fowler.

## • Can you help us?

We hope to double our giving base, so tell a friend about us! Every donation helps, whether it is \$5, \$500,000 or anywhere in between; and yes, we will take larger donations! We have a very modest classroom endowment fund in place and could take large gifts that would help us seed sustaining funds.

## • Can you help us?

We hope to develop a variety of funding streams so send us your contacts or ideas for creative funding. We will approach government sources of funding including the new 1st Things 1st Regional Councils and local, state and federal sources, but if

you have a personal contact at any of those levels, please let us know. I will talk to anyone, just about anywhere, just about anytime!!

## • Can you help us?

We have a cadre of trained speakers that will speak to just about anyone just about any time, so send us a list of your favorite community groups, like professional organizations, service groups, and churches that might be interested in helping keep quality "preschool plus" in our local neediest neighborhoods.

Please contact Cindy or Margie at the office, 602-843-8281, or any board member (see the board list on page 2 in the right hand margin) with your ideas and support!

### Granada Primary

Janice Milks  
Lead Teacher

Veronica Flores, Assistant



### Meet the 2008/2009 Teachers!

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

### Westwood Elementary

Janet Casteñada, Lead Teacher\*  
Fran Smith, Lead Teacher  
Neida Asencio, Assistant

\*a new Assistant for Janet Castañada's classroom will be hired soon.

### Isaac Preschool

Belinda Valenzuela  
Lead Teacher

Angela Rodriguez, Assistant



Special thanks to the Carstens Family Fund, Ann and Bill Smith, Joy and Con Englegorn, and Tom Pynn for donating money and items to fulfill the teacher's "wish lists." Thanks to their generosity, all of the teacher's were able to outfit their classrooms for the 2008/2009 school year!



**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 2009 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 \$1,200 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 2009 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>.

**Expansion Report:**

**Say Hello to Fowler Elementary District**

We have such confidence in our model and such passion for the children and their families that we serve that we have always wanted to expand our program. We'd love to have A Stepping Stone Foundation classroom wherever there are 15 or more families that have children of preschool age and are in need of literacy services. Given this context, it is with great joy that I can tell you thanks to the good folks at the Kemper and Ethyl Marley Foundation and our community partners at Fowler Elementary School District, we will begin a classroom at Fowler Elementary in January!

Our new Program Coordinator, Paulette Harshberger, and I will be working closely with district staff in the next few months to be sure we have a full high quality program in place for new students and families by January. Watch for more details in the next edition of *Footprints*! - Cindy

Thank you to the Ladybug Golf Classic held on May 5, 2008 for a \$13,000 donation to A Stepping Stone Foundation from the proceeds of this event. The Ladybugs have donated over \$145,000 to the Foundation in the past eleven years!

*Director's Footnote, from page 3*

their eyes that may see that they exist at all, and by giving them skills necessary for schoolsuccess. We do this by beginning early. A plethora of studies tell us the earlier we begin and the longer we have them the better. We robustly involve the parents in their own literacy education, their child's classroom experience and parenting skills.

We educate two generations at once and we honor each family. We network with other agencies and foundations to create additional opportunities for those that can avail themselves of them. And finally, we create, seek out, and link our children and families to higher education opportunities by providing a modest scholarship to ANY of our former Stepping Stone kids that graduate high school and want to enter college or university or a well-reputed trade school.

I recently came across a quote that says, "A civilization flourishes when people plant trees under which they will never sit." It's listed as a Greek proverb. I guess we could do worse than to take advice from the ancient Greeks. Whether you believe that all opportunities exist for all of us in our great country, or whether that remains an ultimate goal toward which we are moving, join us in planting the trees of tomorrow with our stepping stones of opportunity for kids in Arizona.

- Cindy

Congratulations to SSF Board Member, Linda Pape, on her selection to *Cambridge's Who's Who*.

This group of executives, professionals and entrepreneurs is committed to supporting philanthropic endeavors that positively impact society.

Thanks to Linda, there is a page in the directory about A Stepping Stone Foundation.

**Go to:**  
**[cambridgewhoswho.org/cambridge-whos-who-member-charity/a-stepping-stone-foundation/](http://cambridgewhoswho.org/cambridge-whos-who-member-charity/a-stepping-stone-foundation/)**

Congratulations Linda and thank you for the notoriety you bring to A Stepping Stone Foundation!

Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!

Many thanks to the following donors for their monetary or in-kind donations to A Stepping Stone Foundation in fiscal year 2007/2008 (ending June 30, 2008). Supporters such as these generous people are the backbone of the Foundation and they have all made a difference to so many lives (list continues on page 6).

Kelly and Jim Aanenson	Deanna Callan	Eileen Gallagher
Thelma Abril	Barbara Campbell	Gassner & Clark Company (AZ)
Charles & Dina Adernetto	Frank Canez	Cindy and Mike Gattorna
Carl Ahl	Beverly and Ottie Carroll	Carolyn D. Gentle
John Ahl	Casa Fenix Enterprises	Bruce Gibson
Alexi's Grill	John Casillas	Mary Sue and James Gibson
Ken Alhadeff	Fransisco Ceja	Irene and Dennis Glaser
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American Express Charitable Fund	Willie Chaney	James Gordon
Cindy Amos	Dale and Marilyn Childs	Bryan and Pearl Grapentine
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Arizona Diamondbacks Foundation	Climatec	Craig Hansen
Arizona Lottery	Donald Clum	Hansen's Mortuary
Arizona Republic/Channel 12 Season	Russell Converse	Health Choice Arizona
for Sharing	Martha and Larry Cooper	Irene Hearn
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Liane Bamburg	Paula and Tim Cullison	Patricia Hernandez
Eleanor Banks	Doni Cunningham	Gwen and Durrell Hillis
Peter Barcher	Rickie Currens	Micki and David Hillyard
Frank Barrios	Greg and Carla Curry	Eileen and Bob Hoard
Colin and Joanne Barry	Liz Curry	Marjorie Hoffman
Robert Bartels	L.C. Davidson	Pattie Hogan
Bashas'	Robert Davies	Thomas Hornaday
Bashas' Thanks A Million Program	Betsy Davis	Greg Hoyt
Basis Restaurant	Edgar De La Torre	Debbie Hutson
Tom and Gina Batson	Louis De Leon	Roy Hyder
Lyle Bazzell	Ron Denk	Diane and Alan Iles
Vicki Beaudet	Mario and Vero Diaz	Janice Imig
Connie and Chris Beaupre	Donald and Marie Dils	Integra Winius Realty Analysts
Robert Bell	Donley Service Center	Nancy and Ron Ireland
Vera Bettencourt	James and Vanessa Drake	Olivia Jimenez
Regina Bidstrup	Marian Dukes	Bambi Sue and Clark Johnson
The Bidstrup Foundation	Eagle Aerial Imaging	Paul Johnson Jewelers
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Wendy Boorn	Family Arts Needleworks	William Jones
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Jeff and Judy Brown	Severo Flores	Ronda Kelso
Beth Bruce	Michael and Barbara Folb	Russ and Pat Killip
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Ada Cahoon	Gil Forsman	Ellen Kirk
Ernest Calderon	Walter and Sarah Fuelberth	Esther Kmetty
Elbia Calixtro	Susan Funkhouser	Robin Kreider

Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!  
*(continued from page 6)*

Patricia Kurtz  
Ladybug Golf Classic  
Jane and Rusty Lance  
Susan and Bob Lee  
Katie Leinweber  
Patricia and Wilford Leonard  
Paige and Thom Lewis  
BJ Lippincott  
Mary and George Lombardi  
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Mary Lou Lyding  
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Bobbie and Ramsey Madany  
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Marguerite and Ray Mei  
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Dorothy Messinger  
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John and Mary Lou Micheaels  
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Phoenix Suns  
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Ann Rathwell  
Carol Rawilins  
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Kaitlyn Redfield  
Chris Reuter  
Frank Reuter  
Bob Reveles  
Jackie and Jim Rice  
Sal Rivera  
Linda and Rick Robbins  
Britanni Roberts  
Linda and David Roberts  
Cesar and Irasema Rodarte  
Rodel Charitable Foundation - AZ  
Richard Roesch  
Cally and Frank Rogers-Witte  
Rosalind Rolfes  
Roman & Company CPA's P.C.  
Cliff Running, DDS  
Tom and Jill Runyon  
Carmen and Jesus Sanchez  
Nadine Sass  
Randy and Claudia Sassaman  
Gary Satur  
Sucil Saunders  
SCF Arizona  
Mike and Stacy Schlinger  
Janice Schultz  
Sea World San Diego  
Marilyn and Em Sensney  
Shadow Rock Older Boulders  
Shadow Rock UCC  
Evelyn and Marvin Shapiro  
Sandra Shapiro  
Don and Cindi Shikles

Thomas Sienbenaler  
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Francis and Carol Slavin  
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Louise Slotta  
Candace and Richard Smith  
Jackie Smith  
Rev. William O. and Ann Smith  
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State Employee Charitable Campaign  
Annette Stertzner  
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Sharon Thurman  
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William West  
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**preschool★Family★Literacy★Community★Success**

**A STEPPING STONE FOUNDATION**

<b>Mail To:</b>	<b>Office:</b>
<b>P.O. Box 84318</b>	<b>10802 North 23rd Avenue</b>
<b>Phoenix, AZ 85071</b>	<b>Phoenix, AZ 85029</b>

**Phone: (602) 843-8281**  
**Fax: (602) 843-6498**  
**www.asteppingstone.org**

**DATE TO REMEMBER!**  
November 24, 2008: 12th Annual Golf Tournament  
Moon Valley Country Club

**2009 Entertainment Books are on sale!**  
**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 Angels!*  
*The Christmas Angels will*  
*be flying again soon! Look*  
*for Christmas Angel*  
*information in the next*  
*newsletter. If you would like*  
*information before that time,*  
*please call the Stepping Stone*  
*office at (602) 843-8281.*





## Golf Tournament is November 24th! Sign Up Today!

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**Slots are filling quickly! Register today!**

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**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*

## Be An Angel....

Help the Stepping Stone Families Enjoy  
a Happy Holiday Season

Christmas Angels are flying again! For the 18th year, A Stepping Stone Foundation is providing 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 who will receive gifts from this program. Many of the families are in greater need than ever with the economy as it is now.

The Angel Tree will be at Shadow Rock Church, 12861 N. 8th Ave from November 23rd - December 5th with tags for each child. All gifts should be turned in at Shadow Rock by December 8th.

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 hold stars representing monetary donations 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 buy a star, please make your check payable to:

### A Stepping Stone Foundation

and either take it to the Shadow Rock office or mail it to: **P.O. Box 84318, Phoenix, AZ 85071.**

All information about wrapping and delivering the presents is on the Angel tag. If you would like more information on the Angel Tree program, *see Angels, page 2*

## President's Corner, by Craig Hansen, President

### *A Note from A Stepping Stone Scholar...*

*This month, I'm delighted to share with you a letter from one of our former preschoolers and a Billie Gannaway Scholarship Recipient,*

*Marlette Espinoza (preschool class of 93/94) -Craig*

"Dear Stepping Stone Foundation,

Once again, I would like to thank you all for the tremendous contributions you have given me in my pursuit of higher education. This is my second year in college and I started this semester with a new major, Nursing, at Arizona State University on the downtown campus. Although I changed my major from Criminal Justice to Nursing, my passion has not changed: helping others by making a difference in their lives, one at a time, either through words or physical action. My goals are still the same: succeed in my courses and graduate in four years which technically now are three. I hope to do my best not only academically, but also extracurricular, such as volunteering at my local parish and high school by being a role model to students, as well as giving my time to my local hospital through volunteer work. My freshman year turned out to be a great experience with all the commotion of campus life and student interactions. It was also the beginning to a new chapter in my life, and with the help from A Stepping Stone Foundation scholarship

my dream came true, going to college.

Although this letter is a small symbol of my gratitude compared to your generous contribution, I feel that besides working hard to earn A+'s and personal character, there are no other words that can demonstrate my massive appreciation to the scholarship committee. I assume that you have all heard the same wonderful remarks from past students as well, but this truly makes an incredible difference in one's life because if it was not for this beautiful opportunity from you all, I personally would not have had the courage to go on to college with my personal and parents' funds, since they are insufficient. This scholarship helps pay for not only books and supplies, but also pays an investment towards helping to build a stronger foundation for my future.

Well, with this said, I hope that you all understand the impression you left in me and how it has positively made a great difference in my life.

Thank you all so very much.

Sincerely,

Marlette Espinoza

♥ Deeply Greatful!!!"



*Angels, from page 1*

or have any questions, please call the Stepping Stone office at (602) 843-8281 or Beverly Carroll, project chair, at (623) 694-9191.

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

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**Director's Footnotes**  
by Cynthia Gattorna, Executive Director

## Thank You!

I am gearing up for Thanksgiving. It really has become my favorite holiday. What a magnificent thing to do—dedicate a time for just remembering to be thankful! The traditional Thanksgiving story is about two cultures coming together to celebrate a bountiful harvest; factual or not, the truth of the story shines through. We do have so very much to be grateful for. Even in this time of economic uncertainty, most of us reading this newsletter have much more to be grateful for than to worry about. My message to you all at this very moment in history is THANK YOU.

Thank you for your support in all its forms! Those of you who give hundreds of hours to A Stepping Stone Foundation on the board, creating and operating our many fundraisers, or in technical support, THANK YOU! Those of you who give untold dollars, each according to your ability, THANK YOU! Those of you who tell our story to anyone who will listen, THANK YOU! To our wonderful families and children that spend their sweat equity hours in our program, THANK YOU! And we would have no program at all without our great staff—those in the office and our caring teachers, assistants and childcare workers, as well as the districts that welcome our program; THANK YOU ALL!

- Cindy

### *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.

We hope you will join us in supporting pre-school and literacy which strengthens families and communities in Arizona! Questions? Please call the Stepping Stone office at (602) 843-8281.

### 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:** \_\_\_\_\_

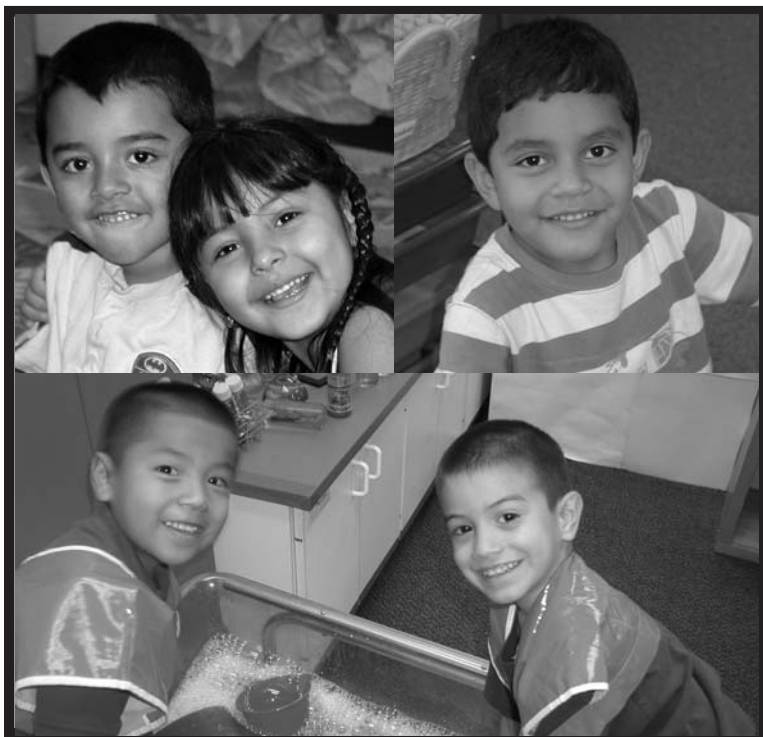
**Please send me more information  
I would like to visit a classroom  
Please send me volunteer and  
Board Member Information**

**Please mail your donation  
before December 31, 2008 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***Fran Smith and Neida Ascencio*

Dear Friends,

We started the new school year off with a full class of 20 preschoolers (3 & 4 yr. olds) and their parents. We invited parents to spend the first day with us and it was a big success. This opportunity took some “first day of school” worries off their minds and we were able to express how to help their child separate from them easier. The next few days our students came to school happy and ready. For a few it was more difficult to leave mom, but in no time everyone settled in. We wish you all could see the difference from that day and now, WOW! they have all grown so much - and we have only begun. We completed a day of home visits and we have to share with you how one family has already experienced what the vision of A Stepping Stone Foundation is all about. When we first met this family in August, Dad was home because construction was slow, so he had a no work day. He was very friendly and happy that this was an opportunity for his son to go to school. He was even more excited that this was going to give his wife an opportunity to go to English class and not have to worry about childcare for their younger daughter. During that visit, Mom expressed how she wasn't sure if she would be able complete all her obligations because she felt she already had a lot going on just taking care of her family, but she wanted to try. Well, six weeks into the school year this same family is beaming! Dad was home again for our home visit. They were all dressed up and ready when we arrived. We played a short game and explained how they could play it all together with a few variations. Then we focused on how Mom was doing and she was smiling from ear to ear. She said that she loved what she is able to do. She has found that she is able to fulfill her obligations without any problems. She is enjoying her English class because now she understands more and looks forward to going. She is also thankful because her younger daughter is happy to go to childcare. Both parents expressed their gratitude over and over to us. They are feeling more confident that they are able to help their children because of this program. This is just one example of what our program is doing to help families invest in the future of our children. We assure you that you are continuing to do this with all your support and hard work. Thank you for what you do and how much you care! *Fran & Neida*

**Isaac Preschool***Kristin Hinkle, Angela Rodriguez and Luz Burgos*

Isaac Preschool has had a major change since the start of school. Belinda Valenzuela has moved from the classroom to the school office. Her assistant, Angela Rodriguez took over as lead teacher with Luz Burgos joining as her assistant and in late October, a new lead teacher was hired. We are so pleased to welcome Kristin Hinkle as the new lead teacher. Thank you to Angela and Luz for filling in so well that there were no transition difficulties for the children and their families.

The children have learned the routines of each day, made new friends and are developing many new skills. They are all working hard on learning the first letter of their names. For several days their activities focused on the story “The Hungry Caterpillar.” They learned about the importance of eating healthy foods.

The Isaac parents are very motivated and working hard in their classes. Each day they spend 11:30-12:00 in their child's classroom. This is a special time for parent and child to read together and share activities the parents learn in their parenting classes.

During class time for parents and preschoolers, younger siblings are being cared for by a wonderful staff. The children have a warm and inviting room with many age appropriate activities for them to experience. The entire families are learning and growing.

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

The classroom is full of 20 smiling faces, learning more and more each day. This fall, six parents from last year requested and were enrolled in ESL classes on campus to continue their education from last year. Look for more classroom details in the January newsletter!

A Stepping Stone Foundation childcare worker at Granada, Socorro Mendez, participated in 60 hours of SUCCEEDS training over the summer and she and her partner, Mary Aguilar, are utilizing age-appropriate activities for the children in their care. SUCCEEDS is a registry of childcare professionals who offer training to childcare workers. Many thanks to Socorro for taking her own time to enhance her knowledge and expertise in childcare and implement all she learned in the Stepping Stone childcare room.

**Westwood Primary***Ms. Janet Castaneda*

It is wonderful to see this time of year how the classroom routines are helping to guide the children. All our parents have had the opportunity to be in the classroom at least three times already. Many have commented on how independent the children are and how well they are working together. It is wonderful to see the parents learning along with their children and observing the classroom life. As teachers we are grateful to be building stronger relationships with our families. It is a "win-win" situation for everyone involved.

This year the children are very much interested in building and constructing with the blocks. I enjoy watching them problem solve as they are creating different structures. They really do learn from each other and are eager to help their friends. Today we provided the students an opportunity to construct something gluing wood scraps onto cardboard sheets. The whole class was involved in creating their own structures. I heard some say they were building "a casita" (house) and others talked about building tall buildings. Through this process they are learning important social skills, comparing and contrasting structures, exploring balance and stability as they build. As an experienced teacher I know the value of their play and the importance to scaffold their learning. I am looking forward to seeing how their building evolves.

This year we are looking for someone to work in our childcare. The position is only 16 hours but requires a special person who truly enjoys being with little ones. We could really use your help finding that unique individual who fits the needs of our little ones. Please get the word out.

Thanks for all your continued support now and in the future.

*Janet***Bashas' Thanks A Million**

Bashas' is 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, 2009, Bashas' will donate a percentage of the sale to A Stepping Stone Foundation. It's easy and costs you nothing!

**Number: 24536****Program Notes****by Paulette Harshberger, Program Coordinator**

The 2008/2009 school year has begun with 70 children currently enrolled. We have 66 families whose home language is Spanish, three families whose home language is English and one family whose home language is Pular. Children and parents are working diligently to learn English in their respective classes.

We have had some staffing challenges at two of our campuses. Belinda Valenzuela, our lead teacher at Isaac Preschool, made the decision to leave her position as lead teacher and take a position working in the school office. Her assistant Angela Rodriguez took on the responsibilities of lead teacher with Luz Burgos acting as her assistant. The job has just been filled by Kristin Hinkle. Janet Castaneda, one of our lead teachers at Westwood Elementary, has been without an assistant since the beginning of the school year, however Maria Flores has just been hired to fill that position. Janet's parent volunteers did a great job working in the classroom until Maria started. Also at Westwood, we currently have an opening in the childcare room. Neida Ascensio, the assistant in Fran Smith's class, has been helping out as needed and applications for this position are being accepted at the Alhambra district office.

Putting aside these challenges, every week when I visit the classrooms I see families engaged in learning. It is such a pleasure to watch the staff, parents and children working together for a common goal. Literacy is growing. I see it happening week after week!

We are in the process of starting our classroom in the Fowler School District. Our goal is to have the lead teacher hired by early November. The school is working toward that goal as well as identifying families who would benefit from our program. We hope to open the classroom in early January.

*Paulette*

**Thank you and best of luck to Isaac Preschool Teacher, Belinda Valenzuela, as she moves on to a new position in the Isaac Preschool Office. Belinda taught in the Stepping Stone classroom for many years and her experience and passion for the kids and the program will be greatly missed!**

## A Stepping Stone Foundation Scrapbook



*On September 30th, we treated all of the Climatec employees to lunch to thank them for their generosity in donating office space and the use of a Ford Freestyle. Pictured above: (from left), Board President Craig Hansen, Executive Director, Cindy Gattorna, Climatec owner Jack Kucera and Board Vice-President, Con Englehorn.*



*Many thanks to board members (pictured above from left) Con Englehorn, Craig Hansen, Bev Carroll, Carolyn Keagle, Jennifer Sanchez and Linda Pape for donating food items and helping with the Climatec lunch. Also thank you to those not pictured: Tom Pynn, Judy Brengi and Paulette Harsberger for their donations and help.*



*Climatec owner, Jack Kucera (pictured here with teacher Janice Milks) and his wife Vianne, visited the Granada Preschool classroom in September.*



*Preschoolers from the Isaac Preschool attended the 2007 golf tournament.*



*Former SSF preschoolers who are now in college attended Stepping Into College. Many thanks to Jackie Smith & Charlie Adornetto for facilitating this event.*



*Stepping Stone Scholar Marlette Espinoza. See her letter to the Foundation on page 2.*



Many thanks to:

The Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust  
 The Rodell Charitable Foundation  
 The Schlenger Family Foundation  
 The Ted Purdy Family Foundation  
 The Ethel & Kemper Marley Foundation  
 US Airways

for their generous grants to

A Stepping Stone Foundation for the  
 2008/09 School Year.



## Save the Date!

**Celebrate A Stepping Stone  
 Foundation's 20th Birthday  
 on February 21, 2009**



Can you believe it has been almost 20 years since A Stepping Stone Foundation began? In April of 1989, Rev. Bill Smith's vision became reality as the Foundation was incorporated.

Please join us as we celebrate our 20th year of providing high quality, tuition free pre-school to children with limited opportunities and literacy education for their families with a dinner and auction on February 21, 2009 at the Moon Valley Country Club. You won't want to miss this event! Co-Chairs Carolyn Keagle and Mike Hensley are putting together a memorable evening which will celebrate A Stepping Stone Foundation through the years.

If you would like to help with this event or have a silent auction item to donate, please call the office at (602) 843-8281.

Look for details in the January edition of this newsletter.



## 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 2009 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 \$1,200 as the Thunderbirds Charities match all donations at 10%. No funds will be collected by the Foundation, but you must send your pledge form to us. Following the 2009 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 Charities is a 501(c)(3) organization, therefore all donations are tax deductible as the law permits. For more information, go to: [www.birdiesforcharityarizona.com](http://www.birdiesforcharityarizona.com)

## Bill and Billie's Kids Go To College...

Annual Dinner is January 27th

Each year, A Stepping Stone Foundation offers college scholarships through the Billie Gannaway Memorial Scholarship Fund to any former preschooler who is planning on attending college. Thirteen former preschoolers are attending college this year with financial help from this fund.

On January 27th, A Stepping Stone Foundation will honor those students who will be awarded scholarships for the 2009/2010 school year at a special dinner at Shadow Rock Church.

Many thanks to Stepping Stone Board member, Linda Pape, for co-chairing this event for the third year in a row! Her creativity and enthusiasm always make for a wonderful evening.

We hope you will join us in celebrating the Stepping Stone Kids as they prepare to pursue higher education.

Tickets will be available at Shadow Rock Church and the Stepping Stone office after Christmas.



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### **EG 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.  
Many thanks to Bumpa Hoard for selling  
these for the Foundation again this year!*

### **IN THIS ISSUE:**

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### **DATES TO REMEMBER!**

**November 23rd: Christmas Angels Fly!**

**November 24th: A Stepping Stone Foundation  
Golf Tournament at Moon Valley Country Club**

**January 27, 2009: Bill and Billie's Dinner to honor  
the Stepping Stone Scholars and to Benefit the  
Billie Gannaway Memorial Scholarship Fund.  
Tickets go on sale after Christmas!**

**February 21, 2009: A Stepping Stone Foundation  
20th Birthday Celebration**



## Second Annual Cena y Serenata is Saturday May 16, 2009 at El Zaribah Shrine Auditorium

*Join the fun at this traditional Hispanic celebration  
to benefit A Stepping Stone Foundation*

Please join friends from the Hispanic community led by Tio Tachias, Event Chairperson, and Tony Astorga, Event Finance Chairperson for the second annual *Cena y Serenata* to benefit A Stepping Stone Foundation. They have really gone the extra mile to make this event special!

Translated as "Dinner and Serenade," guests will enjoy a delicious meal as compadres and mariachis serenade guests with traditional songs. The Grammy

award winning Phoenix Boys Choir will also perform and following dinner, guests can dance to the music of "New Image."

There will also be a silent auction with all proceeds going to A Stepping Stone Foundation. The semi-formal event will be held on **Saturday, May 16th** at the El Zaribah Shrine Auditorium at 6:00 p.m. with a no host bar. Invitations were sent in late March. Please note: the invitation gave the wrong day of the week. The event is on Saturday.

If you haven't received an invitation, please call the Stepping Stone office - *all* are welcome at this event! Tickets are \$100 per person, reservations are required.

A big thanks to our generous sponsors including APS, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona, Helios Education Foundation, SCF Arizona, Wells Fargo, the AZ Lottery and JP Morgan Chase Foundation.

RSVP required to the Stepping Stone office at (602) 843-8281. See the invitation on page 5.

20th Anniversary Celebration Honors Founder Rev. William O. Smith and Nets \$120,000 for the Stepping Stone Classrooms!

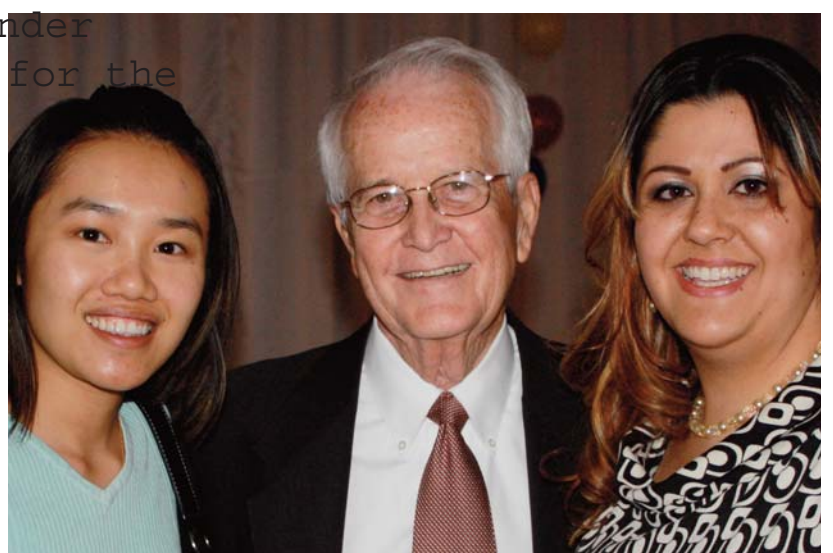
What a surprise it was for Bill Smith as over 180 people gathered at Moon Valley Country Club to celebrate A Stepping Stone Foundation's 20th Anniversary. While Bill Smith knew about the 20th Anniversary Celebration, he was completely surprised by the Foundation's special tribute to him. "I've never been so surprised in my entire life," Bill said at the subsequent board meeting.

It was a beautiful evening,

wonderful food, great music provided by *Rockin' Memories*, and a silent auction AND the event netted A Stepping Stone Foundation over \$120,000!

Many thanks to a longtime educator who offered a \$50,000 donation match challenge and to all those who helped match the that amount!

See the pictures on page 7 and a list of all those who helped make this event a HUGE success on page 3.



*A Stepping Stone Foundation Founder and Honoree Bill Smith with Stepping Stone Scholars Vanessa Tang (left) and Maritza Hernandez (Maritza is also a member of A Stepping Stone Foundation's Board).*



## President's Corner, by Craig Hansen, President

### Charting a Course for Success... Some old courses and some new!

At a most opportune time, in the middle of our 20th Anniversary Celebration, a long time supporter of A Stepping Stone Foundation and his wife announced a donation of \$50,000 if we could match that amount. Dianne and Gary Tooker immediately led the match response with \$25,000 and all of you, our supporting friends, followed with donations until the rest of the funds were raised. This met challenge, the generous support of Jack and Vianne Kucera who underwrote the dinner, and your support led to a fun and successful fundraiser. Pat McMahon could not have said it better, "You are the best." The outcome of all your generosity has enabled A Stepping Stone Foundation to keep a classroom from having to close. From all of the students and their families, A Stepping Stone Foundation Board thanks you.

One of our visionary goals is to bring A Stepping Stone Foundation's model to schools statewide. Since the beginning of the year we have been busy with our newest

classroom in the Fowler School District. Made possible by a grant from the Marley Foundation, we have started the Stepping Stone classroom with a fresh group of families in an area new to us, the southwest Valley. Expanding outside of the Phoenix inner city begins the course of growing into the county and beyond.

Recently, A Stepping Stone Foundation has caught the imagination of local Hispanic leaders. Last year Tio Tachias and Tony Astorga, Event Chairman and Chairman of the Finance Committee, along with other community leaders, created a special evening, *Cena y Serenata*. A fantastic evening of dinner and song which also raised mucho dinero for the Foundation. These wonderful men and women are doing it again and I would like to ask for your support. Buy a table or tickets; bring us your auction items; but most of all, come for dinner, dancing, song and fun. I will be there; I hope you are too.

Craig

*Many thanks to The Arizona Republic/12 News Season for Sharing for granting the Foundation \$10,000 again this year.*

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Tio Tachias

Gary Tooker

Jim Wilson

Ed Van Brunt

Bill Smith, Founder

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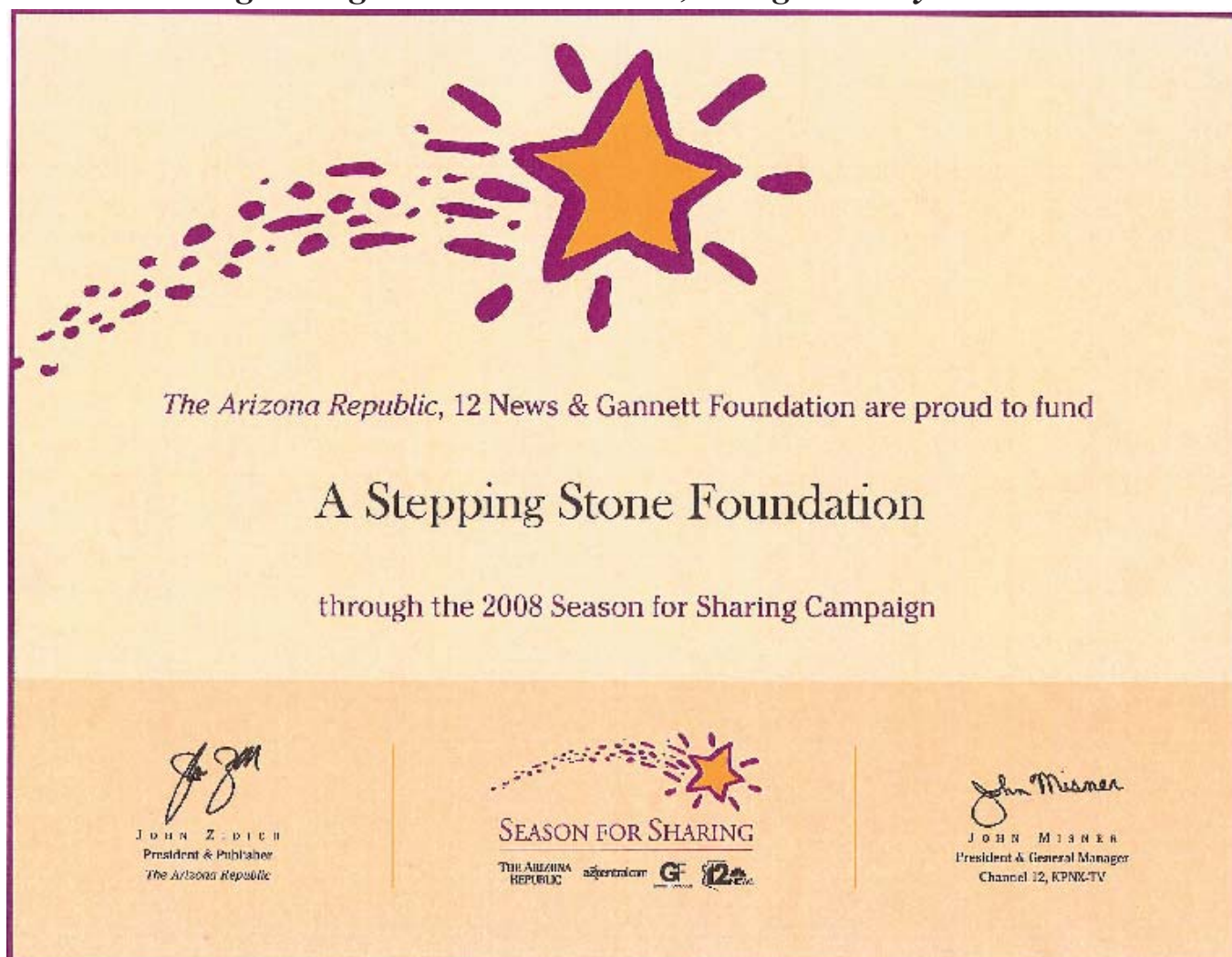
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Director's Footnotes  
by Cynthia Gattorna, Executive Director

## ***Focusing on the Future Revisited***

Are you one of those people that detest the successful TV show that does the inevitable 30-60 minutes of flashbacks relating to prior shows? I am. And yet, this month I find myself falling into that very device.

Sometimes I feel like we're making no progress and I'm still nervous about the long-term stability of the Foundation. We are always tugged back and forth between the need to help those children and families who are here now and the need to be here for the those that will come. At A Stepping Stone Foundation, the tension of serving children now usually wins that tug of war since the great hope is that one day we will close our doors because no one needs our services any longer. Perhaps you've even heard me say, "Put us out of business, because the need has gone away!" Today, there is as much need as ever, unfortunately. And so that feeling of being overwhelmed and not accomplishing anything takes seed in my heart and mind. So I look backward. I want to know that we have indeed accomplished much.

As I looked back at the articles I have written, October 2007 stood out (Volume 7, Issue 2). In October of 2007, the Board and I set forth the following goals (I have added their completion dates):

1. Hiring a Program Director (Our Program Coordinator was hired in August 2008).

2. Ensure at least one person affiliated with A Stepping Stone Foundation sits on a Proposition 203 Regional Council (Board Treasurer, Judy Brengi, was appointed to the Northwest Maricopa County First Things First Board in March of 2008).

3. More in depth program evaluation (Dolores Retana is well into her second year of our independent program evaluation which employs scientific metrics to measure our success).

4. Expansion Class (A Stepping Stone Foundation preschool class and family literacy opened its doors at Fowler Elementary this January).

Remember earlier I mentioned I hate those flashback TV shows? While I may hate them, I do get the important aspects of historical perspective as context, and relevancy for today. We completed all four goals put forth in 2007. I find it is extremely important to acknowledge that accomplishment. When the greater A Stepping Stone Foundation family sets its mind to go out and "git her done," by gosh, we "git her done!"

It's time to look forward again. Time to perceive and respond again! Our Big Hairy Audacious Goal (a la Jim Collins' *Good To Great*) is to confirm our program as a successful model and to establish it nationally. Well, one site at a time, folks. One site at a time.

*Cindy*

Thank You! Thank You!  
Thank You!

The following Stepping Stone Board Members and friends helped make the 20th Celebration a huge success!

*Carolyn Keagle, Co-Chair*

*Mike Hensley, Co-Chair*

*Susan Adams, Video*

*Pat McMahon, Emcee*

*Rockin' Memories, Live Band*

*Foundation Board and Staff*

### *Special thanks to:*

*Jack & Vianne Kucera*

*The Bill Smith Family*

*Judy Brengi*

*Linda Pape*

*Craig Hansen*

*Maritza Hernandez*

*Drew Hensley*

*Sharon Hensley*

*Tom Pynn*

*Mike Gattorna*

*Jerry & Dana George*

### *Silent Auction Donors:*

*Diane Tooker*

*Robin Kreider*

*A Furniture Affair*

*Sam Phan from Bamboo House*

*Cheesecake Factory*

*Furniture Affair*

*Dr. Ali Mosharaffa*

*Debbie Carstens*

*Vincent's on Camelback*

*Janice Boylan*

*Joy Englehorn*

*Bev King and Connie Beaupre*

*Keith Hinrichsen- Hinrichsen Jewelers*

*Tom Pynn*

*Janice Schultz*

*Wendy Blair*

*Carolyn Keagle*

*Sharon & Mike Hensley*

*All of the amazing guests that helped us  
celebrate 20 years!*

*All who pledged or donated  
\$20 for 12 and helped us meet the \$50,000  
challenge*



## Classroom Notes

**Westwood Primary***Ms. Fran Smith and Ms. Neida Asencio*

Dear Friends,

It's hard to believe spring is here! We have explored dinosaurs, community helpers, and Dr. Seuss even had us try green eggs and ham! Thanks to all of you who support us, we have had so much fun these past months.

Without your support, we wouldn't hear questions like, "Ms. Fran, how come you talk English?" My response: "It's the only language I know." Edgardo, "Yeah, that's what I figured!" It is amazing at age 3 or 4 that a child can realize that there is more than one language.

Without your support, our students wouldn't have the opportunities to build friendships at this young age. The youngest student in our classroom has bonded with the oldest student in our classroom. Their personalities are very different but they have become friends and help each other! We wish this could happen everywhere!

Without your support, our parents wouldn't be able to attend ESL classes. This year most of our parents have shared with us how much they are learning from their English classes. Many had tried other ESL classes before but were not as successful as they are this year. Their teacher, Ms. Jane, is very passionate about teaching, and the parents are working very hard to learn as much as they can.

Without your support, our students wouldn't have had the field trip opportunities we explored so far: Children's Museum; a real working farm - Tolmachoff Farms; Great Arizona Puppet Theater; and the Desert Botanical Gardens including the Butterfly Pavilion. All these rich experiences are followed up in class with projects and discussion building on our students experience and knowledge, and expanding their imaginations. It is truly a beautiful thing to be a part of when a child discovers something for the first time, or makes a connection to something else...the joy of childhood.

**Without your support, we wouldn't be able to touch the lives of so many families.**

SO THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT. WE TRULY APPRECIATE YOUR GENEROSITY AND KINDNESS FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR STUDENTS & THEIR FAMILIES.

Love, *Fran & Neida*

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

IT IS HARD TO BELIEVE THAT THE SCHOOL YEAR IS NEARING THE END!

The children have grown so much, not only physically but also socially and academically. They are very ready to move on to kindergarten and be successful. They have mastered the basics and some have gone on to master more. By far this is one of the best classes I have had. There is a group that is so ready to read, they are sounding out words using the letter sounds with great ease. I can't wait to see what they do next year.

We just went on our trip to the Botanical Gardens and the children had a good time. Their favorite part was the butterflies. One of our boys had a butterfly sit on his shoulder. They also enjoyed seeing the different cacti. They were able to find the animal shapes in the cacti and talked about them even after they returned from vacation.

The parents have continued to grow in their English language classes and are working hard to earn stickers for perfect grammar.

The moms are starting to work on plans for their end of year celebration. They are making decisions about theme and decorations. This is always a very special activity for them. They come together to work, but in reality they are forming lasting friendships as well as sharing individual talents that we haven't seen before.

Along with Veronica, and childcare staff Mary and Socorro, I would like to thank the Foundation for its decision to continue the program. We are the lucky ones who see everyday what this kind of program does for the families we touch, without it many would not get the chance for these educational benefits. In this hard economic time and with the state budget cuts to education, it is essential for programs like this to continue to exist. We have begun our next year's registration and have had great results. Returning families are grateful even more now that the program will continue. Thank you again.

*Jan & Veronica*





## Classroom Notes

**Isaac Preschool***Ms. Kristin Hinkle and Angela Rodriguez*

We have been very busy in room 13. Most of the children know all their letters and numbers. For those children who know their letters, we are now working on letter sounds. We have also been learning about different types of animals such as ducks, frogs, and zoo animals. The children love learning about animals and enjoy reading about them also. We have been doing many art activities and we are going to make play dough this week.

On March 26th we took a field trip to the Children's Museum in downtown Phoenix. The children and their moms were all very excited.

The moms in our classroom are also a part of a community service called "Graffiti Busters." Last month they went out into the neighborhood to paint over graffiti. They were very excited and involved in this activity and some moms have even gotten their neighbors involved. We are all very proud of this project.

We are having a lot of fun and there is a lot of learning going on in room 13! *Kristin & Angela*



**Cena y Serenata**  
Dinner & Serenade

*Please join us*  
for a romantic evening of dining and entertainment to benefit  
**A Stepping Stone Foundation**  
preschool classrooms.

**When & What**  
Saturday, May 16, 2009 at 6:00 PM

- Mexican Dinner
- Silent Auction
- Grammy Award Winning Phoenix Boys Choir will perform
- Mariachis
- Trio/Compadres
- Dance to the sounds of New Image

**Where**  
El Zaribah Shrine  
552 N. 40th Street, Phoenix AZ 85008  
\$100/Plate (Tables seat 8)  
RSVP required: 602-843-8281  
Dress: Semi-Formal

**Westwood Primary***Ms. Janet Castaneda and Ms. Maria Flores*

Before we took our Spring break in March, our class went to the Desert Botanical Gardens to learn about the vast desert life found here in Arizona. We also visited their wonderful "Butterfly Pavilion" and saw a variety of multicolored butterflies hiding amongst the flowers. The children really enjoyed watching them fly all over. Before our trip we discussed how to care for the butterflies and the importance of not trying to grab them. One landed on a student's arm and he stood very still so it would not fly away.

When the children returned, we had photos of our field trip displayed so the class could revisit what they saw. We ordered live caterpillars and lady bugs so we could observe their life cycles. Our caterpillars are now waiting in their cocoons until they have changed into butterflies and our ladybugs have quickly changed from eggs to larva and are now in the

pupa stage waiting to become adult ladybugs. We really appreciate having so many opportunities to provide students with real life experiences through our field trips.

It is an exciting time of change for all of us. Before we know it the year will have ended much too quickly and many of my preschoolers will be going to Kindergarten. We are preparing the students for the many changes ahead throughout the year. It is so wonderful to see how much they have all grown into confident, secure and capable children.

I would like to thank everyone for all your support in continuing to provide a quality educational program for our families. I often say I have the best job in the world. We have the opportunity to really form partnerships with our families and witness the growth of our students alongside their parents. We are making a difference!

*Janet & Maria*

*A Stepping Stone kids from the Alhambra District enjoyed a field trip to the Desert Botanical Garden's Butterfly Exhibit.*



Classroom Notes

Fowler Elementary

Ms. Amy Aasen and Ivonne Diaz

We are really excited to get our classroom up and running. We currently have 15 families in our program and we are looking to add more for the following school year.

Just a little about Ms. Amy and Ms. Ivonne. Ms. Amy: "I have been a teacher for four years at Fowler Elementary School. I have worked with 3rd, 4th and Head Start before coming to A Stepping Stone Preschool so I am very familiar with many families that attend the school. I am excited to work with this program!" Ms. Ivonne: "I worked one year with Special Aid kids and then I moved to Head Start for 2 1/2 years before coming to A Stepping Stone. I am really excited to be part of such an awesome program!"

In our classroom, we are currently learning about the letters

of the alphabet along with the seasons. We took our first field trip in March to the Arizona Puppet Theatre. We saw the puppet show "The Three Little Pigs." The kids really enjoyed the field trip.

We have a lot of baby birds that are falling out of their nests this time of year. One of my students found a baby bird on the ground and brought it into class. He was very concerned about the bird. How would it be fed? How would it survive? I explained to him that baby birds eat special food like all other baby animals. He looked at me and said, "Why can't we feed him a peanut butter sandwich?" I had to chuckle at how sweet and innocent this young boy is.

Amy & Ivonne

Paulette's Corner

A Stepping Stone Foundation  
Program Coordinator

What a wonderful year it has been. All our families were very appreciative of the Angel Tree gifts and support that you provide. From all of them I offer a huge, THANK YOU!

We are now in the process of planning our end of year celebrations. This is a time to recognize the hard work and growth that has occurred in the adult education classes. At this time, one parent has completed the GED requirements and is now working. Many others have moved up a level in their ESL classes. The celebrations at each site will recognize these accomplishments of our adult students, as well as their invaluable help in our child care and preschool classrooms.

I have had the opportunity to visit these classrooms weekly and witness the growth and spirit of community that has developed in each class. It is a pleasure to watch the children, parents and teachers all working together for a common goal. I invite you to visit a classroom to see for yourself what a difference your support makes to lives of our families.

Paulette





A Stepping Stone Scrapbook

A Stepping Stone Foundation Celebrates 20 Years!



*Left, event co-chair Carolyn Keagle with the evening's emcee, Pat Mc Mahon and his wife, Duffy.*



*Enjoying the evening, from left, Gerry and Dana George and Linda and Garo Demirjian.*



*Honoree Bill Smith's daughters and granddaughter were on hand to celebrate! From left, Jackie Smith, Estella Pachoe, Annette Stertzer and Allson Pachoe*



*Many thanks for a wonderful evening to co-chairs pictured above, Carolyn Keagle and Mike Hensley.*



*Founder and honoree, Bill Smith with A Stepping Stone Executive Director, Cindy Gattorna*



*Former Board Presidents Mike Hensley (left) and Charlie Adornetto with Charlie's wife, Dina.*





  
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### DATES TO REMEMBER!



*Saturday, May 16, 2009 Cena y Serenata,  
El Zaribah Shrine Auditorium, 6:00 p.m.*

*June 9, 2009: A Stepping Stone Foundation  
Annual Meeting 6:30, p.m., Location TBD*

