Backus Kids Club Update with Julie!

The summer Backus Kids Club program is well underway. We continue to offer our daily morning academic time for the children, as they truly benefit from this “learning bridge” that extends from spring to fall. Parents really appreciate that their children’s minds are stimulated and challenged over the summer months.

We have resumed many of the favorite activities such as swimming at the Falls High School, walking to various playgrounds, and trips to the library to enjoy their summer reading program festivities. We were invited by Voyageurs National Park to partake in an eagle watching excursion aboard their new boat “The Voyageur.” Through grant monies from the park, this field trip was of little or no cost to our Kids Club families.

We’re pleased to provide breakfast and snacks up in our room, then for lunch we’re fortunate to be able to partake in the Summer Food Service program provided through Backus. Chef Mike is serving up some savory dishes that are sure to please our kids’ palate!

We are also lucky enough to be on the receiving end of Otto Bremer Foundation grant monies that will enable us to purchase a great variety of outdoor play equipment for the kids. We love to be outside in the summer, so this will be a welcome addition to our outdoor choices!

Finally, we look forward to seeing friendships form as new children arrive for the summer months, and quickly mesh with our “school year” kids. I appreciate the tireless work our staff puts in to ensure the kids have a good time while attending. They are truly amazing and talented, and I don’t know what I’d do without them!

Backus Kids Club is looking forward to our second summer of offering a unique option for area families who seek something special for their kids while they’re at work. So, here’s to a warm, wonderful, and promising summer!

Julie Talmage
BKC Coordinator

Backus Kids Club at Voyageurs National Park
From the Director’s Desk...

Just thirteen months ago our third floor renovation project was concluding. Over 6,000 square feet of new office space was built along with the new 4-stop elevator. Northland Counseling and Rainy River Recovery (formerly Rational Alternatives) were both moving into their new office “suites”. The third floor of Backus was open again after 20+ years of being closed to public use. In addition to new office space, the main hallway and bathrooms had been completely refurbished and fresh coats of wax brought the terrazo floor back to a “like new” condition. The completion of the third floor and the renovation of the Backus kitchen culminated the list of capital improvement projects which total in excess of $1.6 million.

What a remarkable turn of events considering that only ten years ago the Backus and Alexander Baker buildings faced an uncertain future including the possibility of complete demolition. The Backus building is now leasing or actively using all but three classrooms of this historic building. Two rooms are still available for lease on the second floor with only one room un-leased on the third. Since last fall the Backus Building Committee has been engaged actively in planning for the redevelopment of the Alexander Baker building. Tentative plans include apartments on the upper two floors with a mixed use on the ground floor. During that time the following tasks have been accomplished:

- Continued engagement of an economic development consultant
- Involvement of two architectural firms in the planning process
- Completion of a housing market survey and several community meetings
- Preliminary project cost estimates and financial models completed
- Active discussions with two major potential tenants

Backus awarded BUSINESS first and second place at this year’s Chili Challenge.

L: Second Place - Trent Steinbach from Almost Lindy’s and Michelle Misner

R: First Place - Cynthia Warren (center) and Stephanie Rognerud (right) from Coffee Landing with Michelle Misner
Community, member and foundation support continues to grow including the following:

- Donation by the Falls Library Board of Trustees of a 24’ x 16’ projection screen and projector
- Award of an Otto Bremer Foundation grant to Backus and 4-H of a 1-year grant of $109,857 for after-school programs
- Donation by the Basketball Booster Club of a commercial floor sander for annual refinishing of the Gym floor
- Donation by United Health Care of 200 office chairs
- Collaboration on two MN State Arts Board grants that will bring performing artists to International Falls for school residencies and on-stage concerts
- A Midcontinent Foundation grant of $1,000 to begin fundraising to purchase new dining room tables and chairs
- Almost 100 hours of volunteer time by United Health Care employees for two major painting projects
- Collaboration with the Oberholtzer Foundation which will bring musicians to the Backus stage for an evening concert on August 27
- Volunteer time by Bill Gray and Bill Elliot to refurbish, clean and install new fluorescent tubes in all Art Room light fixtures

Other highlights of the past twelve months include leasing space to several new tenants including: the MN Department of Public Safety for driver’s license testing (Room 211), Local Relief (massage therapy & retail sales) – Hollie Bahr (Room 201), Scholler School of Natural HealthCare – Robert Scholler – Suite 212 and Replenish Mind-Body-Spirit Yoga Studio Suite 303 – Christa Heibel.

Capital improvement projects underway include remodeling Room 101 (old school wood shop) with new paint, carpet and wall removal; installation of wireless internet throughout the Backus building and installation of a “house” sound system for film use in the Auditorium.

Ward Merrill, Executive Director

L to R: John Frederickson, Jim Nelson, Byrne Johnson, Jeannine Nelson, and Carole Johnson at the Volunteer Appreciation held in April.
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Thank You for Contributions:

- In Honor of Shirley Kocinski’s 90th birthday: Carol & Lynn Belanger, Elizabeth Ericson, Patricia Hamalainen
- General Operating Fund: City of International Falls, Koochiching County, Bob & Michelle Misner, and Schwab Charitable Fund
- Snow Plowing: Jim & Lou Bartkowski and Anonymous
- Arts Program: Borderland Arts Alliance
- Purchasing Dining Room Tables & Chairs: Ameriprise– matching fund from James Hamalainen’s contribution
- Purchasing Floor Sander: Bronco Basketball Booster
- Reconnect Water Heater: International Falls Chamber of Commerce and Jim Klobuchar

Non-Cash Donations from:

- A&L Restaurant Supply, Bemidji - 96 Food service trays
- Ballan Furniture - Six 90” white round tablecloths
- Marcia Bringedahl - Food Processor and Littlefork Times Subscription
- Coca-Cola Bottling Company - Beverages for Icebox Days
- Chuck Lepper - Ice Cream Machine
- Nate Moseman - Labor to fix Backus office computers and activate wi-fi system
- Mark & Pam Rooney - Bowl for Chili Challenge Prize
- The Sports Shop - Plaque for Chili Challenge Prize
- International Falls Library Board - Projection screen and projector for Auditorium
Memorial Contributions (as of July 11, 2011)

As of July 11, 2011 Backus Community Center has received contributions in memory of:

- **Chuck Armstrong** from Ralph & Susan Johnson
- **Elwyn Boe** from Jessie Dahl
- **Marge Brunette** from Dale & Kay Arnold, and Joseph & Janet Schulz
- **Leo Buechler** from Robert & Leanne Crompton, Donna D. Frederickson
- **Evelyn Crompton** from Barbara McDowell and Jessie Dahl
- **Mrs. Dworeski** from Wayne & Mary Ann Kasich
- **Elaine Graf** from Ralph & Susan Johnson
- **Betty Herzig** from Donna D. Frederickson, Barbara McDowell, Kurt & Hoi Sobczynski, and John & Karen Wilson
- **Tammy Holler** from Marilyn Larson
- **Valio Johnson** from Ralph & Susan Johnson
- **Tom Manka** from Lois Manka
- **Lois Milette** from Sage Hardwigm
- **Johanne Moe** from Dale & Kay Arnold, Craig & Mary Moe
- **Louise Nelson** from Barbara McDowell
- **Phil Olson** from Joseph & Janet Schulz, John & Karen Wilson
- **Ruth Plummer** from Delores Arason, Shirley Boeckers, Bonnie Roberts, John & Karen Wilson
- **Ron Rising** from Ralph & Susan Johnson, Marilyn Larson, and Jim & Carol Wherley
- **Campbell Smith** from B.E. June Smith
- **Norma Stone** from Dee Bigler, John & Lynda Faith, Donna Frederickson, Ralph & Susan Johnson, and Joseph & Janet Schulz
- **Jack Strain** from Marilyn Larson
- **Joe Swendsen** from Dale & Kay Arnold, John & Lynda Faith, Ron & Wanda Pelland, Bruce & Shirley Schmidt
- **Helen Trask** from Ralph & Susan Johnson, Wayne & Mary Ann Kasich
- **Florence Veranth** from Marilyn Larson
- **Janet Wagner** from Darcie Schulz, Joseph & Janet Schulz
## Financial Report on Third Floor Renovation Project

### SOURCES OF FUNDING

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<td><strong>Total Income for Third Floor Project</strong></td>
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### EXPENSES

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<td><strong>Total Expense for Third Floor</strong></td>
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New Faces at Backus!

This past year, Citizens for Backus has welcomed several new faces. We are pleased to highlight our Event Coordinator, Michelle Misner, and our new tenants, Local Relief, Replenish Yoga and Wellness, and Scholler School of Natural Health Care.

Michelle Misner: Event Coordinator

Michelle Misner joined Backus in December 2010. She graduated from Bemidji State with a B.A. in Elementary Education. As Event Coordinator, Michelle manages clients, staff, and volunteers to host various events.

What is your favorite food to eat, bake, or cook?
I love to bake cookies and eat steak that has been grilled over a fire.

Do you have any pet peeves?
Unreliable people, people who lack common sense.

If you had to be an animal, what would you be?
I would be a hippo, so I could be fat and it wouldn’t matter.

Describe your perfect day:
Floating on Rainy Lake, reading a good book, and hanging with family.

Where do you see Backus in five years?
I hope to see apartments in AB, and I hope that Backus continues to thrive with its many events.

What is the most difficult part about your job?
Getting to know my responsibilities and learning computer skills.

What do you like most about your job?
Meeting the many volunteers, seeing the wonderful events that go on there, and the people I work with.

Volunteer’s Corner with Michelle!

Backus continues to be a vibrant community center due to its many wonderful VOLUNTEERS! I have worked at Backus since December, and the support the volunteers and staff have for Backus is amazing!

Through the countless hours of volunteering, we have continued to host Soup Suppers, many intermissions during events, Top the Tater Dinners, and keep the office running smoothly, etc. Also with the help of volunteers and the kitchen staff, we have hosted a retirement party, class reunions, various luncheons, and a bridge club that meets four times a month.

Way to go!

Backus treated our volunteers to cake and ice cream in April as a Thank You for all their hard work. We appreciate everything that you do for us!

If you like to bake, answer phones, or just want to help, give us a call. We would be honored to have you as a volunteer!

Michelle Misner
Event Coordinator

Below: United Health Care Volunteers.
Local Relief: Suite 201
Hollie Bahr CMT, owner and practitioner of Local Relief, has been practicing massage therapy since 2004 and offers a variety of massage techniques. She earned her A.A.S degree in Clinical Massage Therapy from St. Paul College in St. Paul, MN.
Contact Information: (763) 229-5033; www.localrelief.massagetherapy.com; Facebook: Local Relief

When did you join Backus?
October 2010. It’s wonderful to be part of an older building and neat to be part of the community center.

What is something unique you offer the community?
I am the only clinical massage therapist in the area. I offer a new avenue of alternative healing and wellness in general.

What is your favorite time of year?
Fall. I like the colors, the coolness in the air, the crispness.

Where would your dream vacation take you?
I’d like to go back to Paris. I liked the ambiance. I’d also like to see Italy and the Mediterranean.

If you had to lose one of your five senses, which would you choose?
Such a hard question! Probably my smell.

“Throughout the years I have practiced on a wide range of individuals with an even wider range of problems. I truly love assessing clients and providing therapeutic massage to help ease physical pain and everyday stress.”

Replenish Yoga and Wellness: Suite 303
Christa Heibel, owner of Replenish Yoga and Wellness, has been studying Reiki since 1998 and Yoga since 2001. She is certified in Reiki I and II and Yoga TT200. She will complete her TT500 certification this August.
Contact Information: (218) 286-4006; replenishmindbodyspirit@gmail.com; Facebook: Replenish Mind®Body®Spirit

When did you join Backus?
I signed a lease in February.

Favorite thing about Backus?
The nostalgia of being in Backus. I went to school through 8th grade there. And I think so many people are comfortable with walking into Backus.

Do you have a hobby or something you do to relieve stress?
I like to cook.

Is there anything you do or don’t like to cook?
No, I’m pretty experimental. I like to grill in the summer. I’ll eat anything off of a grill.

What is something unique Replenish Yoga and Wellness has to offer the community?
Yoga. I am the only certified yoga teacher in town. I believe the practice of yoga and meditation can help you live a little calmer.

Scholler School of Natural HealthCare: Suite 212
Robert Scholler, owner of Scholler School of Natural HealthCare, will earn his Doctor of Health Education degree at A. T. Still University in Missouri in July. Scholler will teach complimentary and alternative medicine in Suite 212.
During the week of June 13, Backus hosted the Prairie Fire Children’s Theatre and Art classes. The PFCT worked all week on perfecting their performance of Snow White. It was amazing to watch the progress made in 5 short days!

Backus also held Art classes which included: Lightnin’ Lasers (John Faith), Watercolors (Barb Gray & Kitty Ewald), Acrylic (Cherie Serrano), Play with Clay (Betsy Ward), Self-portraits (Beth Nelson), and Recycled Art (Karla Line). At the end of the very busy week, they held an Art Show to display all their talent. Students had the option to participate in one or both of the programs during the week. Both were well attended and we hope to see participation grow even more next summer. If you are interested in teaching an Art class, contact Backus!
Wish List

If you are able to help us obtain the following items, please contact the office at 285-7225. Thank you for your help and support!

To be used during Open Gym in the Quiet Corner:
- Legos
- Toy Cars (Hot Wheels, Matchbox, etc.)
- Dolls (Barbie, other small dolls)

To wash dishtowels and tablecloths:
- Good, used washer

Now in its second summer of operation, the Backus Summer Food Service Program has seen tremendous growth during the month of June. Perhaps due to wider community awareness or perhaps as the result of the economy, use of the program which provides a free meals lunch to children ages 1-18, served 1,853 during the 19 lunch days in June. That month’s total represents 53% of all 3,500 meals served in 2010! A daily average of 98 noon meals have been served since the program started on June 6 compared to just 30 meals per day in June of 2010.

The program is regulated and funded through the Minnesota Department of Education and is meant as an extension of the school lunch program. In many families, the meals provided through school lunch and breakfast programs are the main source of nutrition for kids. The Backus program is meant to fill the gap in children’s nutrition during the summer months. Meals must meet strict component, portion and nutrition guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the MN Department of Education. The state reimburses Backus at the rate of $3.29/lunch for children. Adult meals are either paid for by the parents or reimbursed by the Falls Hunger Coalition. Supplemental funding for the program has come from the Otto Bremer Foundation, Boise, Second Harvest and the Vikings Children’s Fund. These added funds have helped provide “open gym” equipment and staffing as well as promotion, equipment, and transportation. Bus service to and from Backus is provided by Arrowhead Transit.

Staff working in the program include: Hoa Sobczynski (Food Service Manager), Mike Hopkins (chef), Bethany Tupper (student worker), Melinda Boutilier (kitchen volunteer), Steve Barnett (custodian), Shannon Moseman (open gym), Michelle Misner (Events Coordinator) and Barb Albert (volunteer). The Occupational Development Center clients and staff help with dining room clean-up on a daily basis.
(In spite of the State of Minnesota “shutdown” – the Backus Summer Food Service Program will continue to operate thanks to support from the funders listed above).
Historic Backus/AB, a community center in the heart of International Falls, where past, present, and future come together to celebrate the arts, culture, recreation and lifelong learning.

Summer Events/Programs

**Backus Kids Club** - Monday-Friday 7:30am-6:00pm

**Open Gym** - Monday-Friday 11:30am-1:30pm

**Summer Food Service Program**
Monday-Friday 11:45am-1:15pm

**Community Market** - Wednesdays 5:00-7:00pm
Saturdays 8:00-11:00am

**Rock the Border III** - Thursday, July 21 @ 7:30pm

**Summer Picnic** - Thursday, August 4 4:30-7:00pm
Sponsored by Rob's Janitorial Service

**Dancin' with Darcie Registration**
Tuesday, August 15 4:00-7:00pm
Wednesday, August 16 4:00-7:00pm

**"Harvey" Production** - Thursday, August 18 @ 7:30pm
Friday, August 19 @ 7:30pm

**Mighty Mustangs Wrestling Camp**
Saturday & Sunday, August 20-21

**Stroke Detection** - Wednesday, August 24 8:15am-5:30pm
Thursday, August 25 7:15am-4:30pm

**Backus Arts & Crafts Festival**
Thursday-Saturday, August 25-27

**IFBC 5K Race Spaghetti Dinner**
Friday, August 26 5:00-7:00pm

**Oberholtzer Folk Music Concert**
Saturday, August 27 @ 7:00pm

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RAFFLE

$50 TICKET

$50 1st Prize
$2,000 2nd Prize
$500 3rd Prize
$50 4th Prize

Need not be Present to Win
Must be 18 or older to Participate
Raffle Permit X-34613
Tickets Donated by: Jordan J. Pearson

Great Gift for Birthday, Anniversary, or Appreciation!

Support the Fundraising Campaign for Dining Room Tables and Chairs

Only 400 tickets will be sold!

Drawing at Backus Soup Supper
September 1 @ 6:00 p.m.