

THE SAGE PAGE

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Winter 2008

'Family Time' Group Is Fun Time

By Dianne Oberhansly

If you happen to hear wild laughter and music spilling out of Boulder Town Hall, don't worry. It's just Mike Nelson's Family Time class, a group of preschool-aged children who gather on Thursday mornings to have fun, sing, dance, paint and to learn.

Mike, director of the Anasazi State Park Museum, felt there was a need for young children in Boulder not only to prepare for school, but to experience learning as a fun activity. Having taught years ago in a Montessori school, Mike observed that children learn best through active engagement. Of course, the fact that Mike has a four-year-old son, Zach, must have provided some motivation, too, so early last Fall Mike began offering the free-of-charge Family Time class.

Between four and ten children attend weekly. Sometimes mothers stay for the whole class and assist; sometimes they simply drop-off



This isn't any ordinary spaghetti! Trina Barsch sets out plates of multi-colored pasta for kids to sculpt.

and pickup. Mike tries to structure the two-hour class into ten or fifteen minute segments, corresponding to the preschoolers' attention spans. Even so, he finds vast differences between three and four-year-olds. No matter the age, he keeps everyone busy though, with a variety of activities, objects and lessons--many of them gleaned from internet sites. Each class is usually planned around a letter of the alphabet.

The Thursday that I visited the

class, "F" was the letter being studied. Folding small, green origami "Frogs" was the first activity. Then the kids "Fed the Fish" by trying to toss bean bags through the open jaws of a posterboard shark. A little later, a blob of paint on a piece of paper became "Fireworks" when the kids were given straws and blew on the wet paint. The art lesson was followed up with dancing to a song by Abba, then "Freezing" each time the music was ran-

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Dates to Note:

◆ Feb 20-22	Diversified Ag Conference, USU, Logan, UT
◆ TBD	Spring tree planting; volunteers needed
◆ Jul 4	4th of July, town festivities; volunteers needed

(Family Time, cont'd from page 1)

domly stopped. As you might imagine, everyone really loved this activity.

Willow and Kayenta Ryan were excellent in assisting Mike that day, working with younger children, and helping set up and put away activities. The children were also given short intervals of free time when they could play with blocks, matchbox cars, look at books and put together puzzles. Snacks for sharing were provided by parents. In attendance that day were Caleb and Kendal Gardner, Zach Nelson, Levi Feiler, Anthony Mutcher, Cheyenne Barsch and Braxton Reeder. The class ended with a surprise spontaneous lesson when Mary Feiler, Levi's mother, brought in an old vacuum cleaner and let the kids explore it.

"Thursdays have become my favorite day of the week," Mike says. Children make him happy and it's obvious that he makes the children happy with his enthusiasm, guidance and creativity. He invites any adults to drop by the class, Thursdays 10-12 a.m. in the Town Hall, and to pitch in.



Group drumming is serious business. All preschool-age children are invited to attend as often as they wish. Boulder-area adults are also welcome to drop in for a visit on Thursday mornings.

Photos by Mike Nelson

Call Goes Out for Town Park Tree Donations

The Boulder Town Park Committee is preparing for the 2008 season. One of the Committee's stated goals is to plant trees in the future Park site south of the Fire House, and many of you have expressed a desire to donate to this phase of the Park project.

Please express or re-state your interest in contributing by contacting:

Tom Jerome @ tjerome@scinternet.net / 435-335-7401

or P.O. Box 1505, Boulder UT 84716

Other projects slated for this spring and summer are sprinklers and lawn for the Town Hall, construction of an events shelter on the north side of the Fire House, and renovation of the play area on the town grounds.

Thanks for you interest. Tom Jerome, Boulder Town Park Committee Chairperson



Food Chain Connects Buyers to Local Produce

By Mary Feiler

In the last several years, American farmer's markets have popped up like dandelions in response to consumer demand for fresher, healthier and locally grown produce. Boulder's own farmer's market has a small but steady group of supporters, and occurs biweekly during the growing season. People are finding out what gardeners have known all along: that homegrown food is better tasting, fresher, and better for you.

In an effort to connect more of Boulder's growers and consumers, a number of locals have expanded on an idea of Sue Fearon's and have created a group called "Food Chain." One function of the "Chain" will be to inform consumers about produce availability via email and bulletin board. Some people might choose to have regular deliveries of locally grown produce to their doorstep, or harvest their own veggies from the grower's plots. Consumers can also "pre-order" by telling growers what to plant for

them in the coming season. Right now, Food Chain is fairly small and informal, but its potential is mighty.

Why buy local? Are you tired of pale tomatoes that have no taste? Local food is ripened on the plant, which means better taste and better nutrition. Tired of lettuce from the store getting slimy too quickly in your fridge? Freshly cut salad greens will last many days longer than those purchased at the store. For local gardeners, you may actually be able to sell some of that extra produce (I'm not promising you can get rid of your zucchini, though!).

Food Chain is an avenue for buyers to get all this good stuff without driving for hours and for growers to support themselves doing what they love. Please send us your email address or call us if you are interested in being a part of this effort.

For more information, contact Eric and Mary Feiler at 335-7393 or eandmfeiler@hotmail.com.

BCA To Sponsor Boulder Residents Attending Diversified Ag Conference

"Community Sustainable Agriculture," "New Product Development and Marketing," "What's Happening to Bee Colonies," "Developing New Businesses Out of What You Have." These are samples of the scheduled breakout sessions at the 5th Annual Diversified Agriculture Conference to be held Feb 20-22, 2008, at Utah State University campus in Logan, Utah.

BCA is sponsoring four people (room, gas, and conference fee) to attend the three-day conference. If Sue Fearon's experience at last year's conference is any indication, the attendees will return to Boulder charged with enthusiasm about local ag opportunities. They will be asked to summarize their gleanings at an upcoming BCA meeting and will obtain literature that will be available in the Boulder Town library.



Photo from www.diverseag.org/

To view a draft copy of the program, see the diversified ag website:

<http://www.diverseag.org/>

If you would like to attend the conference this year, contact Sue Fearon.

Volunteers needed on 4th of July Town committee. Help plan kids' events, food prep and service, decorations, music, seating, and audio setup. Sign up by email or in the library. Questions? Call Peg, 7481, or email.

Summary of Annual Report

By Tim Clarke, Executive Director of Boulder Community Alliance

We have been involved in a broad range of projects and issues over the past year. I'll start with the local projects and move to the regional issues.

Website ---- Since the launch of the website in late 2006, we have received much positive feedback on its design, but we also realize that it is not easy to navigate and has become quite static. We will be redesigning the site to provide more intuitive links, incorporate regular updates, heighten awareness of fundraising opportunities, and attract more membership.

Sage Page Newsletter ---- The *Sage Page* was printed four times last year and will continue with four seasonal issues in 2008. The editing duties will be divided between Peg Smith and Dianne Oberhansly, and they will be inviting more local submissions of story ideas as well as articles. The online version of the BCA newsletter will be evolving as it tries to reach out to a wider audience.

Friends of the Library ---- We were able to acquire 90 new children's books through a Libri Foundation Grant (and match) enabled by John Austin and Jacqui Smalley. We also began our Oral History Project in 2007, completing one with Fay Jepsen and her two sisters and one featuring LeFair Hall.

Hospice Care ---- Introductory and program meetings have been held for caregivers. At least 16 individuals have attended the meetings or expressed interest in participating.

Sustainable Agriculture ---- We have identified this as a focal project and are fostering discussions among local producers around collaboration and value-added products. In 2007, one person attended the Diversified Agriculture Conference sponsored by Utah State University. This February, BCA will sponsor four attendees. (See page 3)

Town Grounds ---- A number of our Advisory Council members donated substantial volunteer hours to the Phase 1 landscaping project this summer. The Park Committee chairperson, Tom Jerome, who is also a member of the BCA advisory council, is serving as a liaison for individuals who would like to make tax deductible tree donations to the town through BCA.

Skycaps ---- We have an offer of funding to purchase 'Skycap' light shields for Garkane light poles. We plan to install one unit as a model for residents to see how they work. Residents can then choose whether they'd like to have one fitted on poles adjoining their own property. The purpose of the skycaps is to reduce glare and light pollution and to help protect our Dark Sky quality.

Stream assessment training ---- Four of our members attended the 2-day Rapid Stream-Riparian Assessment training on two reaches of the Fremont River last summer. This year training sessions are planned on streams within the Escalante River basin system.

Garfield County ----

- ATV Routes mapping

In Spring 2006 the County Commission took scoping comments on their ATV route mapping proposals throughout the county. Having recently formed BCA, we submitted a response letter as did the Boulder Town Council and local business owners. That process was summarized in 'The ATV Challenge' article on our website. Our response letter collected 130 signatures over one weekend.

- County Trails Committee

The County ATV route mapping (above) had been a three-year process through the Trails Committee. Although we were late to the party, we have since been regularly involved in that committee. One of our members, Walt Gove, has started his second term as Eastern Area representative. The current focus is on non-motorized trails mapping around each community.

- General Plan RMP amendment

The Garfield County General Plan, adopted 1995, and last amended 1998, is being amended section by section. This amendment relates to federal public lands, and specifically wilderness areas. The county, with the support of the Utah Association of Counties, is promoting increased off-road vehicle access and extractive industry development. We presented our scoping response at the public hearing with 113 signatures from residents of Boulder, the County, the State and beyond. Thanks to all of you who signed on. The Boulder business owners also submitted a response.

Annual Report (continued from page 4)

- Economic Development Committee

As a former Town Councilor and Planning Commission chair, Tim is a member of this committee. For the first time the County has initiated an economic development component in its Resource Management Plan. The Economic Development Plan process has been completed. I have enjoyed the stimulating discussions; there is an acknowledgement that there are a variety of different sectors throughout the county, and also that more produce could be grown locally. A BEAR survey will research business owners, provide education on available resources, and report back to the Governor annually. There are also plans for a conference on 'Celebrating the Diversity of Garfield County' in mid-March.

Dixie National Forest ----

- Motorized routes monitoring

Several of our members and other residents of Boulder and Escalante learned how to use GPS units to monitor the condition of ATV routes on Boulder Mountain. This provided useful feedback to the Forest Service for their MTP (below). This effort is on-going, and we now have our own GPS units thanks to grant funding. Our volunteers document illegal routes, soil erosion around riparian areas, and general impacts that the Forest Service isn't able to do due to understaffing.

- Motorized Travel Plan EIS scoping and review

Due to a revision of the 'National Rule', each Forest Service region is conducting an Environmental Impact Study for motorized travel routes.

At the start of 2007 BCA submitted a response with detailed documentation of conditions on the ground (see above). The Dixie NF is currently preparing their alternatives for public comment starting in March.

- Wild and Scenic Rivers

We attended the open house for the Draft EIS proposals covering the six National Forests in Utah. Responses are due by February 14th.

- Beaver reintroduction

(See the article on page 6: 'Using Beaver to Improve Riparian Areas')

Capitol Reef NRA scoping for ORV EIS ---- We attended the open house and submitted a response letter for the scoping process.

Tourism ---- In partnership with Boulder and Escalante businesses, we are putting together a tourist brochure for the Escalante River Basin area based on Quiet Use recreation. Local routes will be featured on the Dixie National Forest and in the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, Glen Canyon Recreation Area, and Capitol Reef National Park. Local businesses in Boulder and Escalante will be requested to sponsor the printing in exchange for listing them with contact information.

As tourism is such a vital component of our local economy, BCA sponsored my attendance last year at the State Tourism Conference in Price.

When I think back on it, we have gotten involved in a lot of worthwhile efforts. We're very encouraged by what we've be able to do in such a short time and look forward to serving our community for a long time to come.



Photo by Peg Smith

Using Beaver to Improve Riparian Areas

By Tim Clarke

As a follow-up to the last summer's riparian assessment "BioBlitz" along Deer Creek, BCA hosted a December 7 slide show on using beaver to improve riparian areas. The slides were presented by Lew Pence, former director of Idaho's Wood River Resource Conservation and Development Area. Lew, a rancher himself, donated his time to drive the 1,000-mile roundtrip from Gooding, Idaho, to share his practical experience with reintroducing beaver in the Wood River area. Despite a wintry evening, 23 Boulder residents attended his talk and participated in the question-and-answer discussion afterwards.

Riparian areas are the "narrow strips of land situated along the banks of creek, streams and rivers" and are important for "diverse wildlife and fish populations, water quality and quantity, recreation, and grazing values," as stated in Lew's information pamphlet. The Wood River area suffered badly eroded and degraded streambeds caused by the familiar cycle of destructive flooding and spring runoff, followed by periods of extreme drought.

Several engineering solutions were attempted in order to dam areas of the streambed--- concrete, riprap, logs and old irrigation line pipe. All were unsuccessful, and in some cases very costly. One dam that cost over \$20,000 was irreparably damaged after the first year's flooding.

Almost out of desperation, Lew's team decided to try out the acknowledged experts at dam building---beavers. Their resulting 1986 beaver re-introduction management plan was sponsored by the local Soil Conservation Districts, Idaho Dept. of Fish and Game, Idaho Dept. of Lands, Soil Conservation Service, and the local US Forest Service and BLM districts, and counties and was endorsed by the area ranchers and irrigators.

Lew explained that beaver are regarded as *the* keystone species for stream health. His slides illustrated several before-and-after scenes as dry,

eroded washes transformed into newly vegetated riparian corridors as a result of beaver activity. He explained how a stream, rather than charging the surrounding ground with water, actually does the reverse. It acts as a drain that pulls the groundwater down to the level of the streambed. By raising the water table (as

the result of beaver dams), surrounding groundwater is retained at this new level, and the results of this enhanced sub-irrigation to the surrounding land and vegetation become apparent within only a few seasons. In addition, he said, reduced water velocity during flood periods dramatically halted erosion and allowed sediment to be deposited. Fish habitat and spawning was greatly enhanced. Water quality improved due to less erosion. Stream flows and water storage and release improved through the

summer and drought years. Sagebrush was diminished by the elevated water table and replaced by grass and other herbaceous vegetation.

The beaver reintroduction program continues to thrive in Wood River. Lew emphasized

that the program has been diligently monitored since its inception. Periodic adjustments to beaver dam sites and/or grazing areas are managed with full communication and cooperation among all stakeholders. The success of the program was inspiring; today many of the ranchers and irrigators are its strongest advocates. The important thing, he said, is that as long as the water is retained, you have the option of managing it. "Once it's run down the stream, your options are over."

(Editor's note: Lew plans to return to Boulder in May with another slideshow. As soon as a date is set, we will make sure there is plenty of notice .)



Lew Pence, speaker

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They Call It The "Quiet Season"?

By Peg Smith, Editor

It's that quiet time of year. The seasonal traffic has been long gone. Even full-time residents choose this time of year for their get-aways, tropical or otherwise. Only the die-hards are still around, some reveling in the once-a-decade snows, others hunkered into interior warmth and solitude.

Still, the routine community activities continue with only minor weather disruptions. Thanks to the residents who run big equipment with blades, most of us were dug out from the deep drifts that isolated us for a couple days. Those guys put in some long, cold hours moving snow for the rest of us. We are all in your debt.

The Boulder Fire Department completed its January Fire School in St. George. According to **Randy Ripplinger**, the whole crew gets lots of valuable information and training at those annual workshops, and they all seem to come back with their batteries charged for the year ahead. Thanks you guys, and keep up the fantastic work you all do.

We always try to feature in the *Sage Page* some of the great community activities that people are engaged in, regardless of whether they are BCA-affiliated or not. However, many of these activities fall below the radar. For instance, only parents of school-age kids may know about **Alyssa Tip-petts** and her after-school Wednesday kids' art workshop. She is one shining example of where a community need

aligns with personal dedication.

Another example would be the 4H parents who spend inordinate amounts of time and gas money taking the 4H kids and horses to shows and events statewide. **Katie and Mark Austin** and **Corey and Candace Johnson** have been fully committed to these activities, and are looking at several more years of the same.

Speaking of several years, in 2005, **Jacqui Smalley** and **John Austin** established the Boulder Escalante Scholarship Foundation to provide tuition support for Boulder-Escalante students who want to continue their education after high school graduation. For the past three years, the BESF has funded tuition (and renewals of tuition) for 10 recipients, to the colleges or vocational schools of their choice. Boulder and Escalante graduating seniors should start thinking soon about applying for this year's BESF scholarships, which are awarded in May.

These are examples I happen to be aware of. However, most of

the town's good works are probably happening beyond my personal knowledge. And too, many individuals, who want absolutely no recognition, are continually engaged in teaching skills to others, helping with caregiving and child/elder assistance, sharing food items, rendering mechanical assistance, cutting firewood, and a myriad of other acts of giving that create such a tight bond within this community.

I mention these positive things now because it seems that a few controversies get all the attention. Maybe it has to do with the time of year and the need for a little entertainment? Maybe hubbub is a way to channel boredom? Anyway, the weight of real commitment falls definitely on the side of the kindly and giving acts of our friends and neighbors.

Take heart, Boulderites! All too soon we'll all be crawling out of our caves to brave the new season of restaurant dining and tourists and traffic and impatiently waiting for the next "quiet season" to roll around.



Photo by Peg Smith

The Sage Page

Newsletter of the Boulder Community Alliance, a nonprofit
serving Boulder, Utah

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