

Letter from the President

If my only window on the world was the television, it would be easy to believe that we were all on the brink of disaster. ...laid off from our jobs, on the verge of having our homes repossessed, clanking around miserably in five-year-old cars, stomachs growling before bare cupboards.

Fortunately, I've learned over the years that the television is not our only source of information. So my window on the world tends to be exactly that...my kitchen window. I see the same people as always, walking down 2nd avenue on their way to work, or happily pulling their 20 year old pick-up into Dependable Lumber for supplies, or walking home from Don's with a grocery bag in each hand.

In contrast to the despair on the TV, I see wealth in the bounty of my friends. I feel surrounded by people who are used to making their way without handouts or bailouts, living comfortably within their own means, meager as they may sometimes be. I also see a community that has supported local businesses and services long before it was chic, a community of people who know how to trade for what they need. These are the people who have a chance to not only survive these challenging times, but to thrive.

Some say that when the economy is bad, luxuries like entertainment are the first to go. I disagree. Now, more than ever, we need to stay committed to keeping our hearts, minds and bodies healthy through learning and laughing, listening to exceptional music and dancing with

friends. Now more than ever, the Blue Sage will strive to keep our events affordable while continuing to support local musicians, writers and artists.

And I encourage all of you to see our struggling economy as an opportunity to share and grow. Share your time, energy, talents and love - with your family, friends and neighbors. Sharing enriches our lives and encourages others to share as well, creating a self-perpetuating upward spiral of energy that will not only sustain us as individuals but allow us to soar as a community. We have that potential in this valley. I know it, because I see it every day, right outside my kitchen window.

In love and peace,
Carol Kwiatkowski

Donna Mann takes over as Events Director for the Blue Sage

Long time Paonia activist and entrepreneur Donna Mann was recently selected as the new events director at the Blue Sage Center for the Arts. Mrs. Mann brings considerable experience to the table as a former chairperson for Cherry Days, one of the original board members of the Mountain Harvest Festival and the Warehouse Playhouse Community Theater, half owner of Mannclan Productions, as well as the former owner of Paonia's Pizza My Heart before selling it to Louis Hays in 2005.

"I'm so pleased to have been chosen for this position and I'm going to work hard to continue the vision of the Blue Sage of enhancing cultural and educational enrichment in our community. I would like to bring back some of the great events



enjoyed during the Thomas Smith stewardship," Mann said for this interview, "and we at the Sage hope to reach out to factions in the community who haven't yet experienced the value of having such a wonderful facility at their disposal."

Donna envisions the addition of several positive uses for the center, including a

permanent home for children's theater. "Lisa Howden is bringing great theater to Paonia, and she and I are hoping to work together to further this endeavor with more workshops and shows geared toward young people." Other areas to concentrate on, she notes, include pursuing improved ties with the business community in the valley by working more closely with them, as well as area Chambers of Commerce, to promote and support events that are more mutually beneficial. "Open communication is the key," she said, "and we are ready, willing and able to go forward in a positive manner to make this valley, it's civic organizations, businesses, and the community at large an even better place to work, play, do business, and enjoy the many aspects of our diverse community." Donna invites anyone to come by the Blue Sage office and visit with her and share ideas for events they would like to see happen, or e-mail her at events@paonia.com.

New Year Celebration at the Blue Sage

New Year celebrations take on many different meanings for people within the community. Some look forward to a chance to start with a clean slate, breaking free of old habits and creating new resolve. Others are eager to put the hectic holiday season behind them and find joy in returning to normal routine. Still other folks just appreciate a chance to dress up and party for two days straight.

The Blue Sage was filled with people from a number of celebratory outlooks on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. With the libations flowing and the sparkle glowing, New Year's Eve revelers danced to music from the Jazz Renovators and friends, laughed and

toasted to the Ship of Fools Improv Troupe, and happily partied until the wee hours of the morning. The Black Eyed Pea Jubilee on New Year's Day was no less of a party, with copious amounts of food and an amazing variety of local music organized by Rick Stockton. We were treated to a wealth of talented musicians: Zach Mann, John Hutchingson, ZBS News, Russ Chapman, Mike Gwinn, Rick Stockton & Helen Highwater, Michael Meadows, Gus Brett, Howard Berkman, Jazz Renovators, and George & Lynn Weber.

These events would not have been possible without the great community participation that took place. A big thank you is necessary for everyone who generously brought potluck food, onstage talents, wonderful costumes, and overall joy to the Blue Sage.

Meet Your New Board Members

We are pleased to welcome Randy Campbell and Annette Choszczyk as recent additions to the Blue Sage Board of Directors.

Randy is a five-year resident of Paonia and a Coloradoan since 1974, previously residing in Grand Junction and Fort Collins before being drawn to the North Fork Valley.

His prior employment as head of production maintenance at Chaco and current position as an independent handyman/contractor have proven to be natural fit for chairperson of the facilities committee here at the Blue Sage. Randy jumped in with both feet and has already tackled the renovation and heating system for the back room of the gallery, as well as offering invaluable advice and research for the ongoing maintenance of our beautiful historic buildings.

Randy is an active Rotarian, past president, and currently serves on the board.



He enjoys the cultural events that the Blue Sage helps bring to our community. He is a founding member of North Fork Men's Book Club. His leisure time activities include home improvements, hiking, skiing, travel, and reading.

A Colorado native, Annette Choszczyk moved to Paonia in 2007 to become the District Director for the Delta County Public Library District. Before the move, Annette spent

years working with libraries and art centers in the Denver area, and is now going to be bringing her extensive non-profit experience to the Blue Sage Board. She currently sits on the Gallery Committee.

Annette enjoys singing, dancing, movies, and fine foods. She can be found at numerous local events every week as she shares her limited free time among various organizations in the community. If you see her out and about, be sure to welcome her to the Blue Sage Board and, in return, she might introduce you to a new favorite book!

Thank You Volunteers!

The Blue Sage would like to thank its many volunteers who helped make the New Year's Eve Celebration a huge success:

Catherine Gockley	Steve Morris
Joy Kuhlman	Lori Porter
Carol Kwiatkowski	Matt Weaver
Bob McHugh	Patricia Weller
Leah Morris	Lynn Wetherell

Special Thanks to Mary Reilly, Lisa Cassle, Jack Young and Mica Yates for their great decorating skills!

Thank You, Sponsors!

We are so grateful for the New Year's Eve sponsors. Their generous support make these special events happen.

Overgaard Bicycle Repair	New Belgium Brewery
Lori Porter	Paonia Skin Care
Todd & Cathy of Tri-R Liquors	Louis' Pizza

Thank You, Helene!

The Blue Sage would like to send a big thank-you to Helene Enslow for ushering us through a time of transition as our temporary Events Coordinator. Her attention to detail and protocol helped pave the way towards a more efficient organization. We look forward to her contributing to the Blue Sage in many ways in the future, particularly in providing opportunities for dance, theater and spiritual growth.

Calling All Writers!

The 2nd Annual Blue Sage Writers' Anthology Contest.

A writing competition and judging collaboration provides local writers a venue for presenting and publishing short stories.

Manuscripts are due to the Blue Sage by February 23, 2009.

Find information and contest rules at The Blue Sage, North Fork Valley Public Libraries, Paonia and Hotchkiss bookstores, or on the Blue Sage website - bluesage.org.

Winning entries will be published in the 2nd Annual Writers' Anthology.

What's Happening at the Blue Sage

February 13, 8:00 p.m. The triumphant return of **Mardi Gras!** Working in conjunction with KVNF, there will be a Mardi Gras party featuring Howard Berkman and his Big Bottom Band, bringin' jazzy, bluesy tunes from N'Orleans. Valley formal or costumes encouraged. Free masks and beads, frivolity, music, food, dancing!

March 6, The Blue Sage and KVNF proudly present **The John Cowan Band!** Legendary singer songwriter John Cowan will perform at the Paradise to benefit the

Blue Sage and KVNF Public Radio. From bluegrass to soul to rock-n-roll, his is a unique talent not to be missed!

March 17, 7:30 pm, **Opera Colorado.** Come join us as we travel to 1900's Russia for a brilliant comedy, "*The Music Shop*," and be educated and entertained with "*Arias and Ensembles*" by some of the most talented performers of the Opera Colorado Ensemble Artists.

April 3, 4 & 5, (see below for times). **Children's Theatrical performance,** *Fairy Tale Trio*, directed by Lisa Howden.

April 17, **The Sage Stage** returns! Are you a singer? Musician? Fancy yourself a comedian? Whatever your talent, come down to the Blue Sage and show us your stuff! Sign-up at 7:30, fun begins at 8:00.

April 18, Ellen Stapenhorst, Jan Garrett, Bobby Mason & J.D. present a **Songwriters Concert.** Times TBA

April 25, 7:30 pm, **Western Slope Music Series** with Tyme and Kathryn Mientka.

Theatre Notes from Director Lisa Howden

If you missed the Kid's Christmas production at the Blue Sage in December - no worries, you will get another chance to see local Playwright Pat McFadden's words at work in the next children's production *Fairy Tale Trio*. Pat, who also wrote *Too Many Santa's*, and *The Dragon Dilemma* (two past Children's shows that graced the Sage stage), has put her pen to work again in this adventurous play that reunites us with our favorite tales of Jack and the Beanstalk, Rapunzel, and Little Red Riding Hood. This workshop targets the talents of 8-12 year olds and includes over twenty kids. There will be two separate casts, each one getting both an evening and a matinee performance. The two casts rehearse on the Sage Stage on different days of the week. After school rehearsals are currently in progress with the performances scheduled for the first weekend in April.

Pat is a great person to work with. She is a witty playwright with a good sense of humor. The kids really enjoy working

with her scripts and the characters she develops for them. And on top of that, she's great with costumes. Wow, what a bonus! As a director in a small town, my wish has always been to have the technical side of things covered so I can really focus on just working with the kids. I am the first to admit that hanging lights, set construction, and assembling costumes are not my forte. Now, with folks like Leah Morris stepping up to help with lighting, and Pat, taking over the costumes, directing has become a lot more manageable and tons more fun! (By the way, now all that I need is a set designer... maybe, if I'm lucky, he or she is out there reading this... hint hint).

One of the greatest gifts of theatre is its ability to unite a community. The kids that make up the cast come from schools all over the North Fork: Paonia Elementary, Hotchkiss Elementary, NFC Montessori, Lamborn Valley and Paonia Vision School. The theatre workshops are a wonderful way to meld kids from neighboring

schools together on a creative project. They make new friends, share ideas and encourage one another. In the end, the whole community wraps itself around their performances and supports the children's efforts.

The final performances will take place April 3rd, 4th and 5th. Evening shows will be on Friday and Saturday nights at 7:00 and the matinees will be Saturday and Sunday at 2:00. Admission will be \$5.00 at the door.



Helena Menely



Katy Parsons



Marisa Edmonson

Winter Class Schedule

Tai Chi with Bob
Sunday and Thursday 6:30-8pm

Children's Theatre with Lisa
Monday 3:30-5:00pm

Drumming with Michael
Tuesday 4:30-5:45pm

African Dance with Leah
Tuesday 6:00-7:30pm

Choreography Dance with Helene
Wednesday 4:00-5:00pm

Children's Theatre with Lisa
Thursday 3:30-5:00pm

Yoga with Phyllis
Thursday 8:30-9:45am

Creative Movement with Sharon -
Ages 3-5
Saturday 10:00-10:45am

Intro to Ballet with Sharon - Ages 6-8
Saturday 11:00-11:45am



*Committed to
Promoting & Expanding
the Role of Arts & Humanities,
Enhancing
Cultural & Educational
Enrichment in the Community.*

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Randy Campbell - Handyman

"I fix & build things"

I will do small jobs; I do return phone calls.

Phone: 970-260-0106 Email: randyc@paonia.com

Create a Meaningful Legacy...

with a simple designation in your will. Talk to your lawyer to plan your estate and leave the Blue Sage a set amount, percentage, or even specific assets. This will provide a charitable estate tax deduction and is an effective way to leave a legacy of community support!



Documenting the life
and times of the North
Fork Valley since 1996



Ads: Dana 921-5683 or
MerchantHerald@aol.com

News: Tom 872-2664 or
Hotchkiss@aol.com

Want a FREE TICKET to any Blue Sage Event?

Volunteer! We need help in the office, before, during and after events, with facilities maintenance and much more.

And if you have volunteered recently and did not receive tickets, let us know and we'll make it right!

Email or Snail Mail?

We are now offering our quarterly newsletters via email as well as by snail mail to help save money. If you are a member of the Blue Sage and would like to receive email newsletters, please let us know by emailing us at: bluesage@paonia.com.

Board of Directors:

- President - Carol Kwiatkowski
- Vice President - Lori Porter
- Secretary - Leah Morris
- Treasurer - Francois Pretorius
- Randy Campbell
- Annette Choszczyk
- Kelly Ryan Johnson
- Administrative Director - Joy Kuhlman
- Events Director - Donna Mann



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