Several weeks ago an older gentleman stopped in the Backus office. He was carrying a “thank you” letter I had written back in March in which I had invited him to stop in for a visit if he was ever in the area. The thing that made this visit somewhat unique is that the man was from Belfair, Washington, and was only in the Falls for a day or two visiting friends. Within a few moments I was engaged in a delightful conversation with Duane Jacobson – Class of 1949. Actually, almost 1949. Mr. Jacobson’s father had been a millwright back in 1946 and there had been a strike that summer by a number of the unions working for MANDO. Having had enough of the strike, Mr. Jacobson’s father moved the family out to the state of Washington to seek a more prosperous living.

As Mr. Jacobson’s story unfolded, he told of being a close childhood friend of my aunt, Beverly Molstre and visiting at her parent’s home on Riverside Drive. He told of being one of the leaders of a mass school-skipping plan and of having to pay the consequence for his instigation. Principal Stanley Helleloid had sentenced young Duane to a week’s incarceration in one of the Backus ticket booths for his part in the plot. A week was spent doing school work in the tiny ticket booth just down the hall from Mr. Helleloid’s watchful eye.

He told of being inspired by his shop and mechanical drawing teachers enough to pursue a career in the technical and engineering fields himself. Working for a major aircraft corporation on the west coast had involved a rewarding career and world travel. Other stories about classmates, teachers and adventures filled the hour-long visit. We ended by taking a look at that ticket booth where Mr. Jacobson had spent a week so many years ago.

Last spring Duane Jacobson had sent a sizeable donation as part of his membership to us. Even though he lives in Belfair, Washington, spends winters in the southwest, rarely visits the Falls, and moved to the west coast prior to tenth grade – he still holds the experiences in this community and in this building close to his heart.

This story is typical of so many people that I visit with or hear from. Often I hear words of thanks and appreciation that the historic Backus and AB buildings have been saved and are finding new uses for new generations. I sense a degree of support from community members, local and state government officials and long-time supporters that may not have been here a few years ago. Support from foundations, funders, local contractors, businesses, local financial institutions, donors, members and volunteers has been overwhelming.

As our financing and planning come together, we hope to be “under construction” with our third floor/elevator project and our kitchen/dining room project early this fall. We’re looking forward to the sound of workers in the building, the sound of power tools, and the smell of fresh paint along with the usual sounds of children and adults that fill our building.

Ward Merrill
Executive Director
Remembering Bob . . .

The “Backus Family” will be a bit poorer due to the absence of Bob Frederickson. Not only were he and his wife Donna early and substantive supporters of saving Backus/AB – Bob was an ongoing supporter. Whether it was financial support, working on a committee, volunteering to wax or refinish floors – Bob was there.

He served on John Faith’s “Building and Grounds” Committee and could always be counted on to be there when a crew was needed to spend two days stripping, washing, sealing and waxing the beautiful terrazzo floors or refinishing the gym floor. He installed all those metal nameplates that are affixed to Auditorium seats. He might offer to get lunch for a work crew or pick up donuts for a meeting. Bob was the one with the humorous word, the story to tell or a reflection on the past.

Together we spent a cold morning last February salvaging railings and fixtures from the old Border Theatre. The best part of the morning was a drive around town with Bob and his recollections of where buildings used to be, who lived there or what happened during his youth.

Bob grew up in the Backus neighborhood. I believe he really cared for these buildings and certainly worked to insure their preservation and reuse. He was a key member of our building committee that supervised the roof renovation project last year. Bob provided input, support and experience as we began an even more massive project of third-floor renovation and kitchen planning.

We’ll continue with these efforts. The projects that Bob helped plan will come to fruition. The job will get done and we’ll remember that Bob had a hand in all these things.

Contributions toward kitchen project in memory of Bob Frederickson:

- Sharon Anderson
- Janet Arai
- Dale & Kay Arnold
- Patti Ballan
- Carol & Lynn Belanger
- Janice Berg
- Virginia Bergvall
- Marilyn Berlin
- Gary & M. Dee Bigler
- Norman & Karen Boyum
- Steven & Cynthia Boyum
- Jerome & Lois Brekke
- Corinne Brindos
- Marcia Bringedahl
- Leo & Alma Buechler
- James & Laurie Bujold
- Terrance & Nancy Carew
- Donald & Dorothy Carey
- Belmer & Karen Cole
- Mike & Sue Commerford
- Bob & Leanne Crompton
- Fred & Donna Day
- Jim & Joanna Domheker
- William & June Dougherty
- Donna Erickson
- Gordon & Patricia Ettstead
- Robert & Betty Ewald
- Idella Franz
- Donna Frederickson
- James & Vicki Giauque
- Thomas & Jackie Glowack
- Kevin & Kelly Gordon
- Mary Graves
- Bunny Green
- Thomas & Clara Hardy
- Phyllis Hart
- Michael & Nancy Heibel
- Nancy Heli
- Robert & Mary Hike
- Robert & Jean Houska
- Duayne & Nancy Johnson
- Richard Johnson
- Susan Johnson
- Phyllis Karsnia
- Susan Karsnia
- John & Judy Karry
- William & Marcia Kneasbaw
- Ladd Kocinski
- Lillian Koranda
- Margarete Kostuk
- Roberta Larsen
- Liane Lehtinen
- Wayne & Nancy Lindstrom
- Jay & Pamela Lofgren
- Thomas & Mary Lucca
- Howard & Barbara Marquardt
- Barb & Craig Mason
- Donald Mason
- William & Shawn Mason
- Barbara McDowell
- Joseph & Karen McGregor
- Ward & Linda Merrill
- Howard & Virginia Milette
- Bronko & Bev Nagurski
- James & Jeannine Nelson
- Stuart & Susan Nordquist
- Helen O'Brien
- Dennis & Paula Olander
- Robert & Tonya OmDahl
- Margaret Patnode
- John & Helen Patterson
- Mary Phillip
- Sharon LaVigne Piekarzki
- Kipp & Diane Raboin
- Joyce Rasmussen
- Mildred Robinson
- Harriet Rosenberg
- Bob & Lynette Rousseau
- Edith Sandstrom
- George & Edith Schieff
- Bruce & Shirley Schmidt
- Roman & Janet Schultheis
- Joseph & Janet Schultz
- Harold & Julie Schumacher
- Diane Semmler
- Muriel Severd
- Laurie Skilstrom
- Alton & Linda Shannon
- Steven Shemoen
- Karen Shickell
- John & Kay Siats
- Orin & Bette Simon
- Douglas Skrief
- Russell & Debra Spry
- Ivan & Marcia Stewart
- Norma Stone
- Erik & Jeanie Strand
- Florence Strukel
- Linda Sutch
- Roberta Lynn Swenson
- Sandra Tornes
- Elizabeth Villalta
- Dennis & Carol Vohler
- William & Marlene Wagner
- Daryl & Teresa Waller
- La Velle Leeman Walls
- James & Kathy West
- James & Carol Wherley
- James & Carol Wherley
- Lyle & Diane Windsnes
- Harry & Carol Youso
- Frank & Evelyn Youso
- Talia Zeman
- Daniel & Sharon Zik
Join us for a special film premiere event at the Backus Auditorium on Friday, September 25, 7:00 p.m., co-hosted by the Backus Community Center and Voyageurs National Park Association, with support from Fredrikson & Byron, P.A. View *Minnesota's National Park Legacy*, and hear from guest speakers on the making of the film and our neighbor National Park, Voyageurs.

Minnesota is home to a treasure of National Park Service sites—all of them are “crown jewels” of unique, cultural, historic and natural significance that merit national status. Our region’s Voyageurs National Park is a true gem, comprising 218,000 acres of towering pines, glistening waters, and abundant wildlife. Its history is vibrant, and the recreational opportunities are unparalleled.

Complementing the upcoming Ken Burn’s documentary, *The National Parks: America’s Best Idea*, Minnesota is telling its own national story of “America’s Best Idea” from the scenic waterways of the Mississippi and St. Croix Rivers to the historic sites steeped in Native American history at Pipestone and Grand Portage to the vast waters of Voyageurs. With the national trails weaving across the state there is a national park “right outside our front door” just about everywhere you go. Working together, Minnesota’s National Park sites are dynamic, living, evolving places with important histories and incredible futures. They were created by citizens, for citizens. The ongoing committed citizen stewardship of each generation is critical to the ultimate preservation of our natural heritage for all the generations to come.

*Minnesota’s National Park Legacy*, co-produced by the National Park sites of Minnesota and Twin Cities Public Television (TPT), will air on TPT channel 2 on October 4, at 6:30 p.m., and on the statewide TPT MN channel at 8:00 p.m.. It represents a project of historic collaboration among Minnesota’s National Park sites. Major funding and support for the film was provided by Voyageurs National Park Association, the Mississippi River Fund, the St. Croix River Association, Northeast Minnesota Sustainable Development Partnership, and the Donald Weesner Foundation. For a complete list of supporters, please visit www.voyageurs.org.
Contributions toward general operating from:
City of Int'l Falls, Richard & Elizabeth Forsythe, James Hamalainen and Ameriprise Financial Gift Matching Program, Koochiching County, and James & Carol Wherley.

Contributions toward landscaping from: Kay & Dale Arnold, Barb Albert, Patti Ballan, Marcia Bringedahl, Jay Hokenson, Marcia Kneeshaw, Ward & Linda Merrill, and Joyce Rasmussen.

Contributions toward new dance studio floor: Darcie Schultz

Grants toward kitchen project from: Otto Bremer Foundation and Marshall N. Knudson Family Community Fund, Falls Rotary Club, Paul Casey Foundation, and International Falls Hunger Coalition

Contributions toward kitchen project from: Dale & Kay Arnold, Bill & Kitty Ewald, Lawrence Johnson, Gene & Patricia Kjellgren, Charles Lestico, Barbara McDowell, Northland Art Society, Peter Graham Auxiliary Post 2948, John & Helen Patterson, John & Rose Rasmussen, Joyce Rasmussen, Sons of Norway, Floyd & Geraldine Streiff, Helen Tveit, and all of memorial contributions.

Contributions toward kitchen project in memory of: Lalah Asplund from Donna R. Erickson, Todd Bernard from Florence Strukel and Dennis & Carol Vohler, Wendy Blais from Marjorie Gerlach, Bonnie Bruggeman from Harriet Rosenberg, Agnes Christianson from Rosemond Kucera and Dennis & Carol Vohler, Patricia Christenson from Ward & Linda Merrill, Ruth Degrugillier from Phyllis Hart, Marilyn Larson and Betty Villalta, Mary Geddes from Marcia Bringedahl and Joan Evanoff, Ann Glennie from Patty Bahr, Louise Belanger Gordon from Patty Bahr, Betty Lepper, Adele McDonnell, and Don & Janet Olson, Arthur Holmstrom from Marguerite Davison, Donna Frederickson, Muriel Lesseman, William McPherson and Edith Sandstrom, Dorothy Johnson from Adele McDonnell. Ronnie Johnson from Esther Ludwig, Russell Johnson from James & Louise Bartkowski, Robert & Leanne Crompton, Donna Erickson, Violet Johnson, Nancy McBride, Clarice Miller, John & Helen Patterson, Theodore & Delores Paulson, Ronald & Wanda Pelland, James & Gail Rognerud, Darlyss Samuelson, and Florence Strukel, Benjamin LaGoo from Dorothy Anderson, Patti Lu Minton from Janet M. Dunlap, Elsa Skartvedt from Patti Ballan, Wilfred Sweney from Adele McDonnell, Edna Brown & Eric Weum from Elvira Earley

Contributions in honor of Birthdays and Anniversaries: Wilson family from John & Karen Wilson, Melanie Kucera’s 50th birthday from Marit Lee Kucera, Red & Janet Schulthes’ anniversary from Stuart & Susan Nordquist, Wanda & Al Linder’s 50th anniversary from John & Karen Wilson and Elvira Earley, Marcia Stewart from the Birthday Club and Katherine Herman, Beverly Moistle from Susan Foran and John & Catherine Schroeder.

Donations to Summer Art Program from: Super One Foods and Battalion Distributing.

Top the Tater and monthly Soup Supper Sponsors:
Northland Art Society
Duty Free Americas
Minnesota Monument
Northern Lumber
Streiff’s Floral & Gifts
Sunrise Center
Up North Builders
VFW Peter Graham Post 2948

Contributions through Seat Dedications:
Marguerite Davison, Gerald & Sharon Faith, John Faith, Susan Foran, Tom & Edna Karsnia, Michael & Jill Katrin, Peter Graham Auxiliary Post 2948, John & Catherine Schroeder, Alton & Linda Shannon, John Sweney, and VFW Peter Graham Post 2948

If you would like to purchase a seat in our historic auditorium in honor or memory of someone call the Backus office at 285-7225 or Wanda Linder at 875-2195

Page 4
We set a GOAL in 2009 to reach 500 Memberships or 30,000 in membership dollars.

To date we stand at 403 Memberships totaling 34,691 dollars!!

This list has been prepared to the best of our ability— if there is someone missing please let us know!

Backus Office— 285-7225
Past Events January ~ July 2009

January 8th First Thursday Soup Supper  Spon. by Good Samaritan Society  Att.: 110
January  Boys & Girls Basketball Games  13 games with an overall Attendance: 660
January 16th Top The Tater Dinner  Sponsored by Border State Bank  Attendance: 83
January 16th Boundary Water Boys Concert  Attendance: 130
January 17th Icebox Days CHILI CHALLENGE  Attendance: 125
January 17th Icebox Days “Kids Icebox Adventures”  Attendance: 43
January 29th Backus ANNUAL MEETING  Attendance: 32
February Boys & Girls Basketball Games  4 games with an overall Attendance: 177
February 5th First Thursday Soup Supper  Sponsored by Nat’l Honor Society  Att.: 89
February 8th Chocolate Affair  Attendance: 200
February 11th All School Musical  Attendance: 619
February 19th Contractor Seminar  Sponsored by City of Int’l Falls  Attendance: 100
March 5th First Thursday Soup Supper  Sponsored by Green-Larsen  Attendance: 130
March 7th Horizon Concert  Attendance: 136
March 19th Ethnic Food Festival  Attendance: 350
March 26th U of Morris Choral Concert  Attendance: 120
March 31st Top the Tater Dinner  Sponsored by Northern Lumber  Attendance: 62
March 31st Border Concert “Small Town Stories”  Attendance: 211
April 2nd First Thursday Soup Supper  Sponsored by Kantor Electric  Attendance: 92
April 2nd Open Mic Night  Attendance: 50
April 16th Falls High School Concerts  Attendance: 180
April 23rd Top the Tater Dinner  Sponsored by Up North Builders  Attendance: 95
April 23rd Border Concert “April Verch”  Attendance: 439
April 24th Janet Wagner’s Dance Recital  Attendance: 505
April 28th 4-H Share the Fun  Attendance: 120
April 26th Dancing with Darcie Recital  Attendance: 915
April 28th Community Homeless Shelter Mtg.  Attendance: 50
May 7th First Thursday Soup Supper  Spon. By Sunrise Center  Attendance: 79
May 8th United Way Talent Show  Attendance: 709
May 16th Paul Durocher Concert  Attendance: 120
May 21st Top the Tater Dinner  Spon. By MN Monument  Attendance: 85
May 21st Border Concert “Brass Quintet”  Attendance: 420
June 4th First Thursday Soup Supper  Sponsored by Northland Art Society  Att.: 113
June 4th Borderland Community Orchestra  Attendance: 122
June 15-20th Summer Arts @ Backus Program  Attendance: 100+
June 20th Summer Arts @ Backus Student Art Show  Attendance: 96
June 20th Prairie Fire Theater Children’s Performance  Attendance: 196
July 2nd First Thursday Soup Supper  Sponsored by Strieff’s Floral  Attendance: 74
July 11th Bob Frederickson Funeral  Attendance: 600
July 24th Rock the Border Show  Attendance: 330

"Thanks for bringing in all the wonderful entertainment. The last two weeks (end of May) were VERY good!"
~ G. Earnest

Backus Office Hours:
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.  Monday - Friday
285-7225
Please note our new mailing address:
900 5th Street, Int’l Falls, MN 56649
This group is back at the Backus after a five year absence. Pier Country performed regularly at the Backus from 2000 to 2004, giving the audiences a genuine taste of what you might see if you attended one of Nashville’s Grand Ole’ Opry performances. A typical concert from Pier Country will pay homage to the great legends of Country Music, combining Chet Atkins style guitar, along with Hank Williams Sr. vocals, to the Patsy Cline signature classics, along with plenty of good country instrumental tunes performed by these top-notch entertainers. The Sept 26 concert will also include newer material from such artists as Josh Turner and Kenny Chesney, and signature songs from Randy Travis, Don Williams, and more. The performing sets for this concert will be a very family-friendly evening of music, something the grandparents can take their grandchildren to, and everyone in between.

**Saturday, Sept. 26**
**7:30 p.m.**

Advance Tickets: $10 Adults/ $6 Children
At the Door: $12 Adults/ $8 Children

Tickets Available at: Backus Office, City Drug, Coffee Landing and Betty’s in Fort Frances

---

**Adult Art Workshops**

**November 7 & 8 ~10 a.m.– 3 p.m.**
**Lunch Provided**
$35.00 per day- purchase your own supplies

A variety of workshops by Professional Artists

**MORE INFORMATION TO COME**
Watch the Backus Website!

**www.backusab.org**

Proceeds to benefit the Backus Community Kitchen with matching funds from the Otto Bremer Foundation.

---

**GUN SHOW**

**October 24 & 25**

**Saturday 9a.m.-5p.m. / Sunday 9a.m.-3p.m.**

Concessions Available!

**CLASSES AVAILABLE:**

**Utah Permit To Carry Class** Saturday 11 a.m., Sunday 10 a.m., 3 -4 hour class. This course will give you permit to carry in several states including Minnesota.
Cost $50

**Refuse To Be A Victim Class** Saturday 3:30 p.m., Sunday 2 p.m., 1 hour, Free Admission. Personal Protection and Awareness.

Gregory D. Olson is a Certified Instructor for the NRA, BCA, BCI and MN Department of Safety.
Backus Community Kitchen Project Moves Forward

Fundraising for the new kitchen/dining room project is nearing completion with almost $140,000 of the $180,000 needed for the project already on hand or pledged. The International Falls Rotary Club raised $5,735 locally which was matched by their District affiliate for a total of $11,470! This donation will in turn be matched by the Otto Bremer Foundation. A local fundraising committee has been working hard to reach our goal with such efforts as: silent auction theme baskets, a showing of the “Johnson Journals – The Movie”, a Voyageurs National Park Boat Tour, a historic Backus Calendar, art workshops, and sweatshirt & t-shirt sales.

Already, St. Thomas School children are eating a catered noon lunch in the soon-to-be-completed “dining room.” Contractors will begin work shortly on partial demolition of the wall between rooms 110 and 111. An “Art Deco” style arch will be installed creating a larger dining area. The room will be finished with new ceiling lights and flooring to help achieve a more elegant 1930’s atmosphere.

A final decision on kitchen lay-out and fixtures will be made shortly with construction hopefully completed no later than January 1. The new kitchen and dining room will help make Backus a more self-sustaining enterprise. We invite Backus friends and patrons to take advantage of the Bremer Foundation’s offer to match up to $30,000 of donations on a dollar-for-dollar basis by making a donation today!
Dance Studio Remodeling Underway

A joint effort between Darcie Schulz and Backus will create a bright new look in our first floor dance studio this fall. Local contractors are installing new flooring and an entire wall of mirrors for a more professional look to the space. With a new coat of paint and bars along the walls the studio will be ready for well over 140 dancers this September. We would be happy to show you this newly remodeled space next time you visit the building!

Third Floor Remodeling & Elevator Project

After months of planning, meeting with contractors, and discussions with potential tenants, this massive remodeling effort is almost ready to begin. Thanks to the staff of Border State Bank and the work of Gordy Winzenburg and David Hebig, the financing for this $640,000 project is almost complete. Bremer Bank and the Northland Foundation are other partners in the financing. The decision of the Koochiching County Board of Commissioners to back the project with the issuing of two tax-exempt bonds has been critical to its success. The County incurs no financial liability with the bonds but acts as a conduit for the issuing.

Once construction is complete Northland Counseling will occupy the entire east portion of the third floor of Backus with Rational Alternatives Counseling relocating from the first floor to the northwest portion of the third floor. An elevator shaft will be built inside the “West Court” and the new system will provide access to all three floors and the basement. Over 25 workers from at least five local contractors will work on the construction. Two to three new jobs will be created with the counseling agencies as a result of the added space in addition to more work for the Occupational Development Center which is contracted to clean the Backus building.

When are the apartments going to be ready?

We hear this question frequently. The Backus Board of Directors has by no means given up on the idea of apartments. Our long-range plan calls for completion of all improvements in the Backus building with renovation of the AB building to follow. Once the kitchen/dining room, third floor and elevator projects are completed – we will turn our efforts to the AB building. We plan to begin the “planning” early in 2010.

By the time we’re ready to start on the AB building, six major building improvements will have already included: Sprinkler system - $35,000, Auditorium Roof replacement - $55,000, Art Room Roof Replacement - $16,500, AB/Backus Roof Replacement - $260,000, Kitchen/Dining Room - $180,000 and Third Floor Remodel/Elevator - $640,000. With a total cost of over $1.2 million, each one of these projects seemed immense at the time – but they were achievable with perseverance and outstanding local support.

The cost of previous capital improvement projects will seem small in comparison to the cost of AB renovation. Estimates to convert AB to residences will likely reach or exceed $4 million. Although that seems almost impossible – it will be achieved. Bear with us, be patient and be supportive – the apartments are coming.

“Thanks to all the people who work so hard to keep Backus/AB operating!” ~ B. McDowell
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Upcoming Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good Samaritan’s “Musical Madness”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 12 @ 7 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VNP Movie Premiere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 25 @ 7p.m. ~ FREE!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pier Country ~ “Revisited”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 26 @ 7:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soup Supper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 1 4:30-7 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsored by Bremer Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VNP Boat Tour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 3 ~ Boarding @ 5pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autumn Arts Festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 9 &amp; 10 9 a.m.—4 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top The Tater Dinner &amp; Border Concert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 11 ~ Dinner 4:30-7 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsored by Waschke Family GM Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Wellness Workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gun Show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 24 &amp; 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat. 9 a.m.– 5 p.m. and Sun. 9 a.m.—3 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top the Tater Dinner &amp; Border Concert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 30 ~ Dinner 4:30-7 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsored by: Education Minnesota, Int’l Falls Local 331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Dist. 361 Elections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 3 ~ 8 a.m.-8 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soup Supper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 5 4:30– 7 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsored by City Drug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults Art Workshops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 7 &amp; 8 ~ All Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday Arts &amp; Crafts Festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 28 ~ 9a.m.—4p.m.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>