



Inside SDH

Sonoran Desert Homeschoolers • Tucson, AZ • September 2009

ROOTS & SHOOTS AND EARTH SCOUTS

by Frances K.

If you would like to attend the meeting for Roots & Shoots/Earth Scouts, we are going to escape the heat of Tucson and live it up on the top of Mount Lemmon for a few hours. We will have a pot luck and talk about this year's events and activities. We can also go on a short hike to a waterfall, then we will have to say goodbye to the beautiful weather and come back to Tucson. So come join us for some fun for the new homeschool year! Let me know if you would like to go and need carpooling. Also let me know if one of you has extra room in your car.

Where: Take Tanque Verde all the way to Catalina Highway, turn left then follow that all the way to the end. You will go through Summerhaven to the Marshal Gulch picnic area.

When: Friday, September 11, 1:00 to 5 or 6:00 p.m.

How: With your car or on a bike or just take a very long hike.

Who: You and your family too.

Why: Because we like to eat pie and look up at the sky .

PARK DAY SCHEDULE

August – McCormick

September – Ft. Lowell

October – McCormick

November – Ft. Lowell

December – McCormick

January – Ft. Lowell

February – McCormick

March – Ft. Lowell

April – McCormick

May – Ft. Lowell

June – summer break

July – summer break

TUCSON BOTANICAL GARDENS

by Frances K.

Join us for a fun day at the Tucson Botanical Gardens! It's a special homeschool day on Friday, September 25 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The cost is \$2.00 per person (let them know you are with SDH). We will get to enjoy the beautiful gardens and shade trees, participate in fossil digs, and watch the native butterflies and birds of the desert. It should be lots of fun and not a long drive. (2150 N Alvernon Way, just south of Grant on the east side of Alvernon)

LEGO CLUB

by Kim B.

The SDH Lego Club will meet on Friday, September 25 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the Martha Cooper Library. Lego Club is an informal meeting of kids who all like to build with Lego's. All you need are your Lego's and your creativity! Come build with us!



FALL CLOTHING EXCHANGE

The fall clothing exchange will be at Ft. Lowell Park on park day, Tuesday, September 29. Bring any clothing you would like to pass along. You do not need to bring something to take something. Take whatever you can use. Any unclaimed clothing items will be bagged up at approximately 1:00 p.m. and given away to a local charity.

Don't forget to renew your SDH membership!

Go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SDH-newsletter/> to print the form.



JUNIOR STATE

by Theo J.

Are you interested in government, politics and world affairs? If you are a middle school or high school age student, consider joining Junior State of America. Junior State is a national, nonpartisan, student-run organization. The Pima County Homeschoolers Chapter of JSA was founded last year and we have many great activities planned for 2009-2010. In addition to debates and political discussions, we'll work on a community service project, have a mock trial and a field trip to a court room, hold a mock election in November, host some great guest speakers, plus we'll meet with other JSA chapters at state and regional events.

Our chapter meets weekly on Fridays from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. After our meetings this fall, we'll have an optional debate class from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. This is totally optional. You don't have to take a debate class to join JSA or to participate. The course will use JSA materials and the Teaching Company's Argumentation lecture series on DVD. For meeting locations, please contact me. I will also post meeting information on SDH's discussion group.

For more information about JSA, check out our chapter web site: www.pimacountyhomeschooljsa.org or the national JSA organization site: www.jsa.org

BIKE SAFETY CLASSES by Frances K.

Bike Safety classes will be held at park days on:

- Tuesday, September 29 at Fort Lowell Park, 10:00 to 11:00 a.m.
Kids will receive free helmets and helmet fitting and there will be a short video on helmet safety.
- Tuesday, October 6 at McCormick Park, 10:00 to 11:00 a.m.
Bike safety jeopardy game.
- Tuesday, October 13 at McCormick Park, 10:00 to 1:00 p.m.
Bike rodeo, obstacle course. Please bring your bikes and helmets for the bike rodeo. Some bikes will be provided for kids without them.

These are for all ages but the child should be able to pay attention to the presentation. Depending on the size of our group we may have to split up into two groups, which means extra time will be needed. I will also need 3-4 adults to help with the things that the bike instructor needs help with such as setting up, passing out helmets, etc.

CYT SCHOOL DAYS SHOWS

by Laura N.

This fall (and Christmastime) CYT will be presenting two shows: Rodgers and Hammerstein's "Cinderella" on Wednesday, October 28 and Thursday, October 29 at noon at Crowder Hall on the U of A campus; and "A Christmas Carol" on Wednesday, December 9 and Thursday, December 10 at noon at Crowder Hall on the U of A campus.

CYT is a local children's theater group with casts composed of kids aged 8 through 18. There are three SDH kids participating in these two plays.

CYT offers school days shows at a reduced cost for school and homeschool groups. Tickets for school days showings are *\$5.00 per person* (regular ticket prices are \$15 for adults and \$10 for students). Payment (*made payable to CYT Tucson*) must be made in advance. No refunds are issued, so please make sure you can attend on those dates. We meet as a group at the theater and go in to the play as a group.

If you would like to attend either or both of these CYT shows, please contact me to get on the list, indicating which date you would like to attend, how many children and how many adults.

Go to www.cyttucson.org for more information about CYT.



What in the world!? It's the National Geographic Bee!

By Jackie O.

Calling all young geographers and would-be world travelers: get ready for the Pima County Home Educators National Geographic Bee. The date is Saturday, November 14, 2009 at the Nanini Library community room. Registration begins at noon; bee starts promptly at 12:30 pm. The competition is open to homeschoolers in grades four to eight who meet National Geographic's eligibility requirements. (See below.)

Students do not need to pre-register to compete and there is no charge to participate! The winner of our bee will take a qualifying test to see if she or he will go on to compete at the state level. The Arizona state winner will go on to compete in Washington, D.C. where the field will be narrowed to 10 finalists competing for \$10,000, \$15,000 and \$25,000 scholarships.

Geography Bee Study Sessions

To help prep homeschoolers for the bee, we will be coordinating 7 study sessions beginning in September for kids in grades 3 to 8. (Younger siblings welcome with supervision.) You don't have to do the study sessions to be in the bee and, conversely, you don't have to compete in the bee to be in the study sessions. In each 2-hour study session we will learn all about U.S. and world geography with games, maps, games, atlases, and games (can you tell how WE like to learn?!).

We included third graders in the study sessions to encourage children who will be eligible to compete next year—sorta' like the minor leagues. We will be covering a lot of ground each study session. Reading and writing are a must. Our goal is to best prepare our homeschooling contestants for the bee so the sessions will be geared to those students who are in a position to benefit from the prep the most — 4th through 8th graders eligible to compete in the homeschooling bee (again, see requirements below).

Here's a general rundown of the subjects to be covered (subject to change):

Session #1	Tues., Sept. 1	2 – 4 pm	Woods Library
	U.S. states & capitals, US regions, continents, oceans, latitude, longitude, map reading, bee rules		
Session #2	Tues., Sept. 8	2 – 4 pm	Woods Library
	U.S. national parks, landmarks, Europe		
Session #3	Mon., Sept. 14	10 am –12	Woods Library
	U.S. review, South America, Oceania and Australia		
Session #4	Mon., Sept. 21	10 am –12	Woods Library
	U.S. review, Africa, map skills		
Session #5	Tues., Sept. 29	6 – 8 pm	location TBD
	U.S. review, Middle East and Central America, bee skills		
Session #6	Tues., Oct 6	6 – 8 pm	location TBD
	U.S. review, Asia, bee skills		
Session #7	Fri., Oct. 23	1 – 3 pm	location TBD
	mock geography bee		

For questions and up-to-date information about the study sessions and the homeschooler bee, contact Jackie.

For more information and some good geography games and resources, check out National Geographic's website: <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/geographybee/>

Geo Bee Eligibility Requirements:

(edited from National Geographic's website)

1. Registration is open to students in grades 4 through 8 who will not be over the age of 15 by the time of the national competition at the end of May 2010.
2. A student may not be enrolled in more than three academic courses at the high school and/or college level during each school year of the competition.
3. Students enrolled in public or private schools, including **publicly-funded virtual academies and charter schools, are not eligible** to compete in the homeschool bee.
4. Also, to hold a competition, there is a minimum participation requirement of six students and students must be present to compete.



ARIZONA THEATRE COMPANY STUDENT MATINEE SERIES

by Donna J.

Arizona Theatre Company has a great 2009-2010 season planned this year with lots of must-see performances. So order your tickets for their student matinee series now and guarantee your seat. Please see schedule and descriptions below. Tickets for the musical, *Ain't Misbehavin'* are \$10 for students and \$18 for adults, subject to availability. Tickets for *George is Dead*, *The Glass Menagerie*, and *Second City* are \$8 for students and \$15 for adults, also subject to availability. I must have your ticket order by Friday, Sept. 18.

To begin the order process, first, email me and let me know how many adult and how many student seats you want for each performance and let me know how you would prefer to pay for your tickets. You may mail a check to me, or use PayPal. Please email me even if you are planning to mail your order, so I'll know to expect it (mail has gone astray in the past). To mail your order, send it to my home address. Be sure to include your check, and make it out to me, so I can consolidate our payments. Also include your email address and phone number with your order so I can contact you easily if I have a question. If you're paying via PayPal, I'll invoice you after I receive your email. Please note, if you use PayPal, there will be a small service charge added to the cost of your tickets. This is to cover the fee for using PayPal.

All ATC performances take place at the Temple of Music and Art, 330 S. Scott Ave. in downtown Tucson. Descriptions for each play are taken from an ATC announcement. The actors are available for discussions with the students after each matinee. For more information, check ATC's website: <http://www.aztheatreco.org/>

Just a reminder – ATC plays contain adult themes (and sometimes adult language) and aren't suitable for younger children. Please order tickets for middle school and high school students only!

George Is Dead Written and directed by Elaine May
Tuesday, November 3, 2009 at 10:00 a.m.

Comic legend and Academy Award nominee Elaine May offers up a new comedy starring Emmy and Golden Globe Award winner Marlo Thomas as Doreen, the socialite wife of a right-wing Republican named George. On her way to a fundraiser, driven by a possibly illegal immigrant, she ends up at the home of a former employee and her left-wing husband. How? Why? Do they kill her? Reject her? Adopt her? Is George really dead? See this comedy by the award-winning writer of *The Birdcage*, *Primary Colors* and *Heaven Can Wait* to find out! Note: Contains mature themes and language.

Ain't Misbehavin' The Fats Waller Musical Show

Based on an idea by Murray Horwitz and Richard Maltby, Jr. Music by Thomas "Fats" Waller

Thursday, December 3, 2009 at 10:30 a.m.

Note: Tickets for this musical are \$10 for students, \$18 for adults.

Bright lights. Glamorous gowns. And finger-snapping, toe-tappin' music. The joint is jumpin' and we're taking misbehavin' to a whole new level! Travel back to Harlem's sassy, swinging '30s with this riveting, Tony Award-winning musical — exuberantly performed by a quintet of irresistible talents. Spend a joyous evening partying with one of the greatest jazz songwriters of all time, Thomas "Fats" Waller. A composer and pianist with a legendary lust for life, he created jubilant melodies, soulful ballads and gleeful love songs like I'm Gonna Sit Right Down and Write Myself a Letter, Honeysuckle Rose, I Can't Give You Anything but Love and, of course, Ain't Misbehavin'. This is one show that may just bring the house down! One never knows ... do one?

America Plays! Celebrating Great American Stories Series:

The Glass Menagerie by Tennessee Williams

Tuesday, March 9, 2010 at 10:30 a.m.

In the 1930s in a small tenement apartment in St. Louis, the Wingfield family awaits your visit. The mother Amanda lives in an illusion of recapturing her faded Southern Belle glory, her daughter Laura lives in a fantasy world of delicate glass figurines, and her son Tom dreams poetically of a world beyond the back stoop. When Tom brings home a Gentleman Caller to meet his sister, *The Glass Menagerie* weaves these lives into a heart-stopping dance of hopes pursued and dreams betrayed. Considered by many to be Tennessee Williams' greatest play, *The Glass Menagerie* is an achingly beautiful story of longing and love that has touched generations of theatergoers with its sparkling, delicate radiance.

The Second City Does Arizona, or Close, But No Saguaro

Tuesday, April 20, 2010 at 10:00 a.m.

Talk about a stimulus package! From sagebrush to Sheriff Joe, from Green Valley to kokopelli — it's time to batten down the barrel cactus because we've invited *The Second City* to Arizona to do a no-holds-barred world premiere comedy revue all about us. Famous for their hilarious sketch comedy and for their equally famous alumni (Tina Fey, Steve Carell, Stephen Colbert, Bill Murray, John Belushi, Gilda Radner and a whole slew of others), *The Second City* is turning their photo radar on the Grand Canyon State, and aiming their tee-shots at the land of prairie dogs and snow birds. We're joining with this troupe of expert Chicago comedians to create a comedy about the challenges of the high life in the low desert. It's a guaranteed evening of recession-proof fun and high-mileage laughter — and which of us couldn't use a lot more of that right now?

2009-2010 AZ OPERA

STUDENT DRESS REHEARSALS

by Donna J.

Now is the time to sign up to attend Arizona Opera's student dress rehearsal performances. Arizona Opera – now in its 37th season – is an Arizona treasure and students have the opportunity to attend the company's final dress rehearsals at a bargain price. Three of these performances are scheduled for Tucson this season: *Così fan tutte*, *Salome*, and *A Concert of Signature Arias*. Student tickets are just \$6 for each opera and adult tickets are \$15. (More information is listed below.)

If you are interested in attending an AZ Opera Student Dress Rehearsal, please give me your ticket order by Friday, Sept. 18. To begin the order process, first, email me and let me know how many adult and how many student seats you want for each dress rehearsal and let me know how you would prefer to pay for your tickets. You may mail a check to me or use PayPal. Please email me even if you are planning to mail your order, so I'll know to expect it (mail has gone astray in the past). To mail your order, send it to my home address. Be sure to include your check, and make it out to me, so I can consolidate our payments. Also include your email address and phone number with your mail order so I can contact you easily if I have a question. If you're paying via PayPal, I'll invoice you after I receive your email. Please note, if you use PayPal, there will be a small service fee.

All dress rehearsals take place at 7:00 p.m. at the Tucson Convention Center Music Hall, 260 S. Church. For more information, go to Arizona Opera's website: <http://www.azopera.com>

Così fan tutte by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Thursday, October 15, 2009, 7:00 p.m.

To test a lover's fidelity is to test one's own ability to live with the consequences. In Mozart's witty – yet deeply human – opera, the line between laughter and heartache is perfectly drawn. The stunning mezzo-soprano Lauren McNeese, vivacious in her portrayal of Dorabella at Lyric Opera of Chicago, brings her signature role to Arizona this fall in a score that contains some of the most sublime music Mozart ever composed. Recommended for middle school and high school students.

Salome by Richard Strauss

Thursday, November 12, 2009, 7:00 p.m.

Kelly Cae Hogan sings the title role of *Salome*, whose disturbing obsession with John the Baptist drives her to make a shocking request: the head of the Prophet as a reward for performing the Dance of the Seven Veils. The dysfunctional and dangerous court of King Herod is brought to searing life through Richard Strauss' powerfully seductive music. Greer Grimsley, world renowned bass-baritone, debuts with Arizona Opera as Jokanaan. Recommended for mature high school students.

A Concert of Signature Arias

Cast: Christine Brewer, soprano; Dolora Zajick, mezzo-soprano; Stuart Neill, tenor; Gordon Hawkins, baritone

Thursday, March 4, 2010, 7:00 p.m.

Four of today's most exciting stars bring their signature roles to thrilling life in a must-see performance of dramatic arias and ensembles. This confluence of artistic forces gives Arizona Opera audiences a rare opportunity to experience some of opera's greatest hits featuring works by Puccini, Verdi, Wagner, Richard Strauss and other famous composers. Recommended for all ages.

Wright on Time: ARIZONA Book Launch and Signing

Lisa Bentley, ten year SDH member and homeschooling mother of two, has just released her first book, Wright on Time: ARIZONA. This is the first in a series of children's chapter books about an RV-living, homeschooling family who travels the USA.

What: Book Signing and Release Party

Where: Lovin' Spoonfuls Cafe

2990 N. Campbell, Ste 120 (west side of Campbell between Glenn & Ft. Lowell)

When: Saturday, September 26, 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Website: <http://www.WrightOnTimeBooks.com>

See book trailer: <http://www.WrightOnTimeBooks.com/trailers>

No purchase of book or food necessary for you to come and say hello! Lisa will have temporary tattoos and more for the kids.

Also listen to Grey Matter on 92.9 The Mountain on Sunday, September 20 from 9:00 to 11:00 p.m. when Lisa will be talking about her new book as well as homeschooling.



• **Send articles for the newsletter to SDHnewsletter@yahoo.com** •

SPARKS Across America

by Debbie G.

SPARKS Across America is grant-funded program designed to stimulate and promote children's interest in science by involving their parents and grandparents in science activities. Parents and grandparents who participate in SPARKS training receive meals, tours of the participating organizations, learning materials and an activity book to use with their children, plus a \$50.00 honorarium upon completion of the training. After attending the training sessions, parents then help staff a SPARKS science fair event. The hope is that after completing the training, parents and grandparents will bring home what they have learned, "sparking" their children's interest in science. This sounds like an excellent opportunity for homeschooling parents, especially because it is based on what homeschooling families have long known, that parents and children are a great learning team!

Reid Park Zoo has worked in conjunction with New York's Bronx Zoo, Miami's MetroZoo, and Chicago's Brookfield Zoo to bring SPARKS Across America to parents throughout the United States. Here in Tucson, we are lucky enough to have two separate SPARKS training programs to choose from, one sponsored by the Reid Park Zoo, the other by the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum/Tucson Children's Museum.

Dates for the Reid Park Zoo program are:

Training on Saturday, September 12th, and Sunday September 13th, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., followed by the fair at Reid Park Zoo on Saturday, October 3rd, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

If you are interested in signing up for the training at Reid Park Zoo, please email Jennifer Stoddard at Jennifer.Stoddard@tucsonaz.gov.

Dates for the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum/Tucson Children's Museum program are:

Training on Thursday, September 10 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the TCM; Saturday, September 12 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the ASDM; and Thursday, September 17 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the TCM; followed by the fair at the ASDM on Saturday, September 26 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

If you want to sign up for the training at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum/Tucson Children's Museum, please visit the ASDM's SPARKS page at http://www.desertmuseum.org/kids/family_discovery.php.

If you have questions about their program, you can contact Debra Colodner at DColodner@desertmuseum.org or 520-883-3021.

If you want to read more about SPARKS Across America, here is an article from the Wildlife Conservation Society (the Bronx Zoo's parent organization): <http://archive.wcs.org/353624/sparkswcs.html>

SDH MONTHLY PARENT OPPORTUNITIES

Dads' Coffee Night - September 2

Held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at Borders on Oracle.

Moms' Coffee Night - September 30

Held on the last Wednesday of every month at Something Sweet, 5319 E. Speedway (NW corner of Speedway and Beverly, east of Craycroft) from 7:30 p.m. to midnight (or any time in between)



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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."

<http://tucsonhomeschoolers.org>

Info: sdhtucson@yahoo.com