

# Neighborhood NEWS

# THE STARDUST HOUSE

*Serving the South Ranch II community since 1999*

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## INSIDE

Wall Mural 2

Youth/Yard Sale 3

Family Art 4

## Neighborhood News

A monthly publication

Minerva Sanchez-Salcido  
Lisa Reyes  
*Head Start Teachers*

Jason Gitkin  
*Recreation Coordinator II*

Jessica Peifer  
*Recreation Leaders*

Anthony Flores  
*Recreation Instructor*

Ana Arredondo  
*Recreation Aide*

Gail La Grander  
*Executive Director*

Maria Wolfe  
*Director of Family Resources  
Arizona Family Housing Fund*

## Gail LaGrander joins Stardust as New Executive Director

The Stardust House is proud and excited to introduce Gail LaGrander as the new Executive Director of the center. Gail LaGrander has over 15 years experience working with neighborhoods throughout the City of Phoenix.

Prior to coming to The Stardust House, Gail was employed with the City of Phoenix Neighborhood Services Department as a Neighborhood Specialist. She had the opportunity to work with diverse neighborhoods including the Palomino, Cesar Chavez, Garfield, Sevilla, and Tomahawk Village neighborhoods. She was also responsible for designing and coordinating the "Good Neighbor Program", a program designed to inform and integrate families with neighborhood improvement projects.

Gail is looking forward to meeting with the families in South Ranch, she says "I believe working families should have access to resources in order to be successful. I believe The Stardust House does that. At South Ranch families have real opportunities to flourish and reach their potential."

Maria Wolfe, Director of Family Resources for the Arizona Family Housing Fund says, "I'm impressed with Gail's compassion and desire to form strong relationships and we are very excited at her breath of experience in working with neighborhoods."

Francisca Montoya will work closely with Gail until the end of the year helping Gail



*Gail LaGrander was selected as the new Executive Director of The Stardust House. She joined the center in early September 2004.*

transition into the neighborhood, become familiar with all the homeowners, and take charge of the center programs and services. Francisca will leave at the end of the year to take on her new job as the Arizona Regional Director of the Cesar E. Chavez Foundation. As Francisca shares her thoughts she adds, "I'm confident that Gail is an excellent addition to the center and that she will do well in her new position. She has a real passion for working with people and helping to create change, this will help her as she works to fulfill the mission of The Stardust House."

Welcome aboard Gail y Bienvenida!

# Wall Mural at the Park



*Local artists Felicie Regnier and Kristine Kollasch display examples of some of the public arts projects they've created. This team of artists will lead the wall mural project at the South Ranch Park during Fall '04 and Spring '05.*

The South Ranch Park will soon become alive with lots of activity as local artists Felicie Regnier and Kristine Kollasch work with children, youth, and adults to design and create a wall mural.

The Wall Mural is a community project that invites the neighborhood to become involved in all aspects of the design and creation of the mural. To begin the project, a **Community KICK-OFF** is planned for **Saturday Octo-**

**ber 16 from 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. at the park.** Artists Felicie and Kristine will introduce the project's general concept and invite everyone to share ideas as to what they would like the wall mural to look like. They will also teach the audience how to make artistic ceramic tiles and everyone will have an opportunity to make their own tile that will eventually be mounted on the mural. The entire neighborhood is invited to attend and participate.

The six month art project will begin this fall in October and completed sometime next spring with a dedication celebration sometime in March or April 2005.

The focus of wall mural project is to create community art that depicts the lives of people that live in the South Ranch neighborhood. In the process of its creation, the artists will work with youth and serve as art mentors to support them in their artistic and creative development. This is a unique opportunity for our youth to work side-by-side with professional artists and learn from experts while gaining pride and learning how to work and contribute to their community.

The wall mural is made possible through a grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation in partnership with Free Arts of Arizona. If you have any ideas for the mural, please call Gail LaGrander at (602) 276-3587.

Come and join this effort and have fun exploring your creativity and artistic capabilities.

# Citizenship Classes

The Stardust House is offering citizenship classes for anyone interested in learning what you need to do to become a U.S. citizen. The class begins on **Mon. Sept. 27** and will be held **every Mon and Wed from 6-8 p.m.** through mid-Dec. 2004. A new class will begin in January 2005.

Heather Patterson, an instructor with Friendly House will be teaching the class. She will explain the entire process in detail as well as go over the application and answer questions. Students will also review the exam and have an opportunity to take practice tests. The class is open to anyone who is interested in becoming a US citizen. If you would like to register for this class or you have questions please contact Gail LaGrander at (602) 276-3587.





# Arizona State University Students are back!



The students from Arizona State University – Barrett Honors College are returning to The Stardust House to volunteer with our youth during PAC After-School Program.

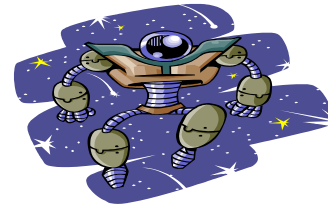
The teams will participate in the Regional Competition at Arizona State University in April and if selected will advance to the National Competition in San Diego, California in July of 2005.

This is the third year college students will be coming to provide assistance with homework as well as facilitating specific programs such as keyboarding, soccer, sign language, and computers.

Our hope this year is that the teams win the regional competition and come together to raise money through fundraisers, to be able fly to San Diego.

In addition to these activities, the TOY Challenge Program will begin again, and the center plan on putting together two teams. Boys and girls, ages 10 to 12 years will work on teams, partnered with college students, to create a board game that is fun to play as well as educational for youth to learn about science and technology.

Parents and students are asked to stay tuned for information about an upcoming orientation with parents and the youth interested in the Toy Challenge Project.



## South Ranch II Neighborhood

## Yard Sale

### Sat Oct 23

### 7 a.m. — 12 p.m. at the Park

(Space to set up and sell is on a first come-first served basis)



Come and check out the bargains, buy a few things, or make money selling your old used items!



*Sponsored by South Ranch II Homeowners Association.*

# Head Start Class of 2004-2005



The Stardust Head Start students will be learning a lot about pumpkins during the month of October. "They have planted pumpkin and various other seeds in the flower beds" says teacher Minerva Sanchez-Saucedo. She adds, "The students will be exposed to the concept and science of how plants grow as living organisms on earth."

Later in the month they will make pumpkin pies, empanadas, and make their own pumpkins seeds to eat. They plan to use outside shell to make creative designs. A field trip is planned to Safeway to expose the students to the various types of pumpkins, the different shapes, textures, and colors.

To wrap up the month of October, the head start program will be hosting a Harvest Festival which will include outside games, face painting, relay races, bobbing for apples and several other fun activities.



*Stardust Head Start Class for 2004-2005. Front row l-r are Kassandra Solis, Yeseñia Godoy, Evelyn Valdez, Ashley Rodriguez, Lilibeth Garcia, Brenda Godoy, & Gabriela Duran. Back row l-r are Teacher Minerva Sanchez-Saucedo, Abigail Sillas, E fzain Santamaria, Jacob Quintero, Christopher Hernandez, Esteban Vargas, Diego Rochet, Sebastian Varela, Jonathon Hernandez and teacher Lisa Reyes.*

## Strengthening Families through the Arts

Strengthening Families through the Arts is coming to South Ranch. This five-week program provides families with positive opportunities to interact creatively allowing families to explore new ways for self-expression.

The goal of this project is to create a time and space for families to work together and have fun while strengthening family-building concepts through positive interaction.

Strengthening Families provides clear and direct, art based activities for families to improve the lives. Families are invited to participate in a series of five weekly workshops, two hours in length.

In each workshop, families will be exposed to music, drawing, painting, and other art forms with professionally trained staff guest artists, and volun-

teers. Each family will work together to create an art project collectively and at the end of every session, they get to take it home with them.

The Strengthening Families program is open to five or more families or up to a total of twenty-five individuals. The workshops will be held every **Tuesday evening from 6-8 p.m. beginning Tuesday October 12 through November 9, 2004.** The only requirement to participate in the program is that all members in the family will be asked to participate.

If you are interested and would like to participate please call Gail LaGrander to get registered at (602) 276-3587. This is a great and wonderful program that will be lots of fun and will benefit all families who participate.

