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(218) 285-7225
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From the Director's Desk

In past years we experienced periodic breaks in activities here at Backus; a brief respite, to pause, catch our breath and move on to the next event or program. The summer season used to be one of those "breaks." That's no longer the case with year-round programs, events and activities happening all the time. Summer is now our busiest time.

Our Event Coordinator, Robin Bjorkquist, has proved to be an excellent addition to our staff. She has taken the place of our dear friend and colleague, Lisa Hauke, who passed away January 3 after a nine-month battle

with cancer. Robin does a terrific job planning events, coordinating volunteers, designing posters, pamphlets and

growth and development. In addition to her work for Backus she has been a key volunteer for the International "Pulling



flyers, scheduling, imagining new programs and following through with ideas. She has completely re-vamped the Backus website (www.backusab.org), put Backus on Facebook, engages young volunteers and been an enthusiastic promoter of Backus programs. Robin brings not only passion and skill to her job but also has a genuine love for this community, its

for Peace" event and works hard to involve celebrities in the festivities. Robin is an active member of her church and provides outreach and support to students at Rainy River Community College.

This spring Backus has been the recipient of a number of grants and donations that will not only help fulfill our mission but also bring programs and services to more

From the Director's Desk Continued ...



Ward Merrill
Executive Director
Backus Community
Center

"Now, over two decades in the past, the real events depicted in this play still echo in the community and will create a unique experience for both the artists and the audience." "The Mill" will be performed on the Backus stage February 28 and March 1.

people of all ages. In March Backus was awarded a \$48,900 Minnesota State Arts Board Arts Tour grant that will bring Chris Koza and his band "Rogue Valley" not only to Backus but also to all four Koochiching County schools (Falls, Littlefork-Big Falls, Indus and Northome) - in September. The grant will also bring a play by former Falls resident and now playwright with Stages Theater in Hopkins, Jeannine Coulombe, to the Backus stage. Titled, "The Mill", the play premiered in Minneapolis in March 2012. Funding from the Arts Board will bring the play to the community that inspired it. "Now, over two decades in the past, the real events depicted in this play still echo in the community and will create a unique experience for both the

artists and the audience." "The Mill" will be performed on the Backus stage February 28 and March 1. Other State Arts Board grants will bring "The Rose Ensemble" to the Falls' schools and to the Backus stage on October 14. In March 2014, "The Galactic Cowboy Orchestra" will perform outreach and arts learning activities in all county schools in addition to a Backus concert on March 22. The Marshall N. Knudson Family Community Fund supports a unique one-man show by New York singer/actor Randy Noojin during the week of November 4-9. Noojin's "Hard Travelin' with Woody" brings the spirit, songs and stories of Woody Guthrie, America's greatest poet-of-the-people, to the Backus stage and area schools. The show premiered at New York City's Fringe Fes-

tival in 2011. Most artists will offer arts outreach and learning experiences at Backus for both St. Thomas Catholic School students and home school students. March was busy with an inspection and site visit from the MN Department of Human Services relating to child care license renewal for the Backus Kids Club. We invited the City Building Inspector Kelly Meyers and Fire Chief Jerry Jensen to conduct an inspection of Backus on March 14. Their input and that of our architect Jim Luchick resulted in a multi-stage building improvement plan focusing on three areas:

- ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) improvements in many areas. Immediate focus on adapting areas in the Auditorium for use by wheelchair and walker patrons.

From the Director's Desk Continued ...

- Health and Safety improvements with immediate attention to a removable guardrail along the front edge of the stage, an added sidewalk, additional handrails and partial wall removal connecting Rooms 208 and 209 for the Backus Kids Club.

Improving Energy Efficiency – planned for later phases with a focus on lighting.

Summer projects currently being planned and executed include:

Summer Arts Week for Kids – June 10-15 (classes, art show & Prairie Fire Theatre's production of "Peter Pan."

RIVERFEST 2013 – a rock concert on the riverfront at the Irvin N. Anderson Amphitheater with four tribute rock bands: Hard Day's Night (Beatles), SpinDrift (RUSH), Freebird (Lynyrd Skynyrd) and Arch Allies (Styx, Journey & REO). – July 20. Sponsored by the Falls Rotary Club & Backus Community Center.

Summer Food Service Program – a free nutritious lunch for all children ages 1-

18. Offered Monday-Friday, June 3 – August 30 from 11:45am to 1:15pm. Free Open Gym from 11:30-1:30pm. Parents may eat with children (donations of \$3.50/adult meal accepted). Sponsored by the MN Department of Education.

Backus Kids Club – Summer child care program. Monday-Friday, 7:30 am – 6:00 pm. Licensed teachers, a fun mix of arts/crafts, field trips, swimming, bowling, outdoor, reading/library, computers, science, gym, social and learning activities. Licensed by the MN Department of Human Services.

Community Market – beginning Wednesday, June 19, open 4:00-6:30 pm on Wednesdays and 9:00 am-Noon on Saturdays through September 28. The market features local produce and products and takes place in the Backus parking lot along Third Street. We plan to install a wireless "point of sale" machine that will allow us to accept credit, debit and EBT cards (Electronic Business Transactions).

The Backus Arts & Programming Committee will

conduct at least six site visits to historic theaters throughout Minnesota during the next ten months to document how other theaters and auditoriums have adapted their venues for modern lighting, sound and accessibility. What we learn will become the basis for a long-range auditorium plan for Backus.

The Community Café – which began serving a free meal to those in need each Tuesday evening on December 4, will now offer a meal on Thursdays also. The "Café" has received excellent financial support along with overwhelming volunteer support from local groups and churches. Thursday meals began on June 6. Meals are served from 5:30 to 6:00 p.m.

Backus has also benefitted tremendously from the generosity of our members and supporters. The gifts and donations have included: a beautiful 7-foot grand piano, a commercial slicer, a sizeable bequest from a deceased member's estate as well as other cash gifts.

Continued on Page 5

Backus Kids Club



Julie Talmage,
Backus Kids Club
Program Coordinator

“Having a pool of talented staff helps not just with scheduling and honoring time off requests, but they all bring unique experiences and expertise that allows the BKC Summer Program to grow in new directions.”

Backus Kids Club is gearing up for another fun-filled, busy summer! We have a lot of exciting news to share, starting with a grant we were awarded from the Northland Foundation in the amount of \$935 to assist in starting a garden for the Backus Kids Club! The nature of the grant was such that the BKC students had to help write it and answer some questions regarding the use and care of it. Because of this they already feel ownership and a connection to it. We have been in communication with Tom Sakry of the Koochiching Men’s Garden Club who has helped us in the preliminary stages of getting the garden started. What a great learning opportunity for the children, and a great

partnership with our own Men’s Garden Club!

We are also thrilled to be expanding our summer staff through the hiring of 2 new teachers and 1 new aide. Thanks to Julie Bartkowski for helping out with the interview process! Having a pool of talented staff helps not just with scheduling and honoring time off requests, but they all bring unique experiences and expertise that allows the BKC Summer Program to grow in new directions.

We also held our first ever BKC Parent Forum. We invited parents to attend an afternoon meeting, trying our best to accommodate their busy schedules. They in turn provided us with valuable insights as to what they appreciated about the program, as well as additional ideas for

summer activities and beyond. A special thank you to these parents for taking the time to offer their feedback!

Our program for summer will once again offer a wide variety of activities that keep the kids busy throughout the day. From swimming at the high school to weekly trips to the public library, from utilizing the local playgrounds to inviting guest speakers, from daily academic time to a once a month out of town field trip, the parents have expressed appreciation that the kids get a wide range of activities on a regular basis. As one parent put it, she knows her children are getting a “full day” while at BKC, so she feels less of a burden to “entertain” them and they can spend the evenings doing their own family fun activities. We are looking forward to a busy, successful (and hopefully warm!) summer at Backus Kids Club!

After School Arts by Betsy Ward, Coordinator

The 2012/2013 After School Art session was very successful and lots of fun! We increased the number of instructors, classes taught, and enrollment, as well as improving the variety of programs offered.

Students in grades K-12 were engaged in performing and visual arts classes such as mask-making, multicultural music, games and crafts of the world, storytelling, dramatic improvisation, portraiture, sculpture, watercolor, lasers and special effects, chain mail, natural still life, and more!

Highlights included a parade through the building by Ka-

tie's multicultural class playing their hand crafted didgeridoos, two tables full of beautiful bones, feathers, rocks, shells and driftwood provided by Dr. Steve Wendels of Voyageurs National Park for the Beauty of Bones class, and our first dramatic performances by Naomi Wood's storytelling class and Kimberly Perkin's UpNorth Jr. Thespian Society.

Be sure to watch for more exciting offerings come September, and help spread the word about wonderful artistic happenings at Backus! We're always looking for folks who would like to teach their passions and

share creative skills with children, as well as hoping to connect with prospective students who have not yet discovered the magic of making art with us at ASA.

I'd also like to send our best wishes with Katie Werman, who has done a super job sharing her passion and talents with us and our students at ASA. Katie is thrilled to be starting a new life and career adventure with Teach For America in the Twin Cities, and while she will be greatly missed, we know she will do well in her new endeavors. Keep makin' Art, Katie, and be sure to visit!

From the Director's Desk Continued ...

I recently visited with one of our talented After School and Summer Art teachers, Katie Werman, who is bound for Oklahoma and intensive training as a "Teach for America" teacher. She commented that she had worked in several community centers in different cities but never experienced one that offered such a variety of activities and programs as we do here at Backus. We are

often so busy with our programs, building maintenance and day-to-day operations that we don't reflect on what a variety of services, programs and opportunities for people of all ages are offered in this wonderful, historic building. A good friend of ours recently suggested that perhaps we should begin referring to Backus as "the Community Center" instead of just "Backus" due to

the fact that Backus has become the focal point for so many services, programs and events.

We've become accustomed to referring to our building simply as "Backus" but perhaps we should be saying "The Community Center" instead. It would take some getting used to, but it might more aptly describe what "Backus" has truly become.

WARD



“Without the
memorials,
contributions,
donations,
memberships,
sponsorships
and grants,
Backus would
be unable to
function as the
vibrant
community
center we are,
and for that
we sincerely
thank you!”



Soup Supper/Dinner Sponsors:

*Border State Bank | Bremer Bank | City Drug Store | Coca-Cola Bottling
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In Memory of:

- Mary Matteson Aiken*** from Brien & Cathy Christensen, Mrs. Robert Christensen, FMH Shunshine Club, Patty Indahl, Brenda Leggett, Charlene Matteson, and James & Kathy West
- Gladys Bacon*** from Donna Frederickson and Judy Peirce
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- Carole Trach*** from John & Karen Wilson
- Gary Trafton*** from Dorothy Blais
- Vickie Trask*** from George & Carol Smith
- Don Urban*** from John & Karen Wilson
- Ann Vukelich*** from Phyllis Karsnia

In Honor of:

- Mary Sobczynski's*** 80th Birthday from Kurt & Hoa Sobczynski
- David & Judy Weum's*** 50th Anniversary from John & Karen Wilson

*General Contributions from: Janice Berg | Catherine Devlin | Janis Heaney
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riverfest

INTERNATIONAL FALLS
MINNESOTA

Tickets \$20 or VIP \$40

Buy at Backus or online www.backusab.org

Non-Cash Donations

Almost Lindy's	Al & Wanda Linder
Patti Ballan	Lucachick Architecture,
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Wherley Motors

**Concert
July
20th!**

Grants from:

*Otto Bremer Foundation \$64,890
Minnesota State Arts Board \$48,900
Northland Foundation \$10,000
Marshall N. Knudson Family
Community Fund \$7,110
Arrowhead Regional Arts Council \$4,000
Boise \$1,817*

*Volunteers Wanda Linder, Delores LaRock,
Miriam Burchell and Mary Ann Lien
at the 2013 Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon*



"Members Only" Event **to showcase new Grand Piano**



Thanks to the generosity of Mr. Bob Congrave, Backus has a "new" Kimball 7' Grand Piano.

The piano has been placed in the Conference Room in the west hall-

way and will add a new smaller performance venue to the community center.

In order to showcase this fine instrument and thank Bob for his donation, the Backus Arts & Programming Committee will host a "members only" event on Thursday, August 8 from 6:30-8:00pm.

Complimentary wine, beverages and snacks will be served throughout the evening.

Mr. Joe Belanger will entertain on the piano during the evening with a varied selection of music. A 30-minute "concert" will take place midway through the event. Backus members and Auditorium seat sponsors will receive special invitations.

Not sure if you're a member? Call the Backus office to find out, update your membership or become a new member.

Memberships start at just \$60/individual and \$120/family. Backus will plan several more "members only" events during the 2013-2014 season.

Thank you to our LIFETIME Auditorium Seat Sponsors:

- Millie Ballan In Honor of Dan Ballan
- Marilyn Berlin In Memory of Dr. James A. Berlin
- Corrine Brindos In Memory of Max Brindos
- Alan & Miriam Burchell In Honor of Alan & Miriam Burchell
- Joan Evanoff In Honor of Sam & Joan Evanoff
- Sue Foran & Catherine Schroeder In Honor of Beverly Molstre
FHS Homecoming Queen
- Donna Frederickson In Memory of Rev. Leo H Buechler,
Alma N. Buechler, Franklyn T. Frederickson, Margaret G.
Frederickson, Robert M. Frederickson, Happy Anniversary
Bob & Donna, Donna Frederickson
- Mark Hauke In Memory of Lisa Ann Hauke
- Bob Hilke In Memory of Fritz & Dorothy Hilke
- Edith Holmstrom Celebrating my parents, A. Holmstrom,
E. Holmstrom
- Tom & Edna Karsnia In Memory of Gertie Coran
- Gene & Pat Kjellgren In Honor of Eugene & Patricia Kjellgren
- Jeffrey & Laurie Lightfoot, Carol Mannausau, Richard & Robin
Tilander, Kay S Wento In Memory of Ardath "Punk"
Wento, Class of 1945
- Dean Lindstrom In Memory of Pearl Lindstrom,
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- Linda & Ward Merrill In Memory of Jim & Deloris Merrill
- Stuart & Cynde Milette In Memory of Margaret Price
Sathrum, John Charles Sathrum, Class of 1946 Howard W.
Milette, Class of 1946 Virginia Sathrum
- Virginia Milette
- Roman & Janet Schultheis In Honor of My Granddaughter
Valentine Michaela Louise Schickell, Merry Christmas
Janet Schultheis
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- Ron & Jessie Laurion In Memory of Paul Shaw
- Lynda Faith in Memory of Dorothy W. Liebe, George Liebe
- Daniel Dilworth
- George Schlieff In Memory of Edith (Edie) Schlieff
- Red & Janet Schultheis
- VFW Peter Graham Post #2948
- Otto Bremer Foundation
- MN Power
- Thanks to Border Boxes

“The Hunts” to perform at Backus July 7, 2:00 pm

The Hunts are an indie-folk band from the southlands of Chesapeake, Virginia. Driven by a passion for creating compelling music, these seven brothers and sisters collaborate with one another to enhance their individual gifts of writing, composing and musicianship. Stringed instruments, surrounded by enchanting harmonies and thrilling rhythms, invoke an organic yet transcendent sound.

Parents Clint and Sandy met in college, married and quickly began the challenging task of raising their young family by instilling a love of music and the stage. Sandy went to work teaching violin to the children once each one reached six years of age.

Clint taught each of them gui-

tar when they were a little older. One by one, each of the kids took on their own musical personalities. Twins Jessi and Jenni honed their skills on vocals, violin and guitar. Jessi also added the banjo to her set of talents. In addition to vocals, Josh plays acoustic and bass guitar. Jonathan fills out the ensemble with the keyboard. Jordan holds it all together on the drums, while Justin and Jami-son round out the group with vocals, hand percussion, mandolin and viola.

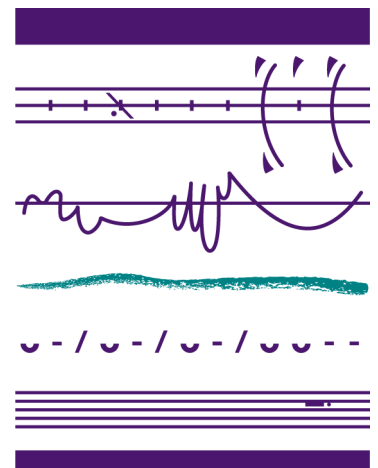
The Hunts have toured the country and worldwide for over 10

years now. In November of 2012, the Hunts released their newest album *We Were Young*, which was produced by 13-time Grammy nominee Mark Carman. *We Were Young* features 10 original songs, each telling its own tale of youthful memories, conquering fears, aching hearts and inspiring journeys.



2013-2014 Backus Concerts

- **Sunday, July 7:**
The Hunts Concert, 2:00 pm
- **Saturday, July 20:**
Riverfest Concerts, 1:00 pm
- **Saturday, September 28:**
Chris Koza & Rogue Valley
7:00 pm
- **Monday, October 14:**
The Rose Ensemble, 7:00 pm
- **Friday, November 8:**
Hard Travelin' with Woody
(Guthrie) - Randy Noojin
7:00 pm
- **Friday, February 28, 2014:**
“The Mill”, 7:00 pm
- **Saturday, March 1, 2014:**
“The Mill”, 7:00 pm
- **Saturday, March 22, 2014:**
Galactic Cowboy Orchestra
7:00 pm
- **Saturday, March 29, 2014:**
Borderland Musical



MINNESOTA
STATE ARTS BOARD

FREE Summer Meals for KIDS and TEENS Food that's in when School is out!

Summer meals at no cost are available to kids age 18 and younger at Backus Community Center.

To eat, just show up!

Serving meals from 11:45 am to 1:15 pm

Summer Food Service Program




August 30, Monday through Friday. Lunch is served from 11:45 am – 1:15 pm to all children through age 18. Meals are provided without

a need for food shelf services. Backus asks a \$ 3.50 lunch donation from other adults to help cover the meal cost. This program is under the auspices of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In accordance with federal law, discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability is prohibited.

Citizens for Backus/ AB (Backus Community Center) is participating in the **Summer Food Service Program**. The program began June 3 and continues to charge; there are no income or eligibility requirements to participate. Parents may eat with their children at no cost if they are Food Shelf clients or have

Open Gym is available Monday through Friday, 11:30 am – 1:30 pm for all ages, June 3 to August 30. Youth through adults are welcome; this activity is also free of charge. Activities are led by adults. Children under the age of 5 must be accompanied by an adult. There will be no Open Gym June 10 – 15. Saturday Open Gym will resume next fall.



"Community Café"

The idea for a "Community Café" at Backus dates back to at least 2006 when we first began talking about building a new kitchen. In addition to providing a Summer Food Service Program for kids and enhancing our ability to offer suppers, meals and lunches, a basic reason for adding the kitchen was to be able to offer a free meal to those in need.

Planning for the "Café" took place over several years and involved discussions with the Falls Hunger Coalition who had the closest connection with families and individuals experiencing food insecurity. Interviews were conducted with two northern Minnesota food services including The Sharing Bread Soup Kitchen in Brainerd and the Community Cafes in Grand Rapids/Deer River. Backus staff and Board members made a site visit for a meal and meeting with the director in Grand Rapids in December 2011. Another year passed with more meetings, formation of a steering committee and planning.

A real force behind actually getting our "Community Café" going was Gordy Winzenburg of the Falls Rotary Club and formerly of Border State Bank. The Boards of both Backus and The Falls Hunger Coalition reviewed the project and gave it their endorsement. On December 4, 2012 the "Community Café" at Backus opened its doors for the first time. Forty-one adults and fourteen children enjoyed that first meal of baked chicken and roasted potatoes. Since then, a



Community Café Contributions:

Dale & Kay Arnold
Boise Paper Holdings LLC
Audrey Dahl
Edna Doris
Education MN Int'l Falls Local No. 331
Evangelical Covenant Church
Falls Hunger Coalition
Lee & Carol Grim
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Zion Lutheran Church

meal has been served each Tuesday evening in the Backus Dining Room with 1,328 meals served by the end of May 2013. Children account for almost 50% of the meals with an average of 55 meals served each Tuesday.

Funding has been secured from local churches and groups in addition to funds from the Marshall N. Knudson Family Community Fund and the Northland Foundation. Boise and the Falls Rotary Club have also supported the "Café." Meal costs have averaged \$2.58/meal. Most impressive has been the local volunteer groups that have stepped forward to help serve, set-up and clean up at each meal. Almost immediately every Tuesday evening was filled with volunteers for the entire year!

Following six months of successful operation and sensing a growing need for services, the "Community Café" began offering a Thursday evening meal in addition to Tuesday nights. Again, the community support has been outstanding with numerous churches and groups filling the need for volunteers. St. Paul Lutheran Church will offer limited transportation to the Café—call Backus for more information.

If you are interested in supporting the "Community Café", donations are always welcome. Groups or individuals may phone the Backus office at 285-7225 to volunteer.



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Label

Up Coming Events

June

Summer Food Service Program:

Serving 11:45 am to 1:15 pm
Monday through Friday

Open Gym: 11:30 am to 1:30 pm
Monday through Friday

Community Café:

Serving 5:30 to 6:00 pm
Tuesdays and Thursdays

Community Market:

4:00 to 6:30 pm each Wednesday
9:00 am to Noon each Saturday

Free Library Movie Afternoon

Thursday, June 27 @ 1:30 pm

July

"The Hunts" in Concert

Sunday, July 7 at 2:00 pm

July continued

Free Library Movie Afternoon

Thursday, July 18 @ 1:30 pm

Riverfest Concert

Saturday, July 20—gate opens @ 11:30 am
Irvin N. Anderson Amphitheater, Hwy 11 E

August

Free Library Movie Afternoon

Thursday, August 15 @ 1:30 pm

Backus Rainy Lake Triathlon

Saturday, August 17 @ 9:00 am

riverfest

INTERNATIONAL FALLS
MINNESOTA

Saturday, July 20

**Music
starts @
1:00 pm!**