



SDH Monthly Newsletter

Parent's Meeting Minutes

May 19, 2004

Present:

Sharon A., Kim B., Lara B., Claire B., Teresa B., Anna C., Wendy E., Lisa F., Jessica G., Debbie G., Giovanna M., Heather M., Tara O., Shari S., Gailee S., Craig S., Erin S., Arnold V., Sybelle V., Ann V., Lori W., Theresa W.

Facilitator: Debbie G.

Minutes: Erin S.

Each person introduced themselves to the group. Topic order was loosely determined by agenda made available prior to the meeting.

1. Pool Party: Sybelle V. prefers a date/time when families, especially

those with members working outside the home, can attend. A concern regarding July/August monsoon season was raised, so a date of June 26 at 5 p.m. was chosen, contingent upon availability of pool.

2. First Park Meeting in August had been previously set as August 17. This will begin the new 10:30 start time, with announcements at 11.

3. Welcome Back Potluck/Potlucks in general: Debbie G. asked participants if they felt potlucks were successful events. People agreed that potlucks were not generally liked, so it was decided that the group would have Eegee's as a Welcome Back. Giovanna M. volunteered

and a date of September 14th was set.

4. Before starting on the next item, the responsibilities of a volunteer were clarified: Any one who volunteers for a position is responsible for coordinating the event and making sure the event is listed in the newsletter. If the volunteer is unable to continue in the position, a suitable replacement or arrangement should be made. (Not on original agenda)

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UAPresents

by Alica M.

UAPresents is here! UAPresents tickets are now available for next season. Seats are \$5 per person and all shows are at Centennial Hall on the UA campus. To sign up please send me a check made out to the University of Arizona. I will need to know how many adults, how many kids, and which shows you want to attend. The deadline is July 23 so that we beat the

schools and get into all the shows.

You must be, or intend to become, an SDH member to sign up. For more details about the shows check the [UAPresents](#) website, or call me and I will read the description from the brochure.

Performances:

Les Percussions De Guinee, Wednesday, Oct 20 at 9:30 a.m.

By the Hand of the Father, Tuesday,

Nov. 16 at 10 a.m.

The Peking Acrobats, Wednesday, Feb. 2 at 10 a.m.

Pilobulus Dance Theater, Tuesday, Feb. 15 at 10 a.m.

Kevin Locke, Friday, March 4 at 10 a.m.

Momix, Tuesday, March 22 at 10 a.m.

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5. Erin S. provided sdhnewsletter@yahoo.com as the email address for newsletter submissions, and said the deadline will always be the 25th of the month. Erin S. indicated that everyone submitting an item for publication will receive a confirmation of receipt from either herself or Eileen D. (Not on original agenda)

6. Parents Meeting: There are three different types of Parents' meetings. The first is specifically for SDH parents and can be about any topic the group wishes to discuss. These can be held at any time anyone wants to discuss a topic. To schedule a parent's meeting on a topic you think would be of interest to the group, Sharon A. and Kim B. agreed to help find a location. Debbie G. briefly described the topics of previous parents' meetings. Some location possibilities discussed were the libraries, Riverdance Center, and the clubhouse available to Giovanna M.

The second type of meeting is specifically for newcomers to SDH and provides an opportunity for newcomers to SDH to ask questions about homeschooling and SDH. The effectiveness/usefulness of Newcomer's Meetings was discussed, with Lisa F. providing a list of the SDH Newcomer Liaison Committee members. The Newcomer Liaison Committee members will hold a Newcomer's Meeting in October as it was determined that historically the largest influx of newcomers has been in October and February. It was noted that the October influx

could be explained by the fact that October is the deadline for membership fees, but it was generally agreed that October was a good month for a Newcomer Meeting.

The Homeschool Information Night is a different meeting specifically meant for anyone considering homeschooling.

7. Curriculum Exchange: No one organized the one held in 2003, but it would be better with one person responsible for organizing in Fall 2004. Sybelle V. volunteered and September 21 was chosen.

8. Fall/Spring Clothing Exchange: Both the Fall and Spring clothing exchanges will be organized by Christine G. No dates have been set. Debbie G. mentioned that any leftover items are donated to New Beginnings (formerly Shalom House).

9. Talent Show: Eileen D. and Sybelle V. will organize. Help would be welcome. Sybelle V. expressed concerns about a talent show effecting music recitals Victoria M. organizes. The scheduling preference is to have the talent show when families can attend, so Saturday and Sunday afternoons were mentioned. An exact date was not set as it will be contingent upon venue availability.

10. Halloween Party: Tara O. volunteered to organize for October 26.

11. Poetry Café: Scheduled for September 18, 5 to 7 p.m. Erin S. has scheduled and will organize. Erin S. provided a brief explanation description of the Poetry

Café. (Not on original agenda)

12. The park times will not change this year as determined by park vote on May 18, 2004. The starting time for park day is 10:30 a.m. with announcements at 11.

13. November Event: Ann V. volunteered to organize a tree decorating at the Tucson Zoo Lights event. Ornaments will be made at park on November 16.

14. Giovanna M. mentioned organizing a field trip to a post office as a group event. She was encouraged to independently pursue any sort of field trip she thought might be of interest to the group. (Not on original agenda)

15. Music Recital: Organized by Victoria M. December 2, 2004 at 3 p.m., and May 5, 2005 at 3 p.m. Open to anyone.

16. December event, combined with November event, will be organized by Ann.

17. Cookie Exchange: Theresa W. will organize for December 14.

18. December Break: It was decided that no winter break in park days would occur this year.

19. Potluck: No potluck will be held in January due to both the previous discussion regarding potlucks in general and because there will be no break in park days this year (see #3 and #18).

20. Valentine's Exchange: Sybelle V. will organize for February 15. Ideas for making the exchange less chaotic were shared.

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21. Group Photo: Claire will organize for February 15. A location in the park, other than the play set, will be considered.

22. May Day: Giovanna M. will organize for May 3. (Not on original agenda)

23. Multicultural Festival: Organized by Brandye F. It was suggested by Debbie G. that enough notice be given to the group so information can be put on the website as was done this year for the Medieval

Festival.

24. Spring Clothing Exchange:

Organized by Christine G. Refer to #8.

25. Last Park Day was scheduled to be May 24, 2005.

26. SDH Parent's Meeting was scheduled for May 18, 2005. Anna C. will arrange location and Kim B. will facilitate.

27. August 16, 2005 will be the first park day for the 2005 - 2006 year.

Debbie G. reiterated that the dates and jobs assigned at the meeting

were not the only options, and people should feel free to schedule and organize any events or activities they think might be of interest to the group.

Theresa W. mentioned a field trip to Saguaro National Park - West.

At this point in the meeting, Lisa F. took over and began going through the Who's Who list. New volunteers were listed in the appropriate job listing, and the list was updated to reflect current group dynamics. An updated Who's Who list will soon be available.

Chess Club

Chess club will be meeting through the summer. Any changes in the schedule will be posted on the SDH-discuss list, and in the newsletter.

The schedule is as follows:

1st Thursday of the month: 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. at Shalom Mennonite Fellowship 6044 E. 30th, near Wilmot and 29th.

2nd Thursday of the month: 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. at Bookman's on Grant and Campbell.

3rd Wednesday of June, July, and August only: 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. at Columbus Library, corner of 22nd St. and Columbus.

4th Thursday of the month: 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. at The Cottage Bakery and Cafe, 800 N. Kolb, next to Tony Roma's. We will meet in the loft area.

If you have questions, please contact Bob B.

Name the Newsletter Contest Entries

Thank you to everyone who contributed suggestions for the SDH Name the Newsletter Contest. A poll containing all entries will be available at the Yahoo! SDH-Newsletter site. Please vote for your favorite by June 25th. If you don't have access to the SDH-Newsletter group or email, please give your vote to Erin S. or Eileen D. by phone, mail or in person. The winner will be announced in the July newsletter. In the July newsletter, we will also acknowledge everyone who submitted entries.

Cactus Clip
CAPU Monthly (Children And Parents United)
CAPU News (Children And Parents United)
The Coyote Crier
Desert Runner
Harmony

Hozho Happenings
Hozho Headlines
Hozho Herald
Hozho Highlights
Hozho Hodge-Podge
Hozho Post
Inside SDH
KAPU Monthly (Kids And Parents United)
KAPU News (Kids And Parents United)
Peccary Post
Quail Quacker
Quail Quacker's News
Roadrunner News
Sonoran Desert News
Super Coyote News
What's Up?
World Classroom News

Poetry Café

These poems were cooperatively written as part of the Poetry Café held April 24th. The next Poetry Café is scheduled for September 18th from 5 to 7 p.m.

The moon is full tonight
and the saguaros will dance again.
The moon will smile down upon
your glowing face
A large purple mask of
Roses
Thy smell as violet as any thing
It is overwhelming.
-Sybelle V.

Pillow ate boy
Orange orangutan
Big dog, big trees and everything.
And sparkly things like rings
And beautiful stars and the moon
And the wings of owls outspread
And stars above my head.
-Kim B.

The funnest parts of the birthday party
Were the swimming pool and birthday cake.
Lots of smoke came out of the cake.
Just before the robot emerged
and ate, and ate, and ate.
Then he swam in the pool.
It was tiled in blues and greens
Then it ate more of everything.
-Bibi V.

I think I like cookies, so do you
My dog likes cookies, too.
A dolphin trainer does not use cookies.
Cookies are for rookies. A professional needs fish
Such a scrumptious dish
Fish swim around too much
But I swim just the right amount.
-Zoe B.

Big and tall tree
Green apples
Green leaves
And other kinds of trees
And worms in the apples!
Or worms in the ground
Or Ground worms in the applesauce
The applesauce is good to eat,
The worms are always good to toss.
-Hunter B.

I like cookies, so do you
But there is always pizza, too.
What about the milk?
Got It? Bought It? Want It? BLECH!
But dog food, too, is wonderful,
Check!
Dog food? Eeww! It made me sick!
I felt like singing in the
Trees.
-Riley S.

Treasury Report for May 2004

by Teresa B., Co-treasurer

March's newsletter treasury report listed expenses of \$58.38. It should have read \$52.38. This error was only in the newsletter report, the logbook was correct.

Balance April 27, 2004: \$1052.44
Income: \$5.00
Expenses *: \$288.32
Balance May 20, 2004: \$769.12

*(final roster, catching up on newcomer packets, May Day

supplies, room and sitters for parents meeting)

Treasury Summary 2003 - 2004

Opening Treasury Balance
September 9, 2003: \$700.74

Total dues income 2003-2004:
\$910.13

Operating and activity expenses:
\$841.75

SDH balance May 20, 2004:
\$769.12

Curriculum Exchange

by Sybelle V.

September 21 is the annual curriculum exchange. Specifics will follow, but if you are cleaning out your closets over the summer, remember to save things to give away or sell to others in the group. Anything you have used with your children is acceptable: curriculum, books, software, videos, CD's, games, manipulatives and puzzles. For questions contact me by phone, or email.

Brownie Girl Scouts

A Brownie Girl Scout troop of homeschooled girls will be meeting through the summer. We meet

every other Tuesday 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. near River Rd. and Swan. We'd love to have more girls join us. If

you have any questions, please contact Lisa B. or Erin S..

June Summer Activities

Summer Tuesday's a group will meet for activities from 10:30 - 1, then adjourn to Ft. Lowell swimming pool (bring shade). Everyone is welcome to participate, but this is not a drop-off program, and everyone who participates in the activities is also expected to participate in set-up and clean-up.

Some activities list supplies to bring - don't feel like you have to buy these. Bring what you have, and what you are willing to share. The activities listed were planned with children 5'ish to 12'ish in mind. However, they can be made easier or harder depending on the child's skills. Plan to bring your lunch, too.

If you have any questions, contact Erin S.

Location: St. Francis UMC 4625 E. River Rd. Room #50, Northwest corner of River Rd. and Swan

June 1
Reader's Groups

Group 1: Nate the Great and the Sticky Case by Marjorie Sharmat

Group 2: Encyclopedia Brown Finds the Clue by Donald Sobol

Group 3: Edwina Victorious by Susan Bonners

Drawing Fun

Supplies to bring: A black fine point pen and a variety of drawing paper.

Alka-seltzer rockets

Supplies to bring: film canisters

June 8

Water Chemistry and Play

Experiments

1. Propelling a Toy Boat
2. Rooting for Sink and Float
3. Warm Water Rising
4. Ice Cubes

Games

1. Pool with stones
2. Water balloon baseball
3. Water balloon toss
4. Water relay

Supplies to bring: buckets, liquid food coloring

June 15

Puppets and Charades

Basic paper bag to marionette to puppets of other cultures.

Supplies to bring: puppet-making *stuff* - yarn, popsicle sticks, construction paper, glue, rubber bands, scarf size piece of material, etc.

Math Day

Estimation Stations

Family Math Activities

1. Cut-a-card puzzle
2. Palindromes
3. 36" square

Supplies to bring: a container with something in it (be sure you know how many items are in it - shhh! Don't tell anyone!)

June 22

Outing - to be determined

June 29

Artist Day

Learn about M.C. Escher, then create a Tessellation Design.

Supplies to bring: scissors, glue, drawing supplies

Pool Party

by Sybelle V.

When: Saturday, June 26th, 4 to 9 p.m.

Where: Frances A.'s neighborhood pool

Directions from Ina and Oracle: Go W. on Ina. At the first light (Paseo del Norte) go N. Continue on Paseo del Norte past the stop sign. Continue N. on Paseo del Norte. Turn left on Comobabi which is the last left before Magee. If you get to Magee, you've gone too far. The

pool is at the intersection of Comobabi and Samalayuca, on the left. What to bring: There is a tennis court, volleyball net, basketball hoop and a good size lawn. So, bring what you want to play. There is a BBQ, but you need to bring charcoal if you want to use it. You may also bring pool toys.

Food: Potluck, drinks provided, no alcohol permitted. Please bring your own plates, knives, forks, cups, and napkins. Bring food as follows (by the first letter of your last name):

A-G Main Dish

H-M Side Dish

N-Z Desert, cookies, or chips

Note: Please be respectful of the neighbors. Drive slowly and do not block driveways. If you pass the pool there will be a gate you can come through to park inside the pool area. However, only park on the dirt and do not destroy anything growing. Please call or email Sybelle V. (not Frances) if you have any questions.

Mathematical Mystery Tour Class

by Debbie G.

I'm looking for kids about 12 and older interested in expanding their understanding of mathematics. The book I want to use, *A Mathematical Mystery Tour: Higher-Thinking Math Tasks*, by Mark Wahl, is designed to be used by small groups of students. The activity pages from the book are photocopied and then distributed to the students, along with their own copies of the accompanying Tour Guide Newspaper (I can order these in batches of 10, costing about \$2.50 each).

Excerpts from the Table of Contents:

- A Fibonacci Game; A Golden Rectangle Puzzle; Mathematical

Artforms; From the Star Explosion to a Seashell; Building and Exploring the Great Pyramid

Excerpts from the introduction:

Educational Objectives of the Book and the Tour Guide Newspaper

- To motivate students who may not be attracted to math. The material integrates history, design, writing, geometrical constructions, botany, zoology, astronomy, and philosophy, which, like musical notes, are harmonized with mathematical concepts.
- To foster surprise in mathematics - yes, even joy!

How to Use These Materials

- These materials are best used with a teacher as a resource and guide and with students working on projects in small groups....

So that would be me, a resource and guide. How, when, how often this group gets together, all of these are wide open. There are some air-conditioned spaces available during the day, or we could meet at my house (or someone else's if that would be more convenient) during the evening. What is important is that the experience is designed to be fun!

Kids, please let me know if you are interested in trying this out. You can call or email [Debbie G.](#) Thank you!

Free, or Nearly Free

by Erin S.

The following is a list of places, or groups, offering free activities during June. Be sure to double check details with the sponsor.

Unscrewed Comedy is offering two free events during June. Both will be at Bookman's on Speedway. The first is an Improv Workshop for ages 8 to 13 on June 2nd, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. The second is an All-Ages Comedy Improv on June 11th from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Michaels at Broadway and Kolb, 520-290-9819, is offering a free Family Craft Event from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on June 12th.

The Tucson-Pima Public Library has different programs at each branch.

Call, or stop by, your branch to find out about their summer events.

Shakespeare Under the Stars at DeMeester Outdoor Performance Center in Reid Park June 10th to June 12th and June 17th to June 20th, 8 p.m.

Tucson Children's Museum: Free admission June 20th. 792-9985.

Bookman's: Each Bookman's location is offering free weekly events. Speedway-Wednesday's at 11 a.m., Bookman's-Grant Thursday's at 11 a.m., and Bookman's-Ina Monday's at 11 a.m. Call, or visit, the Bookman's nearest you for a schedule.

University of Arizona Museum of Art, 520-621-7567: admission is always free. Summer hours are Tuesday to Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.,

Saturday and Sunday 12 to 4 p.m.

Collazo Collage event June 4th at Border's in Park Place from 10:30 to 12, June 9th at Bookman's-Speedway from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., and June 12th at UAMA from 1 to 2:30 p.m.

Tucson Museum of Art is free every Sunday. 520-624-2333. TMA also offers free Handz On! programs at Bookmans on Speedway. The next one is June 20th from 2 to 4 p.m.

The Loft Cinema run films appropriate for all ages as part of their Reel Journeys program. Often the film is an "oldie". The cost is \$1 for children, and \$3 for adults. Call 529-0764 for current information.

This Month's Featured Web Sites

by Debbie G.

Here are six new web sites to tantalize, amaze and intrigue you. You can also find these, along with a link to the [Featured Sites Archive](#).

[Solar System Jigsaw Puzzle](#)

From the BBC, you can try three levels of puzzles - place planets in their correct orbits, match moons to their planets, or drag manmade satellites, probes and telescopes to their correct positions.

[The Mozart Gazette - An Exploration of Wolfgang A. Mozart, his music and his time](#)

This great web site was created by Catherine Larson, a teacher at a Connecticut middle school. I came across it while searching for background information about the film Amadeus. The first two lessons discuss Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Antonio Salieri.

[Summer Solstice page from Teach.net](#)

Learn about Midsummer's Eve customs, and find a link for constructing Stonehenge.

[The Topic: Storytelling](#)

Brief history of storytelling, followed by a comprehensive collection of links from around the world

[101 Car Travel Games and Road Trip Ideas for Kids](#)

From MomsMinivan.com

[Cicada Mania, dedicated to cicadas, the most amazing insects in the world](#)

I was in Maryland 17 years ago when the famous (infamous?) Brood X emerged from the ground and climbed trees everywhere. Also known as 17-year locusts, this cicada brood, the largest in the U.S., is emerging again throughout the mid-Atlantic region. Check this site to see some photos, find more information, even listen to sound files from these noisy creatures.

SDH Talent Show

By Sybelle V. and Eileen D.

Come to watch, or to participate in the first annual SDH Talent Show on October 16. What talent would you like to show SDH members, friends and family? You could do martial arts, gymnastics, dance, magic, recite a poem, do a comedy routine or perform a short skit with your friends. The possibilities are endless. All ages, including

parents, are encouraged to participate. More details to follow.

Remember that the Music Recitals in December and May are for music performances of any skill level.

Contact Sybelle V. or Eileen D. for information.

Homeschool Information Night

Are you new to homeschooling or know someone who is interested in homeschooling? Come to the Homeschool Information Night at Wilmot Library on Tuesday, July 27 at 7 p.m. Learn the basics required to homeschool your child, plus get a brief overview of methods to use, with lots of time for questions. For more information, contact Karen M. or Debbie G..

My Life at Sunken Rock Ranch

by Audrey F.

This spring and summer, my mom is taking care of some property down in Lyle Canyon, south of Elgin. The property has National Forest Service Land on three sides -- we see many animals here cutting across the property I spent several weeks here in May and I want to tell you about what I did.

The property is called Sunken Rock Ranch. It has a large barn, a small pond, a disgusting root cellar, three sheds, and two houses: the Bird House and the Cat House. All of these buildings are on ten acres of land. The barn is where my dad is going to work on his vintage trailers. There is a lot of wood in the barn. I personally would not like move it because there probably are wolf spiders and scary snakes in there, but be my guest. The sheds have been over run by squirrels. The root cellar is also over run with squirrels and Daddy long leg spiders and there are different kinds of tools like shovels and rakes. The inside of the Bird House used to be covered in cat hair, but no longer because we cleaned for days! Everywhere you look you can see birds pictures, ceramic birds, wooden birds, even placemat birds. Outside on the porch overlooking a grove of live oak trees, there are bird feeders where we enjoy watching the many birds and other animals. As you walk into the Cat House, you are instantly covered with cat hair. There are three cats who live alone because their owner recently died and are waiting for adoption. Anyone interested?

The elevation here is approximately 5000 feet and the habitat is pinion-juniper woodlands. There are so many different kinds of trees. The most common is live oak. The lady who used to live here cut down a bunch of trees because she was afraid of forest fires. I really like pinion pine because they make great climbing trees. Inside of the pine cones are pine nuts that are very good to eat. The black walnut trees are plentiful here - my mom says the Spanish word for walnut is *nogal*, which is how Nogales got its name. There aren't many flowers here because it is so dry and also because the blasted deer and javelina eat everything. My mom and sister planted flower seeds and the deer and javelina are enjoying the sprouts! Now their flower gardens are covered chicken wire and string. Hope my mom's flowers get to bloom.

I see so many mammals here. At least once a day, we see white tail deer, usually one male and three females. They like to come to the porch so Natalie and I can feed them carrots, bread, and apples, but they'll eat onions, rice or even avocado peels. The rock squirrels come onto to the porch and stuff themselves with bird seed. Every once in awhile we see two coyotes trotting across the property into the National Forest Service land. My mom and dad say there are javelinas here but I haven't seen any, yet.

Birds are everywhere! The hummingbirds dive for the sugar water feeders and you can hear their

wings beat. From the porch, you can see fluttering sparrows, sweet-sounding finches, noisy raven and loud, tapping woodpeckers. My favorite is the raven. I like it because its body looks like a hawk without color.

Although I could spend the entire day watching the birds and deer from the porch, there are other things to do. Every day I go to the Cat House and take care of the three cats. One is a fat, orange tabby cat named Oreo who likes to lay down and have its head scratched. The second is a gray Persian named Topaz who is energetic and will play with anything. The third one is a sick, tiger-striped cat named Tiger Lily. She doesn't like me very much. In addition to caring for the cats, my family brought down their bikes to ride around the property and down the road. But my favorite thing to do is to read a book outside on the porch so I can watch all the birds flying to and fro. In my opinion, the best part is that there is no TV (other than channel 6 on the radio)!

I like Sunken Rock Ranch because you can enjoy wildlife right outside the door.

I Love Irish Step Dancing

by Natalie F.

Two years ago at the St. Patrick's Day Festival, I sat transfixed by something I'd never seen before: Irish step dancing. Afterwards, I begged my mother if I couldn't please take lessons. I've been dancing for two years now and love it. Here's why.

The history of Irish Step Dancing is hard to explain but I will try my best. I have heard many stories about how Irish dancing started. I will name just a few: protesting the English rulers, ritual dances, and festivities. All of the dances came from Ireland, but most have changed from Irish step dance school to school and over time.

Irish step dancing consists mainly of jigs, reels and ceiles. Each has its own unique pattern of steps. It's different from the ballet and jazz that I learned before especially because I keep my arms stiff down at my side.

Have you ever heard the Chief-tains? That's the kind of music we dance to. There's always an accordion and sometimes a keyboard, violin or drum. Sometimes it depends on who is in the audience and is willing to perform if the paid musicians don't show up.

About every month I go to a feis, the Gaelic word for dance competition. Hundreds of dancers perform over a weekend. The competitions are divided by age, skill level and dance. I've been dancing for nearly two years and am at the Beginner II and Novice levels for most of my dances. I will have to get a first place at Novice to advance to Prize-winner. It's really hard!! The top dancers at each level receive medals. I save mine in a slide notebook. For the "Special" dances, you can win a trophy - I won my first trophy this last weekend at the Tucson Feis.

Every dancer's dream is to go to the World Championships. They are held once a year in Dublin, Ireland. Mr. Bracken, the owner of my dance school - Bracken School of Irish Dance - placed 1st in Worlds many years ago. The daughter of my teacher, Rosemary Browne, placed 3rd in Worlds this spring. Many of the dancers in Riverdance were competitors at Worlds.

Irish step dancing dresses are elaborate and colorful. Beginning dancers wear a white blouse and navy skirt. Each school has a distinct design for its dress; my school dress is black with a white Celtic swan. It's beautiful. Prizewinners

design their own dresses which can cost up to \$2000. The best Prize-winner dress I've seen has green rattlesnakes on a blue background.

In my reel, ceiles and most of my jigs, I dance in gillies which are ballet-like slippers that are made of soft black leather and lace up the front. For my other jigs, I wear "hard" shoes which are like tap dance shoes but with a high toe and heel (and no taps).

Sproing! Sproing! Sproing! Every girl dancer's hair at a feis is so curly. They all look like Goldilocks on a bad hair day. Most Irish dance schools are under the mistaken impression that all Irish have super curly red hair. Since I'm Irish with super straight brown hair, my mom has to curl mine with lots of mousse and purple and blue foam strip curlers. They stick up from my head about four inches. My sister says I look like a colorful porcupine. But I get the Irish curls!

At the feis, vendors have lots of things to sell from candy to picture frames, backpacks to jewelry, and step dancing shoes to bloomers. There are also baskets of goodies being raffled to raise money for the feis. It is fun to wander around and see what is for sale.

Friday Swim Day

by Kris S.

Date: Starting Friday, May 28th
from 2 to 6 p.m.

Bring your suits, towels, snacks and drinking water.

Location: Kris, John, Malcolm and Oona's house. Call for information or to RSVP.

Coming Up...

Watch future issues of this newsletter for: Articles about June homeschooling conferences, event updates, thoughtful writing about homeschool experiences, articles by our very own kids, a new SDH Newsletter name and much more.

May Day Festival

by Giovanna M.

The May Day Festival was a success! Thank you to all the parents and kids who participated and helped. Thank you to the local florists who donated beautiful flowers: Georganne at Villa Feliz Flowers, A Anthony's Flowers, Connie at Connie's Kreative Expressions, Don Sr. at Mayfield Florists. Special thanks to Alica M. for purchasing and bringing in a bouquet, to MaryAnn Nichols for providing May poles to decorate, Dorothy Nuckolls for crocheting the head-bands, and to gifted face-painter Linda Sheehan. It was a wonderful and fun-filled morning. Keep an eye, and an ear, out for next year's May Day Festival on May 3, 2005.

Summer Teen Activities

by Mary Beth D.

Sharon H., Monique S., and Mary Beth D. are coordinating a few summer activities for teens 13 and up. The number of activities will depend on the level of interest shown, and on finding affordable ideas easily accessible for all.

Ideas so far: Movies, swimming, and mini-golf. Let us know of any freebies coming up in Tucson over the next couple months that you may be interested in doing as a group. Maybe Shakespeare in the Park? Outdoor concerts?

Call or email Mary Beth D. with questions or ideas. Have a great summer!

Peaceful Warriors

by Isaiah O.

I love my kung fu class so much. My Sigong is very funny. He makes up a lot of jokes. The demonstrations are really fun. I like the end the best. That's when you get your new belt. Belts stand for different ranks. Right now, I am advanced yellow belt. To get a new belt you have to practice and learn new moves. The Sigong gives us a test to see if we know the moves right. If I get my next belt, it will be an orange belt. My newest move is the short long short punch. He also teaches us to be nice and not to be abused in any way. My friends there are Sam, Nick and Cole. They are nice. When I left class last week, Sam and Nick said, "Nice job, Isaiah." I like Cole because he helped me to tie my belt once.

Life Learning Magazine Renewal

by Alica M.

It is time to renew Life Learning Magazine subscriptions. New subscriptions are also welcome. I do bulk orders, so it is only \$12 per year. Normally a subscription is \$24 per year. Life Learning has articles about, unschooling, parenting, and the ups and downs of homeschooling. To find out more visit the [Life Learning Magazine](#) website. To subscribe, contact Alica M. I would like to have all subscription requests by June 20th.

Teen Book Club

by Brian M.

We will continue to meet throughout the summer on Tuesday mornings at 10:00 a.m. at Coffee Etc. located at 2830 N. Campbell (just north of Grant). Our next meeting is on June 8th. The next book is "Speaker For the Dead" by Orson Scott Card. It is the follow up to the Sci-fi series that began with Ender's Game. Newcomers are welcome. Any questions, call Brian M.

Music/Dance Recital

by Victoria M.

Get ready for the Music Recitals! The Winter Recital is on Thursday, December 2 at 3 p.m. at Washburn Piano. The Spring Recital will be Thursday, May 5 also at Washburn at 3 p.m. There is a stage with room for dancing, singing or playing an instrument. There is also a full size grand piano. All skill levels are encouraged to participate. There is plenty of seating, so even if your child doesn't want to perform you can come and watch the other children do so. Contact Victoria M. between 5:00 and 8:00 p.m. to sign up.

SDH - Our Children Growing Older

by Debbie G.

When we began homeschooling in 1987, we were living in Maryland, outside of Washington, D.C. I had heard about homeschooling through La Leche League, and after reading everything about it that I could find at our public libraries, we decided to give it a try.

The D.C. area was filled with museums, nature centers, and parks, all with activities designed for young children (tip when considering a move: capital cities are often chockful with "extras," perhaps because legislators don't mind spending money on things they and their families will use). Since our three children were ages five and under, we had plenty of ways to keep busy and have fun. Joining a homeschooling support group did not even occur to me - actually, it seemed like it would get in the way of our adventures.

Eventually we moved to Tucson (I know, we ignored the above tip, which incidentally also holds true in Arizona - just consider where most of the state's money is spent), and initially, finding adventures and activities wasn't too difficult. But

within a couple of years, I began looking for other homeschooling families. This was especially important to me because our children were getting older and needed both companions and learning opportunities.

My daughter started a young writers group that met weekly at Main Library to discuss and share work. But just as all adults are not entrepreneurs or leaders, not all children can be expected to create their own groups or activities, nor should they be expected to create all of their own opportunities.

Here is where homeschooling support groups can realize their utility, by creating a network of like-minded people able to work toward a common goal - in this instance, to provide learning opportunities for their members approaching adulthood.

An example of how opportunities can be created is the homeschool biology class led by Noelle J. Sonoran Desert Homeschoolers helped the creation of this class for older SDH children in two ways. One, SDH existed, so there was a way or

Noelle to find a group of potential students; and two, parents already knew each other through SDH, so it was easy to work together to make the class happen.

Ironically, homeschooling support groups membership often has a preponderance of younger children compared to older children. Homeschooling younger children is relatively uncomplicated, so while there is a need for support among parents, there is not that strong of a need for a network. But take a look at the number of older children in a support group - where did all of those young homeschoolers go? There are fewer teenagers in most support groups and this is unfortunate because it is this age group that could most immediately benefit from belonging to a homeschooling community.

The challenge that SDH should consider embracing is to make SDH as rewarding for our teens as it is for our youngsters. It would be terrific if today's excited 6-year-old SDH member could become the future's enthusiastic 16-year-old SDH member.

New Biology Class

by Michaela B.

A new biology class for teens will begin June 10, and continue through February 10. It will be taught by Noelle J., a University of Arizona student. The class will be held on Thursday nights from 7 to 10 p.m. Noelle is attempting to find a more central location for the class, possibly at the University of Arizona.

Let Michaela know if you have any suggestions for the class location. The book for the class is Essential Biology and is available used, for approximately \$8 to \$10. Lab supply costs are divided among the students and were about \$12 (based upon the last class she taught). Each class will cost about \$10, depending upon the number of students enrolled. Currently there are

six to eight students. If you did not attend the Thursday, May 27th meeting at the Riverdance Center and would still like to enroll your student, please call or email Michaela B. We do need to know the exact number of students for the class so that books can be purchased before the class starts and to let you know class location.

Monthly Parent Opportunities

Every month of the year, SDH has opportunities for parents to meet, talk and get to know each other better.

Mom's Coffee Night

Currently Mom's Coffee Night is held on the last Wednesday of every month at Something Sweet located at 5319 E. Speedway. That's at the NE corner of Speedway and Beverly (the Office Depot store is on the intersection's NW corner), and Live Theater Workshop is in the same plaza. We get together at 7:30 p.m. but don't worry if you can't make it at 7:30, many of us stay until midnight! We chat, laugh, and generally have a great

time. It is a great way to get to know others better and there is always a mix of parents with younger or older children so you can ask lots of questions. Contact Kim B. if you'd like more information.

Men's Coffee Night

Men's Coffee Night is held the first Wednesday of each month. This is an opportunity for fathers to discuss homeschooling issues, as well as other topics. Please join us at the Borders on Oracle, for coffee, tea, good company and conversation. This casual meeting starts around 7:30 p.m. Contact Jeff O. or Brian M. for more information.

Adult Book Discussion Group

What We're Reading: The Eyre
Affair by Jasper Fforde

Date: Thursday, June 17th

Time: 7 p.m.

Place: Something Sweet 5319 E. Speedway

Coming Up: July Book Discussion

What We're Reading: Alice, I Think
by Susan Jubly

Date: Thursday, July 15

Time: 7 p.m.

Place: Something Sweet 5319 E. Speedway

Please contact Erin S. if you have any questions.

SDH P.E. Classes

by Eileen D.

Athletes in Training (AIT) will offer SDH P.E. classes starting in September 2004, and will now offer two choices. Monday class is at Himmel park from 9 to 10 a.m. Tuesday class will be at Ft. Lowell Park from 9 to 10 a.m. September 2004

to May 2005. The program is for ages 5 and up and the cost is \$15/month for one child with discounts for additional children. Discounts are also given for paying in annual or quarterly payments. Monday, August 30 is a free trial day for the Monday class and August 31 is a free trial day for the Tuesday class.

Fall Clothing Exchange

by Christine G.

When: Tuesday, October 5

Clean out your closets and bring your outgrown, unused, but still usable clothes for someone else to enjoy. Take home something that you can use. Any excess will be donated to a local women and children's shelter.

What is a Feis?

by Sydney G.

Last Sunday, May 23rd, I competed in a feis (pronounced fesh). A feis is an Irish dancing competition. My cousin Maureen from California was here for the feis too. She is also an Irish dancer.

I danced 9 dances. My favorite one was a 6 hand dance that I danced

with 5 other kids. It was the first time we had done this dance at a feis and we tied for 1st place! I got other medals for some of my other dances. I got a 4th place medal for my Reel dance. That was really good because it was at a higher level than I had danced at before and it was my first time at that level. My other medals were three 3rd place medals

for my hard shoe dances which are the hornpipe, the treble jig, and St. Patrick's Day.

For the feis, my mom makes my hair really, really curly. It hurts a little when she pulls out the curlers. I have been Irish dancing for almost two years and it is a lot of fun. Maybe next year you can come to the feis!

SDH Membership Form

To Join SDH, return this form and \$10 (\$5 after January 1st) to either a Newcomer Committee member in a yellow SDH t-shirt or SDHs' treasurers Claire B. or Teresa B.

Parents' Name(s) _____

Address _____

City, State Zip _____ Phone Number _____

E-mail Address _____

Child(ren) Name(s) and Birthdate(s) (MM/YY) _____

Sonoran Desert Homeschoolers FAQs

About SDH

- SDH is a home education network serving homeschoolers throughout Tucson and Southern Arizona.
- SDH was founded in January 1999.
- Over the years, an average of 95 families are SDH members, with children from infants through teenagers.
- SDH meets for weekly park meetings from mid-August through mid-May.

What are the benefits of joining?

- Every month, Sonoran Desert Homeschoolers Newsletter will be sent to you either electronically or by mail.
- Get the SDH membership roster, plus regular updates.
- Participate in SDH-discuss, an e-mail list restricted to current members of SDH.
- Participate in and help organize SDH group activities for your children and children of all ages.

What does it cost?

- \$10.00 per year (after January, the fee is reduced to \$5 for the remainder of the year—SDH years run August through July)

How do I join SDH?

- To join, come to the Tuesday park meeting—you can submit the above form plus the fee to a newcomer committee member in a yellow SDH t-shirt or to Treasurers Claire B. or Teresa B.

Questions to sdhtucson@yahoo.com

From the Editors

Thank you to everyone in SDH who took on a job and/or organized an activity or field trip for the group. We appreciate your time and effort. Thanks!

The SDH newsletter is published

and permanently archived on the SDH website. However, personal contact information such as e-mail address and phone numbers included in your newsletter will not appear on the website unless you have given SDH Webmaster Debbie G. your

permission.

The deadline for the newsletter is the 25th of every month.

Erin S. and Eileen D.

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Sonoran Desert Homeschoolers is an open, not-for-profit home education network, providing social and creative outlets for homeschooling families. We are not devoted to any one homeschooling approach, political platform, religious outlook, or philosophical ideal. Our homeschooling community supports all families, regardless of their personal lifestyle or educational choices in the area of home education. Our motto is "hozho," a Navajo word meaning "harmony" or "walking in beauty or friendship."

June 2004

For more information about the events listed on this calendar, see the newsletter articles.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Indoor Activities at St. Francis in the Foothills 10:30 a.m. 1:00 Ft. Lowell pool	2 Men's Coffee Night 7:30 p.m. Borders	3 Chess Club 6:30—8:30 p.m. Shalom Mennonite Church	4	5
6	7	8 Indoor Activities at St. Francis in the Foothills 10:30 a.m. 1:00 Ft. Lowell pool	9	3 Chess Club 6:30—8:30 p.m. Bookman's Grant/Campbell	11	12
13	14	15 Indoor Activities at St. Francis in the Foothills 10:30 a.m. 1:00 Ft. Lowell pool	16 Chess Club 6-8 p.m. Columbus Library	17 Adult Book Discussion 7 p.m. Something Sweet	18	19
20 Life Learning subscription deadline, see Alica M.	21	22 TBD	23	24 Chess Club 6:30—8:30 p.m. Cottage Bakery	25 July Newsletter deadline Last day to vote for newsletter name	26
27	28	29 Indoor Activities at St. Francis in the Foothills 10:30 a.m.	30 Mom's Coffee Night 7:30 p.m. Something Sweet			