

TEEN CENTER TIMES

A PLACE WHERE YOUTH ARE EMBRACED BY COMMUNITY

Spring—Summer 2009

Volume 6, Issue 1

HOKEY POKEY

"Spring Break" is a time for fun, and our response to that was to take a group of kids to Charlie Schulz's Snoopy's Ice Arena. I greatly enjoyed the "atmosphere" of the group not only during the skating time, but also to and from the event. I was pleasantly amused at the constant talking, laughing and singing throughout the journey. It got me to thinking.

The varied ice-skating skills of our kids became readily apparent. Some held the rail for most of the time while others skated around effortlessly and even tried to skate backwards at my encouragement. Fun ruled the day.

At the end of the session, the announcer asked all to come to the center of the rink to do the Hokey-Pokey. You know the drill..."you put your left foot in, you put your left foot out... you do the hokey-pokey and you turn yourself around... that's what its all about". It was most interesting to watch our kids actively involved, trying to avoid falling, but not being afraid to fall if that was their destiny for the day. Old and young doing this silly childhood song, no pressure to be "cool", or to even be good at any of this... just laughter and an abandoned sense of freedom to have fun. I have never been prouder.

In my church youth group we have spent several weeks discussing adolescence and its ever-increasing time frame. In summary, it is now taking 15+ years for kids to learn the answers to basic questions of adolescence that earlier genera-

tions once answered in a much shorter period. Hopefully, as responsible adults, we can tune into these questions, learn the reasons why it is taking longer, and most importantly acknowledge that things are vastly different now. We can't continue to "grow kids" the way we were grown, good or bad.

As I shared, the day got me to thinking. It may seem counterintuitive but *I wonder if letting kids be kids longer might answer some of the questions for them sooner.* Do



we sometimes **push** them into adulthood too soon? What happened to **leading and mentoring** them and **walking beside them** throughout their journey? Have our stress-filled, busy lives taken a toll on raising our children? If so, is it really a surprise

when they treat an adult situation in a kid-like manner, causing both parent and child considerable frustration? Do we really want them to enter the stresses of adulthood as soon as they can, when in reality, as adults we often yearn for the better days of childhood for ourselves?

Obviously, I don't have the answers. But, I do suggest taking your child and friends ice-skating, to the park for a game of Frisbee, or to the circus. Buy them some cotton candy, and let them talk or sing loudly in the car on the way. Act like a kid yourself. Be uncool and if the hokey-pokey experience is offered, do it. There is tremendous pressure in being a kid today, and removing that pressure if even for a day can

MARK PACINI

provide great rewards. Who knows, if we all did this, perhaps the adolescent time frame might begin to head the other direction as the questions become answered sooner.

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Special Events of 2009

PUC Mentoring	February 4
Free to Be at PUC Prep	February 13
Drug pres. at Teen Ctr.	February 17
3 Cups of Tea	February 19
Rockzilla Begins	February 26
Community Council Award	March 19
Health Fair Hidden Valley	March 26
Planting Deer Park Triangle	April 13
NV Roasting Co. Reception	April 29
PUC Elementary Soapbox Derby	May 3
Coldwell Banks Presentation	May 11
PUC Health Fair	May 14
ACTC visits SH High School	May 26
Challenge Course with Harrison	June 2
ACTC/SH Family Ctr. to SHHS	June 4

Upcoming Events

Art Classes by Edee Torossian	Summer
Movie Nights	Summer
Shaved Ice and Cotton Candy	Tuesdays
Cookie Fund Raiser	June 16
Tide pooling	June 23
Backpacking Review/Training	July 1
Backpacking in Sierras	July 10-12
Ice Cream Feed	July 14
Picnic/Concert	July 19
Ferry on the Bay/Picnic	July 21
Outdoor Exp. with Harrison	Aug 1-3
Exploratorium	August 20
Relay for Life	Sept 12
Mono Lake Experience	Sept 25-28

“Peanut Butter Kids” Saves Lives in Africa

A most outstanding and inspiring service project came from Pacific Union College Elementary School's, Lauren Madrigal, who spearheaded the Plumpy Nut Project to raise funds to save lives in Africa with Peanut Butter with the help of fellow peers, Katie Begerow, Stefaan Dick, Ian Johnson, and Joshua Penners.

The plan was to raise \$2,265 to pay for needed supplies for an enriched peanut-based paste, Plumpy Nut, developed for famine relief in 1999. Their project would feed 151 severely malnourished children in Malawi which currently has a 23 percent mortality rate for children under 5.

Madrigal, who learned of Plumpy Nut on 60 minutes, said that the paste has a 90-95 percent success rate. As a result, she ventured on a quest of intervention, and decided to invite fellow students and teachers to join her

Madrigal's passion was further driven by remarks in President Obama's inauguration address as he stated, "We can all make a difference."

Money was raised through skipping lunches and donating those funds to the project. Stefaan Dick explained, "We asked them (students) to come have a spoonful of peanut butter so they can feel what it's like to be hungry on a very minor scale, compared to what it's like for these kids in Africa,"

Madrigal hopes the fundraiser will inspire others to start their own projects.

Ian Johnson eloquently encapsulated the project and extended a challenge to all of us, "Anybody can make a difference."

As a Community we are most proud of each of those who took this vision from a passionate idea to a reality. You have accomplished your goal in making a difference not only in Africa, but in your own hometown!

Introducing New Staff Member: Harrison Hood, Mountaneer Extraordinaire

Harrison brings quite a flair to the Teen Center as a result of his life's journey. A product of the North Bay, his childhood was spent frolicking in the hills building tree forts and looking for adventure. Graduation from

high school started a journey that was destined to take him to Canada and Alaska, which in turned launched him on a quest to 17 countries climbing to the top of 4 continents and 6 countries during which he gathered a host of international contacts, including Sir Edmond Hillary; as well as, a fondness for the diversity and greatness of the earth.



His adventurous spirit continues to launch him on journeys of climbing, canyoneering, white water rafting, sea kayaking, backpacking, and travel which have become passions he loves to share with others.

He currently teaches climbing at Santa Rosa Junior College, operates Hood Mountain Adventures a local guide service, facilitates challenge courses by request, and teaches rock climbing and life skills at the Teen Center.

What he has learned through his experiences is; challenge is crucial but getting to the top is not the goal. It's making it back home with your friendships intact.

Flowers at the Triangle Collaborating to Make a Difference



If you enjoy the beauty of brilliant red and orange poppies blooming in all of their glory, take a trip to the intersection of Deer Park and Sanitarium Road,

and bask in the experience. As a result of the inspiration of Dick Maher and his care of the highway between Highway 29 and Silverado Trail for many years, Kids

Against Trash

was formed and roadside beautification expanded. Angwin Community Teen Center and Foot-



hill Elementary School joined forces with KATS and with "a little" help from above, "Walah." Thank you Dick Maher, Lief Nashed, Tom Amato, Mark Pacini, and Foothill Elementary School teacher Brian Henry and his students: Wyatt, Katie, Kyler, and Ryan.



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Napa Valley Coffee Roasting Company Hosts Teen Center Reception

We would like to express sincere appreciation to Doug, Nancy, Brooke, Charlie and Ben of the Roastery for hosting our April fundraising reception, and all of our gracious supporters.

As our Mobile Art Center displayed youth art projects, other students surrounded by their peers created sand art and Lavender Sachets with our art specialist Edee Torossian while donors observed and socialized with hors d'oeuvre prepared by event coordinator and Community Partnership Project Chair Tami McDonald and coffee provided by the Roastery. Other highlights of the evening was the melodious Hawaiian music performed by Earl Britos and Jerry "Kani" Gillgren of Manaleo; and our drawing where two thirds of the profits collected would benefit the Angwin Community Teen Center's operating needs and outreach projects and one-third would be given to the local charity or foundation of the winner's choice. A wonderful time was had by all.



Introducing: Kupuna Noe, True Humanitarian and Expert Culinary Specialist

Kupuna Noe entered our lives at the Teen Center seeking a venue to share his skills, talents, passion, and love for the world around him. His expression of energy has touched every aspect of the Center from his "world famous rice, beans, and humus" to the tranquility that he projects within the Center through his presence, the plants he facilitated providing life and beauty, and the pond that lightens the air with the sound of the flow of running water.



Noe brings with him an experience and understanding of the elements of a very difficult childhood and the pieces that make the difference in the life of a child. His greatest mentor, his grandmother Inez, spoke little but graciously showered him with kindness-the element that provided warmth, love, and built his character. Words and phrases that represent Noe are accountability, gratitude, paying attention to the earth and the Divine Calling of Life, along with his philosophy that like gold "life tests," refinement by fire and challenges bring about purity and wholeness into our lives.

Noe also caters his delicious culinary treats. Contact kupuna@gmail.com.

Minding the Heart of the Mind

Excerpts from Kupuna Noe

Mind as a Verb - a word that characteristically is the grammatical center of a predicate and expresses an act, occurrence, or mode of being. It is a voice, mood, or aspect, and has a full descriptive meaning and characterizing quality. Synonyms include: remember, remind, enjoy, behold, discern, contemplate, propose, comply, beware, care, consider, think, attend and observe.

Mind as a Noun - a brain, intellect, consciousness, faculty, will, inclination, disposition, temperament, reason, sanity, conviction, humor, notice, attention and observation.

How we melt these two parts of speech together has significant implications in the life of a child.

Our success occurs when we look deeply and learn to tenderly mind the Heart of a child's mind.

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THE PERFECT STORM - WILL OUR CHILDREN SURVIVE?

DIRECTOR'S CORNER TOM AMATO

Most of you know of the movie the Perfect Storm – in it a fishing crew found themselves blessed with a full catch as multiple violent storms hit them with gale force. Throughout the journey they ignored the danger signs until it was too late. They eventually reached a point of no return and paid the price with their lives. The question today is, are our children facing the same scenario without their ability to choose? Are they paying the price for decisions that politicians, administrators, and other influential people have made regardless of apparent misunderstandings and disregard for child readiness, brain function, abilities, and human behavior? Decisions that create a survival of the fittest environment where the strong succeed and the weak wither and die.

Look around. Do you see kids that have a positive attitude, excited about life, and yearning to learn? Do you see kids with characteristics of assurance, self worth, motivation to take on the challenges before them, and inspired to make a difference in the world around them? Or do you see kids crying out as displayed



through their language, attitude, values, choices, behavior, art, and music.

Are the Systems that we have created for our kids working or not? Are we mentoring leaders that we would want to follow, who share our hopes, dreams, and values? Are our families, schools and communities truly prepar-

ing and building our children to dream dreams, attain them, and overcome the challenges before them?

At one time America was motivated by God, family, friendships, values and principle. What is our motivation today? At one time parents had the time to pass on values to their children, extended family surrounded children with love and care, schools focused on children rather than subject matter, and the Village loved, cherished, and mentored us with accountability and discipline as expectations.

CAN YOU VISUALIZE THE "PERFECT STORM" WITH OUR KIDS POWERING UP A TIDAL WAVE WITH THE FORCE OF THE WAVE CURLING TO CRUSH THEM?

If we know that our kids are in certain peril, what can we do? But even more important **what will we do?** I look for the day when "No child left behind" is replaced by **"EVERY CHILD SHALL SUCCEED."** How about "Your Child" is "My Child" and I am committed to bring out their gifts and abilities. How about I will **guarantee** a greater success for your child?

If we do not revise our "Systems" to adequately meet the **true needs** of our kids, a day of reckoning will be upon us before we know it. A wave is building of unprecedented magnitude.

It is our move. What will it be?
Contact us to be involved: amatomp@comcast.net

