

# Pebble

F a l l 2 0 1 1

*No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you're welcome here.*

*Shadow Rock UCC, 12861 N. 8th Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85029 602.993.0050*



**Mission Trip 2011 to Best Friends Animal Sanctuary in Kanab, UT**

Pastor Ken, Brenda Hensley, Ty Ragan, Anne Hillyard, Tessa Robinson, Reece Cambron, Ryan Nespodzany, Kelsey Struckmeyer, Rocky Foltz, Claire Cambron

## Welcome Back!

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 7**

9:30 a.m. Worship

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 14**

*First Sunday*

9:30 a.m. Worship

10:45 a.m. Potluck brunch

11:15 a.m. Education classes begin

## On the Fulcrum

*by Rev. Ken Heintzelman*

I heard an interesting phrase from President Obama's National Security Advisor regarding foreign policy and Iran. The phrase was "pressure track." The idea is that the administration is open to talks with Iran despite its political positions and outside the norm nation state interaction. However, until Iran complies within the parameters of normal nation state interaction, the United States will continue to interact with Iran with the "pressure track." In other words, a creative tension will remain and pressure will continue to be applied.

I was intrigued with this idea as I think it represents so many of our own

interactions in every arena of our lives. A "pressure track" is always in existence in every relationship and in every organization. It only differs in degree.

Theologically there are two main pressure tracks in the biblical narrative. One is the "Royal" pressure track and the other is the "Prophet" pressure track. The royal pressure track legitimizes earthly authority and the way we order our communal life. It can be heard in the stories of the anointing of kings and in Paul's letters when he speaks of the divine ordination of governments. The prophetic pressure track challenges earthly authority and the way we order our communal life

especially when power abuses the most vulnerable in our society. It is obvious that these two pressure tracks compliment and inform each other and the right balance will always be a debate for people of faith and conscience. We can give thanks for this divine creative tension.

At Shadow Rock we have our own multiple "pressure tracks" that call for trust and discernment. Most immediate is our need to settle on a sustainable budget with a positive cash flow (we are very close) and our need for maintaining dynamic ministries which characterize our

*continued on page 2*



photo by Sean Malone

## A message from new Shadow Rock Board President Gene McWhorter

I hope you have had a Sabbath that has been blessed with opportunities to create, time to re-create, and lots of recreation. As I write this short note welcoming you back, I will share that attention has to be paid to these three areas intentionally as well as anything else we do individually and collectively as we move forward into a new year of boundless opportunities. When we return together in August, plan on sharing your experiences and ask others to share theirs with you. As this new year unfolds before us, share your passion for the vision, the mission, and growth and sustainability of Shadow Rock!

# Pick-A-Party 2011

The Pick-A-Party  
fundraiser & 'friend'raiser  
kicks off this October!

Pick-A-Party is a fundraiser in which people

- Host parties/events/activities
- Pay to attend parties/events/activities

'Parties' can be anything from a themed dinner, a night out at the theater, a Christmas cookie-baking afternoon, or a game night! Be creative, it's up to you!

Look for more information coming your way about hosting parties.

## On the Fulcrum

*continued from front page*

congregation. Over the last program year we have been blessed by the gifts and talents of Katrina Glenn and Brett Robison. Katrina provided spiritual leadership for our youth ministries, and Brett brought a striving for excellence and inclusion to our music ministry that stretched all of us in some important ways. They reluctantly moved on from Shadow Rock to strengthen their personal and professional lives, and we wish them well.

An important question for us is how do we move forward from here? Staff and church members have already been working on this question. We welcome on staff Andria Fennig as our accompanist and band director. The musicians and I have already met and we have discussed Shadow Rock theology and how it can be expressed through music. Our Youth Team has already met and outlined several exciting programs and collaborative efforts with our Southwest Conference and neighboring congregations. This publication of the Pebble contains several articles that reflect the conversations and planning that will keep our youth and music ministries vital and dynamic.

I do not see us caught between the pressure tracks of our life at this time in history. I see us emphasizing one and then another as we move through our days together. Thanks to everyone and thanks to the Source of Life and Love!

## Profound Journey Dialog...

- *deepens our perspective on the meaning of our journeys*
- *motivates us to rethink our lives*
- *occasions hope*

*PJD Fall 2011 is November 4 – 6*



What are your thoughts about PJD? Do you feel vaguely like you 'should' go? Like a weekend exploring your life's journey is a little like a bowl of overcooked Brussels sprouts offered a beloved auntie? I can sympathize. I registered for my first PJD weekend only after some encouragement from Pastor Ken.

Let me offer a new metaphor. Ditch the sprouts... think about a weekend retreat, a gift of sustenance and energy for your best self. Is your best self a thinker? A dreamer? A revolutionary? A teacher? How do you feed this self? Profound Journey Dialog can be one way to nurture this best self. Despite my initial reluctance, I know at the end of a PJD weekend I will be tired in one way and incredibly energized in another way.

**There is not a PJD type** – a person who is well-suited to experience Profound Journey Dialog. It's for everyone.

Now for the big news! With every time that we've hosted a PJD event at Shadow Rock, we've added changes and experiences to make the event our own and to more fully answer the needs of participants. In fall 2010, we enhanced hospitality and provided additional opportunities for individual reflection. In spring 2011, we had all Shadow Rock presenters, facilitators, and hosts. November 2011 brings another significant enhancement: a parallel, age-appropriate profound journey event for children in kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade.

This new programming will bring the language of the Shadow Rock covenant alive for our young people. They – like adults in our congregation – will explore their relationship with the way life is. They will think about what it means to approach the point of the Wedgeblade. Children and adults are welcome at these events – experiencing the event together as a family or individually.

Abeth Spencer, my Co-Director of Christian Education, and I are so excited about this new children's event. It promises to be a wonderful experience for children and will give parents some peace of mind as they consider their own participation. I hope our excitement spreads! For more information, call the church office or email [karen@shadowrockucc.org](mailto:karen@shadowrockucc.org) or [abeth@shadowrockucc.org](mailto:abeth@shadowrockucc.org).

*by Karen Richter, Co-Director Christian Education*

Shadow Rock teen Dakota Adams travelled to Banos, Ecuador to work with children at "La Bib" (la biblioteca). The following is the July 7th excerpt from his blog

<http://dakotabanosib.tumblr.com>



Dakota teaching the kids *Listen to the Spirit*  
a song by Janet Allyn, one of Shadow Rock's former music directors

*Being in Ecuador changed the way that I think of things. It showed me that you don't need material things to be happy, and that they are not what define who you are. Spending a week with these kids showed me a few very important things*

- 1. Loving what you have is the key to happiness: By being happy with what you have in your life, there is less feel of want tying you down, and you can enjoy your life so much more.*
- 2. Things don't make who you are, your experiences do: Helping at La Bib really showed me this concept. The effect of what they do on the kids is incredible. Banos is a poor city, and has very little. But by La Bib providing a place for the children to grow and learn, it is giving the hope that you can do anything to those kids who have grown up with very little.*
- 3. It made me appreciate my life: Seeing what little the children that come to La Bib have made me realize that my life could be so much worse and that certain things that upset me really shouldn't, because I could have so much less and could have had so much less opportunity when I was younger.*

*In sum, this trip has had a humbling effect on me. I feel now that it is the job of the more privileged to assist those that don't have the same luxuries we have here in the states. When I first came to La Bib, I wasn't sure if I was going to like it. Now, I can't wait to spread the word, and eventually go back to help in changing the world – one child at a time.*

## Kids' Kapers

With the arrival of fall comes the pitter-patter of little feet in our preschool hallways. But after their normal preschool day, some of those little feet are walking the plank as pirates, kicking up dirt looking for dinosaur bones, or learning to limbo and cha-cha with the best of them. That's right – it's Kids' Kapers time!

So what is "Kids' Kapers?" It's an educational outreach offered by the Children's Education Office, aimed at preschool-aged children in our community. One-hour classes are offered in just about every subject imaginable – music, animals, fairy tales, art, languages, nature, and yes, even the popular "Pirates of Moon Valley" class! These classes are taught by some of the fabulous teachers at the preschool, and give kids a chance to learn more about the things that interest them most!

Kids' Kapers is a win for all those involved. The children get a chance to learn and experience hands-on a wide-range of

subjects and grow in a small, comfortable group setting. The teachers get the chance to present material that they have a passion or talent for, that they might not have time for otherwise in their busy preschool schedule. And Shadow Rock Church gets the chance to maintain a tie with the preschool, and provide a wonderful service that supports our education goals and programs.

Classes run in six-week sessions throughout the year, plus a three-week day camp program in the summer. Kids' Kapers are open to all children aged 3 ½ through Kindergarten, regardless of if they attend preschool at Shadow Rock or not. For the current list of class offerings, check the brochure rack by the front office, or contact Abeth in the education office [abeth@shadowrockucc.org](mailto:abeth@shadowrockucc.org).

### Children's Education

Sunday Education kicks off **AUGUST 14<sup>TH</sup>** with classes for all ages. Come for our **First Sunday** potluck, and stay for extended education until 1:00 p.m. Look in the Sunday Nuggets for details and information on classes and locations.

Other **First Sunday** dates to keep in mind are **SEPTEMBER 11<sup>th</sup>** (pushed back a week because of the Labor Day holiday) and **OCTOBER 2<sup>nd</sup>**. Extended Education goes from 10:45 a.m. until 1:00 p.m., with lunch served in the middle. Other Sundays, education goes from 10:45 until 11:45 a.m.

**Rock the World** and **Alternative Rocks** Wednesday fellowship begins **SEPTEMBER 7<sup>th</sup>** at 4:30 p.m. **Rock the World** is open to children from kindergarten through 4<sup>th</sup> grade, and **Alternative Rocks** is for our 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders. Dinner, choir practice, and fun and games await!

Mark your calendars now for **Trunk or Treat**, on **OCTOBER 30<sup>th</sup>**. You don't want to miss the games, costumes and fun that's in store!





## And the winners are....

In May, five high school seniors were awarded a Rev. William O. and Ann Smith scholarship:

from left to right

- Claire Cambron
- Anne Hillyard
- Caitlin Johnson
- Rachel Anderson
- John Banks

Also pictured, representing the Shadow Rock Foundation, is Judy Brengi.

## The Good News About Your Brain!

*by Karen Richter, Co-Director of Education*

I was privileged to have an opportunity to 'cut my teeth' on program planning and project management at United Way in the mid 1990s. It was hard, hard work and long hours... I loved it. And when Ken talks about over-functioning staff, well let's just say I have some stories to tell.

The great thing about that time was that new research about brain development in children was just coming into the popular culture. Everywhere you looked, it seemed, was an article about windows of opportunity in young minds or toys and programs designed to optimize early learning. Grant funding was available for early childhood programming. I used the opportunity to get a local school readiness initiative off the ground, Success By 6. The most important thing I learned during that time was simple and commonsensical: Brains learn best when engaged in healthy nurturing relationships. In other words, when a baby is surrounded by love and care, her brain naturally makes the neural connections that foster learning.

Here's the exciting part: adult brains work the same way. When adults are engaged in processing new information – when their passions are aroused by new possibilities – relationships form naturally. The opposite is also true – integrating and acting on new ideas is facilitated and supported by healthy



relationships. Simply put – when people learn together, they become friends. When friends share a learning environment, learning is enhanced.

That's why I'm excited to be attending Realistic Living's Symposium on Religion in August. Who or what is Realistic Living? I've explained it this way – If Religious Studies I had (at least) two children, one child is Profound Journey Dialog. A second child is Realistic Living. Whereas PJD is an intense and often life-changing weekend event, Realistic Living espouses an ongoing, relational small group process. Founder Gene Marshall describes Realistic Living this way, "Realistic Living is focused on enabling fresh communities of Christian nurture, recovering the personal meaning of the great words of Christian heritage: God, faith, love, freedom, sin, grace, Holy Spirit, cross, resurrection, Christ."

I hope to bring to Shadow Rock after attending the Symposium more information on how to build, support, and maintain the 'fresh communities' Gene mentions. We are good at lots of things at Shadow Rock. We are good at educating ourselves and others. We are good at building relationships. When we bring these strengths together to plan for adult learning opportunities, new possibilities abound. The future is open!



# Youth

This year, Shadow Rock is excited to offer the OWL program for our junior and senior high youth. You may remember hearing about OWL when our 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders completed the program last spring.

OWL stands for "Our Whole Lives," and it is a human sexuality curriculum designed by the United Church of Christ (UCC) and the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). But we're not just talking about the basic "birds and bees" here – OWL looks at the **whole** picture, and gets participants thinking about values, stereotypes, responsibility, social issues, personal well-being, relationships, identity, sexuality and religion, health, respect...in addition to age-appropriate and medically accurate information about our bodies and how we use them. It's the total package!

Three age groups will be participating in the O.W.L. program this year:

- 7<sup>th</sup> graders (& 8<sup>th</sup> graders from other churches)
- 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders
- 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders

These classes will meet two Sunday evenings a month. The full calendar can be found on Shadow Rock's website under the Youth tab. Things kick off on August 21<sup>st</sup> with a parent orientation meeting.

If you'd like to help get this great program underway, look in the parlor for the "OWL Tree." On this tree, you'll find tags with items you can donate, ranging from the everyday (like index cards and markers) to the risqué (like condoms). There are also tags with monetary amounts, such as a \$50 donation to cover a scholarship to the program for a student who needs it, or gas money for guest speakers and panelists. Your support will help ensure a great program for our youth in the coming year!

Too many Youth events  
to keep track of?

It's all in one place on the Youth Calendar  
on the Shadow Rock website under the  
Youth tab.

[www.shadowrockucc.org/youth-rocks-calendar](http://www.shadowrockucc.org/youth-rocks-calendar)

## FAITHQUEST

Beginning in August, Sunday morning education for Junior and Senior High Youth will be at 10:45 .m. Youth Director Brenda Hensley and Tony Spencer will gather with the Youth every Sunday morning in the Kreider Education Center (lower level under the Sanctuary).

## YOUTHROCKS

Twice a month on Sunday evenings from 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. (opposite OWL & Confirmation Sundays) Junior and Senior Youth will gather with Youth Director Brenda Hensley for fellowship, fun, and a light dinner.

## SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE YOUTH PROGRAM

Youth from Arizona, New Mexico, and El Paso County (TX) gather for a Junior High Retreat, a Senior High Retreat, and Summer Camp each year! As events are scheduled, information will be distributed to our Youth.

# Pages

## Summer Camp



## CONFIRMATION

**Confirm:** 1) to establish the truth, accuracy, validity, or genuineness of; 2) to acknowledge with definite assurance; 3) to make valid or binding by some formal or legal act.

Someone in the office asked me recently how to spell confirmation. "Is it conFORmation or conFIRmation?" It's not just a question of spelling. Are we asking our eighth graders to conform or to confirm? Do we want them to conform to our expectations or to the wider culture? Are we we confirming something for them or about them?

The traditional answer is that confirmation is the process and/or ritual by which young people confirm the vows made on their behalf at their baptism (assuming that they were baptized as infants). Their parents' vow from so long ago becomes their own promise; they take the mantle of responsibility for their own faith. Unsurprisingly, we think about confirmation a bit differently at Shadow Rock. We don't feed our confirmands the tenets of our faith and then ask them to spit the right answers back out again. We don't drill them on the history of Christendom, of the United Church of Christ or even of Shadow Rock. We don't give them answers to life's tough questions. So what do we do?

We welcome them to the journey. We welcome their

questions and doubts and even their blank stares. Confirmation facilitators and mentors are something like midwives...helping young people bring their best thinking to light, giving birth to a thinking and discerning person of faith.

When a group of adults were recently asked about formative experiences they had as teenagers, not a single person in the group named his or her confirmation experience. It's our hope that in a dozen years or so, a group of Shadow Rock members could remember their confirmation experience in a positive light. They might recall a feeling of encouragement, relationships with adults who cared, a memory of being cradled by our entire congregation. This is our hope, one that many in our congregation surely share.

Join us in August as we welcome a new group of confirmands. They will need the support of many adults in the congregation: teaching, mentoring, cooking, driving, chaperoning. Each of you can be part of their journey by blanketing them in prayer.










Sisters Alexandria and Samantha perform at the camp talent show.



Can you find the 4 Shadow Rockers in this picture of the Young Junior Camp?

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